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**COMMUNITY BASED DEVELOPMENT
EXPERIENCES ACROSS CITIES**

Prepared by:

**Mona Serageldin
The Unit for Housing and Urbanization
Harvard University, Graduate School of Design**

Presented at the Forum on:

**ENABLING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
SECOND WORLD BANK CONFERENCE
ON
ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Sponsored in part by:

**The Office of Environment and Urban Programs
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

SEPTEMBER 1994

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**Harvard University Graduate School of Design
Unit for Housing and Urbanization**

Unit Staff

**Mona Serageldin
John Driscoll
David Neilson**

Field Research Team

**Wafaa Abdalla
Jeanine Anderson
Denis Lesage
Sherif Lotfi**

Research Assistants

**Janne Corneil
Nader El Bizri
Tarek Sweiliem**

Production Staff

**Abigail Gindele
Randa Tukan**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper highlights principles which structure the interface between communities and municipalities in order to foster community-based development approaches. It is based on a major action research project undertaken by the Unit for Housing and Urbanization at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design and is sponsored in part by the USAID Office of Environment and Urban Programs. The synthesis presented in Part I expands on the presentation given at the second World Bank Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development entitled "The Human Face of the Urban Environment" in the associated forum on Enabling Sustainable Community Development, September 22nd, 1994. The cases presented in Part II illustrate the diversity of approaches to community-based development. They document locally initiated programs at different stages of maturity where generic concepts, creatively adapted to the particularities of the context have helped launch successful community oriented initiatives. All of them belong to a new generation of urban programs that go beyond enabling approaches to create supportive frameworks for community-based development.

In Boston, Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC), illustrates the critical role played by community development corporations (CDC's) in the institutional infrastructure for service delivery, environmental improvement, and poverty alleviation programs in the U.S. DBEDC has expanded and diversified its activities from an initial focus on the production of affordable housing to initiatives for neighborhood stabilization, urban revitalization, and economic development. DBEDC illustrates how a community-based organization can generate its own resources, build financial independence, and attract longer term funding to support ambitious development activities, which include a neighborhood commercial district, an enterprise park for emerging light industries, and a community-based financial service entity.

The Rainbow Initiative in the Comas district of Lima, Peru, highlights the potential of volunteer groups to become catalysts for community-wide action. Women-led organizations, the driving force in support of family welfare, coordinated their efforts to address critical issues affecting children. A formal agreement for inter-institutional cooperation drawn between ten civic organizations, two national NGOs, a state institute and the municipality established COMUPRODENICO as an organization dedicated to the protection of children's rights. The Rainbow Initiative, its most important project has taken on the difficult mandate of bringing the community to recognize and prevent problems of mistreatment, abuse and abandonment.

The cases of Ehlal Housing Estate in the Ain Shams District of Cairo and the El Mourouj Resident Association in Tunis, illustrate how neighborhood improvement associations can, through effective mobilization and participatory processes, transform demand for action against perceived threats into a range of community-based development initiatives. Convincing residents of their ability to control, shape, and improve their living environment, civic leaders stimulated them to organize, contribute to specific activities and take on new challenges to improve the quality of life in their district. They have learned to move from confrontation to creating links and opportunities for collaboration with public authorities.

Recognizing the potential of public/private partnership in the development process, cities have been redefining their role to strategically invest resources and build up the physical and social infrastructure of distressed neighborhoods in collaboration with community-based groups. In Lublin, the City has introduced participatory processes as an operational strategy in the municipality to foster rehabilitation and upgrading of the living environment. An extensive and sustained outreach effort has made residents aware of the role they could play in shaping the future of their neighborhood. Motivated residents have become the link between city and community in the public/private sharing of infrastructure costs. The City has moved to institutionalize the Neighborhood Partnership Initiative as an environmental improvement strategy critical to its future growth and development.

In Adjamé, given the hardships caused by structural adjustment, the Mayor has opted to focus on unemployment, poverty and environmental degradation. He established neighborhood committees (CDQ's) to engage the energies and resources of local communities and channel their efforts towards improving their living conditions and economic situation. His approach relies on mobilization, building up capabilities, and empowerment. The overriding concern is financial viability and sustainability. The municipality nurtures and supports CDQ's through seed capital for their initiatives, but does not subsidize their operating costs. CDQ's generate revenue through user fees for the services they provide. These have expanded from an initial focus on sanitation and security to health centers and micro-incubators. To build sustainability in the community-based development process he has institutionalized, the Mayor is changing the legal status of CDQs to give them greater financial and managerial autonomy.

This paper demonstrates that an interface between municipality and community that nurtures and supports the development of human resources will make a valuable contribution to sustainable community based development, environmental improvement, and the development of a civil society.

**COMMUNITY BASED DEVELOPMENT
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PART I

SYNTHESIS

Introduction

Since the early 90's, development agencies have been examining concepts of sustainability and supporting a range of initiatives to foster sustainable development. As part of its programs, USAID has been promoting approaches to urban management based on decentralization, private sector participation and community involvement. Municipalities and their sub-districts constitute the units of decentralized administration closest to the community. They are pivotal nodes around which a constructive interface between public and private, formal and informal can occur. Because of their geographic focus, municipalities are ideally positioned to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development, a requirement in addressing issues of sustainability.

Local governance and community based approaches are the cornerstones of sustainable development in urban, lower-income communities. Elected local councils, entrusted with broader powers and wider responsibilities, promote a sense of empowerment and accountability. Citizens feel that they have some control over the decision making structures that affect their lives. However, decentralization and empowerment are slow processes. They require reshaping the institutional linkages governing central-local relations, an issue that has been the primary focus of research to date. They also require establishing new working relationships between local authorities and the different communities within their jurisdiction, a subject that has received much less attention. Yet, creating an effective institutional framework to structure these relationships is a necessary precondition to organize and empower citizens. It is a challenge that is currently being addressed by both industrialized and developing countries.

This paper will highlight principles which structure the interface between communities and municipalities in order to foster community based development approaches. It is based on a major action research project undertaken by the Unit for Housing and Urbanization at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. The field research relied on extensive interviews and visual documentation. It was carried out by Wafaa Abdalla, Jeanine Anderson, John Driscoll, Sherif Lotfi, Denis Lesage and myself. We would like to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance received from the Mayor of Adjame and the President and members of the CDQ Executive Boards, the President of the City of Lublin, the City Architect and the staff of the Urban Planning Unit, the President and officials of Ain Shams District in Cairo, the Executive Director of the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation in Boston, the President of Al Mourouj II Residents Association in Tunis, the CESIP Program Officer and the Coordinator of COMUPRODENICO in Lima. These officials gave their time generously, organized field visits and prepared support documentation. Their contribution has been instrumental to our success in assembling up-to-date program information for the purposes of this research.

This working paper is sponsored in part by the USAID Office of Environment and Urban Programs. The synthesis presented in Part I expands on the presentation given at the second World Bank Conference on Environmentally Sustainable Development entitled "The Human Face of the Urban Environment" in the associated program forum on Enabling Sustainable Community Development, September 22, 1994. The cases presented in Part II illustrate the diversity of approaches to community based development. They document programs at different stages of maturity where generic concepts, creatively adapted to the particularities of the local context, helped launch

successful community oriented initiatives. They all belong to a new generation of urban programs that go beyond enabling approaches to create supportive frameworks for community based development.

Community Development Organizations

During the past decade, the increase in the number of community based organizations has been impressive in both developed and developing countries. They grow out of mobilization efforts to demand action on specific issues or oppose activities viewed as threatening. Few of these groups manage to evolve into true agents of development. In order to do so, they must:

1. Become inclusionary and learn to work with public authorities, banks, business groups and private organizations.
2. Change their objective from single purpose action to a broad development perspective.
3. Build a capacity to diversify their activities, network with other organizations and negotiate partnerships.
4. Access resources, manage assets and generate revenues.

During the 80s, in the U.S. and Europe, Community Development Corporations (CDCs) have emerged as critical components of the institutional infrastructure for service delivery, environmental improvement, and poverty alleviation programs. They are widely regarded as models for effective community based development. It is difficult for them to become completely self sustaining. The vast majority require assistance to bridge a gap of 20% to 50% between operating costs and revenues. They receive financial and technical support through an array of programs as part of the redistribution function of the State.

Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, an Effective Agent of Community Based Development One of the most sophisticated CDCs in the Boston area is the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC), established in 1979 by three civic associations to address the neighborhood's persistent problems of economic disinvestment, housing dilapidation, decline of commercial activity, lack of public services, deteriorating infrastructure, property abandonment and foreclosures, unemployment, crime, and drugs. Under the leadership of its dynamic Executive Director, David Knowles, DBEDC has expanded and diversified its activities from an initial focus on the production of affordable housing to initiatives for neighborhood stabilization, urban revitalization, and economic development. It has a permanent staff of 8 paid employees and an operating budget of U.S. \$500,000.

DBEDC has established a strong track record in housing, completing the development of 432 housing units. It has demonstrated its capacity to handle increasingly complex projects. Taking off from few small scale operations, it is able to handle today a package of 51 at risk buildings representing a \$10.4 million investment.

DBEDC has established working relationships with multiple actors including local community groups, city government, and intermediary NGOs, as well as universities, hospitals, businesses, and philanthropic organizations. In structuring a relationship with intermediary NGOs, DBEDC must

determine which activities it wishes to undertake directly on behalf of the community and which should be undertaken by other organizations on behalf of the CDC. DBEDC's decisions are based on technical and economic feasibility. Friction with an intermediary NGO can occur when the CDC decides to take over a function, having built up the capacity to manage it and expand the scope of the operation to a level which makes it economically feasible for the CDC to provide the service directly.

In 1990, DBEDC launched a "Neighborhood Enterprise District" for the revitalization of its commercial district and signed an "Enterprise Collaboration Agreement" with the city. A Business Manager, funded by the city, works with the CDC to reuse vacant and underutilized buildings, and attract businesses to revitalize the district, a task the CDC had been unable to do on its own. A new anchor supermarket, "America's Foodbasket", a multi-ethnic grocery store, opened in December 1992. The image of the area is slowly changing. Driving crime from the revitalized area is a major concern, and the CDC is working with the Boston Police Department to keep repeat offenders off the streets. The CDC is now planning to take advantage of the soft real estate market to acquire key parcels for future development.

Most recently, DBEDC has launched its most ambitious project: working with the city, the state, and academic institutions to create an Enterprise Park for environmental technology, manufacturing, and training. DBEDC is acquiring the site of a manufacturing plant closed down in 1987 to start the initial phase, with financing from the city, an intermediary NGO, the Federal government through the State, and two Boston banks.

Over the past few years, DBEDC has been able to attract longer term funding and, more importantly, develop some income and financial independence through developer fees generated by its real estate subsidiaries. As it looks forward to the next stage of its growth, DBEDC will focus on three areas: housing development, economic development, and financial intermediation. The CDC is, therefore, strengthening its economic development activity and establishing a community-based financial service entity.

The strategy is to undertake several smaller residential and commercial projects while expanding the range of credit services and to initiate one large-scale housing development per year, which will generate the fee revenue needed to support other initiatives. This combination will ensure DBEDC's long-term sustainability and foster its growth as it seeks to fulfill its mission statement: "Access resources to meet community needs."

CDCs recognize that their effectiveness depends on their ability to interface with municipal authorities, network with intermediary NGOs and access local private resources. However, in order to achieve sustainable community development, both money and expertise must get passed down from public agencies and large NGOs to the community-based organizations. A supportive institutional framework creates an enabling environment for CDCs to function while building up their technical capacity, fund raising capabilities, and self-reliance. In most developing countries, this supportive framework is highly inadequate or non-existent. Municipalities are increasingly called upon to shoulder the burden of promoting community based organizations and providing them with the support and incentives they need to function.

Volunteer Groups as Catalysts for Community Wide Action

In socially heterogeneous and economically distressed areas, civic groups do not emerge spontaneously. Concerted public and private efforts and sustained assistance are needed to nurture their development. Reflecting on her work in Lima, Jeanine Anderson outlines the evolutionary stages of the few Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) that become significant actors at the Municipal level. Following the consolidation of a number of successful small initiatives, the PVO establishes links to the municipality and other organizations to access resources and increase the scope and efficiency of its operations. It then starts to gradually expand its services and outreach efforts.

The Rainbow Initiative, Lima District In November 1992, in the Comas district of Lima, Peru, 14 organizations cooperatively created a committee to defend the rights of children: the Multisectoral Committee for the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of Boys and Girls in Comas (COMUPRODENICO). Women-led volunteer groups, the driving force in support of children's rights and family welfare, coalesced in the 80's to fight hunger in their neighborhoods. The number of collective kitchens grew from 100 in 1983 to 6,000 in 1993.

Women's organizations are valuable and effective catalysts for community action. CESIP, a non-government organization with its main concerns revolving around the family, was the prime mover to create COMUPRODENICO. It convened a participatory workshop with Comas District civic leaders to develop a consensus regarding critical issues affecting children that could be addressed through sustained joint efforts. A formal agreement for inter-institutional cooperation was drawn between ten civic organizations, two national NGOs, a State institute and the municipality. A democratic local government with elected representation at the district level, could not ignore the hardships endured by its constituents. The initiative clearly moved beyond immediate subsistence concerns to quality of life issues which necessitate a shift from short term activities to longer term cooperative action. Children's issues offer excellent points of community engagement because of the ease and speed with which consensus can be reached on problems and objectives. Indeed, COMUPRODENICO has survived political upheavals and changes in organizational structures and programs at both the central and local government levels.

The Rainbow office was established to address the issues of mistreatment, abuse and abandonment. It is a difficult and delicate mandate which requires mediators having intimate knowledge of the culture and the people. Rainbow is COMUPRODENICO's most important project. It was founded in December 1992. Rainbow's mission extends further than solving the cases brought to it; it works to bring the community into recognizing and preventing the problems. The District has provided Rainbow a room in the District Administration Building to enhance its public accessibility. Perceived public backing has legitimized the program and gives it authority. The three professionals on the staff (a social worker, a lawyer, and a psychologist) are all provided by CESIP, as is the typewriter.

The Rainbow Defense Office has succeeded in maintaining a delicate balance between formal and informal processes. It relies on volunteers drawn from the community. They intervene with

discretion and mix counseling and persuasion with pressure through relatives and friends. The program balances between:

- The informality needed to mobilize and apply social pressure without having to legally document deviant behavior.
- The formality of having signed written agreements and official case files which are not considered legal documents but do set up a framework for following up on commitments and monitoring progress.

Formal links to the police and justice departments would be useful when mediation proves ineffective, but these are not in place at this time.

Funding continues to be a major concern. Basic programs like child protection cannot expand outreach until cost burdens are removed from families living in poverty. The Rainbow Office, like any other NGO sponsored activity operating at the poverty level, needs funds to cover administrative costs. At present, user families have to pay for all expenses incurred to provide services including basic case documentation. A volunteer work force, particularly one drawn from a predominantly lower-income community, is not stable. The women need to earn a living which results in high volunteer attrition and turnover rates.

COMUPRODENICO recently adopted a statute making it an independent legal association. It will take a central role in developing and administering a Children and Youth Center sponsored by the Comas district government. This decision reflects the District's more active role as a working member of the Committee and is a clear indicator of the District's faith in the Committee's effectiveness.

Long term sustainability would require COMUPRODENICO to raise funds to enable the Rainbow Office to ensure the continuity of its current operations, introduce new services and experiment with innovative approaches. An equitable sharing of costs between users and the society at large would enable this creative initiative to fulfill its potential as an agent of change and development at the community level.

Neighborhood Improvement Associations

Delivering services to marginalized groups is different from building mechanisms to integrate them in the economic and institutional structures which directly or indirectly affect their lives. Both approaches are legitimate and both are needed. In all cases, the participation of the population and the ability to meet their real needs are the key to success. The major differences arise from the interrelationships between process and products underlying the two approaches.

Service delivery is a product oriented activity. Institutional frameworks highlight responsibilities, lines of authority, and procedures. Programs are defined by consultation and justified in terms of cost effectiveness. The community based approach to development is a process-oriented activity to engage the energies of people and support their strategies for self improvement. Institutional frameworks highlight linkages among the different groups whose actions can affect development in

the neighborhood. Implementation relies on mobilization, capacity building and empowerment. Programs are defined through negotiation and consensus building and justified in terms of resource availability.

The Ehlal Community Improvement Initiative, Cairo Working with Dr. Wafaz Abdalla, the Unit for Housing and Urbanization developed a training program in 1992 funded by the Ford Foundation for municipal officials responsible for community outreach and the improvement of public open space. The program sought to develop their capacity to become catalysts and enablers of community based initiatives. It was tested in a dilapidated public housing project area, the Ehlal Housing Estate in Ain Shams District.

The 500,000 public housing units built in Egypt since 1960 were privatized in the late 1970's. Lacking organization and basic understanding of property management issues, residents were unable to upkeep estates already suffering from 20 years of delayed maintenance. In the face of an acute housing shortage, the residents eventually organized themselves to enlarge their living units by expanding the foot prints of buildings over their total height. Environmental conditions continued to deteriorate as residents closed off their balconies and avoided using public open spaces.

The municipal officials responsible for community outreach and the promotion of self-reliance activities rarely make site visits and limit their role to recording complaints and requests. The training program focused on outreach, mobilization and empowerment. It drew its inspiration from a self-reliance initiative by residents in the Khalafawy Housing Estate. Sustained over 10 years by able and motivated leaders, the initiative stimulated families to repair buildings, improve public spaces and build community facilities. Two engineers in the Public Open Space Division of Ain Shams District were trained to replicate this self-improvement effort in two housing blocks of the Ehlal housing estate.

The pilot project launched in 1993 demonstrated the potential of constructive public/private partnership. Three hundred fifty-five families living in the pilot area developed a framework for communal decision-making and elected leaders among themselves. They petitioned the District authorities to have a government warehouse that had been erected in the middle of the block removed and a broken sewer main repaired. They removed animal pens and mobilized resources to clean the large square enclosed by the blocks as well as the spaces between buildings in order to plant gardens with fruit trees.

Creative initiatives occur whenever members of the community become convinced of their ability to control, shape, and improve their own living environment. The Ehlal project stimulated residents in a third block to organize and seek technical assistance and support from the district. The leadership set up groups to control the illegal activities which tend to take place in ambiguous public spaces without a clear function. District officials are responding better to an organized community that demonstrates initiative, makes commitment to sharing costs and assumes responsibility for the maintenance of improvements.

As part of a long term project to upgrade the sewerage system, the District Authorities decided to give priority to those areas where residents participate in self-reliance improvement activities. A

condition for initiating new public works is the formation of a "Union of Owners" by residents in the housing blocks to help maintain the renovated sewerage system and the open spaces around buildings. Ehlal residents easily established an association with an elected board to enter into maintenance agreements with the District.

To institutionalize the process in the Governorate, the Unit has recommended a program to build up a permanent capacity within a specialized NGO and create mechanisms and procedures to replicate the process in other districts, utilizing a training of trainers approach and relying primarily on local resources.

It is interesting to note that in Cairo, as in Boston or Asuncion, open space projects turn out to be the best catalyst for getting residents involved in the management of their living environment. As the leadership and residents acquire skills and confidence, their initiatives broaden in complexity and scope. A leadership structure that truly represents the interests of the community is crucial to the continuity and sustainability of the improvement process.

The El Mourouj II Residents Association for the Promotion of Environmental Quality, Tunis
In the winter of 1987-88, a group of residents in El Mourouj II District of Tunis formed a committee to prevent further expansion of a landfill and contain its adverse environmental impacts on the neighborhood. Headed by Adel Azzabi, the group evolved into an association, El Mourouj II Residents Association ("L'Association des Habitants d'El Mourouj II"), focusing on improving and sustaining the quality of the environment in the district.

El Mourouj II was developed in the mid-70's as a planned new settlement on the outskirts of Tunis bordering on the marshes. When the first residents moved to the site in 1987, the municipal landfill had expanded in an increasingly uncontrolled fashion, threatening El Mourouj and three neighboring settlements with stench, smoke, infestations of insects and rodents. Scavengers moved in and around the dump.

The residents committee came together initially in 1982, growing out of a housing cooperative for the project area. During the winter of 1987-1988, heavy rains impeded access to the disposal site and truckloads of solid waste were dumped on the main road. Alarmed residents formed groups to discuss the deteriorating situation. They signed petitions and contacted the news media. They organized and took their grievances to the highest level of government, submitting a petition to the President of the Republic. The hazards created by indiscriminate disposal of solid waste constituted a catalyst that sensitized the residents and sharpened their awareness of the links between environmental degradation, sanitation, health and the quality of life as it affects them in their homes.

The committee changed its name, formalized its structure and registered as a separate NGO, the El Mourouj II Residents Association directed by an elected board of 11 members. The priority short term objectives focused on the mobilization of residents to address the pressing environmental hazards generated by the landfill. The long term objectives focused on participation in the improvement of the living environment.

In September 1991, the Association met with the Mayor of Tunis and pressed the government to take concrete action. The entire dumping ground, covering 100 hectares, was sprayed to control insect populations. Municipal employees and cleaning equipment were mobilized. The Association then went to the Minister of Housing to request that central authorities address the environmental problems plaguing the settlement which had been planned and developed by the Housing Real Estate agency under the Ministry's umbrella. A visit by the President of the Republic on November 3 was followed by an order from the Council of Ministers directing the Ministry and the Municipality to clean up the landfill and confine the dumping grounds to the 16 hectares originally allotted for this purpose.

The start of the public works marked a major victory for the Association. Vacant apartments were filled and construction of unfinished dwellings resumed. Residents have become more involved in the Association's activities. They have increased their financial support and formed citizen groups to address other community-wide concerns. The Association's headquarters provides a meeting place for the affiliated civic groups referred to as "syndics." The range of environmental improvements is being continually expanded. It now covers such diverse activities as landscaping and tree planting, improving roads, developing recreational facilities, and operating a recycling program. The Association is adamant about keeping its outreach and activities sharply focused on environmental issues. Nevertheless, it cannot avoid becoming involved in pressing social and educational needs, including training programs for unemployed youths and support groups for women heads of households.

Today the Association seeks to establish working relations with other Tunisian and foreign NGOs. It recognizes the need for cooperation with elected representatives and mayors and appreciates the benefits to be derived from collaboration with local authorities. To pursue its ambitious mandate, El Mourouj II Residents Association has defined guidelines and objectives for future development, reasserting its role as the major driving force in sustaining the quality of life in the community. It will establish a social center to serve as a focus for gatherings and events, outreach and educational activities and promote citizen participation in the administration of the district. Having successfully fought off a threat that undermined their well-being as families and their survival as a community, the residents of El Mourouj II are ready to take on new challenges in their quest to improve the quality of life in their district. The Association has matured and learned to move from confrontation with central and local authorities to creating links and opportunities for collaboration.

Public/Private Partnership for Community Improvement and Development

The legitimacy which successful community-based groups acquire allows them to interface with municipalities and other government agencies on the basis of complementarity of roles and a full partnership in the development process. Paralleling this trend, cities have been redefining their role to strategically invest resources and build up the physical and social infrastructure of distressed neighborhoods in collaboration with community-based groups. In France, the United Kingdom and many other countries, central agencies are involved in the revitalization process providing funding and technical support directly to the community or indirectly through local government structures.

At the cornerstone of these partnership programs is a three step process;

1. The development of a shared vision of stabilization and revitalization between the city and the community through a planning process which defuses contentious relations between residents and public authorities.
2. The creation of a partnership committee made up of civic and business associations, churches, NGOs, and other institutions having a stake or an interest in the neighborhood.
3. Reaching an agreement between public authorities, the business sector and the civic groups spelling out mutual responsibilities and commitments made the partners to carry out the plan. These agreements can be more formal, signed documents which may or may not be legally binding, or more informal community arrangements which may provide the foundation for the future formalization of constructive partnerships.

Lublin's Neighborhood Partnership Initiative, Poland: the Municipality as a Catalyst for Community-Based Activities In 1990, Ewa Kipta of the Urban Planning Unit of the City of Lublin initiated a participatory planning process to engage residents in the development of their districts. Her initiative received strong backing from the City Architect and the support of the City President. Dwindling central transfers and tight budgets necessitated the mobilization of community based resources to improve the urban environment; a cutting edge concept in Poland for both the city planners and the affected population.

The new approach was initiated in two lower-income districts, Bronowice and Kosminek which encompass a broad range of housing types: owner-occupied and rental, formal and informal. Since the districts were designated as an urban renewal site, residents were denied access to infrastructure. They could not even connect to existing networks, on the grounds that all existing housing was "temporary" pending demolition and many houses fronting on serviced streets have continued to rely on public wells. Repairing buildings was also prohibited, except for major roof leaks. This state of affairs lasted over 30 years resulting in resentment and distrust of municipal authorities which the urban planning teams have had to overcome to build a pragmatic working relationship between the city and the communities.

In Bronowice, the size of the site dictated an outreach strategy that would not entail visits to individual households. Every family was invited to participate and express its views. Although only 10% of distributed questionnaires were returned, they played an important role in building trust. They signaled to the residents a change in the public authorities' attitude and made them aware of the

role they could play in shaping the future of their neighborhood. Regularly scheduled public meetings were held to discuss issues openly and frankly. Motivated residents on each street became the link between the city and the community.

The community planning process has required an extensive and sustained outreach effort over the past two years. The plans for both Bronowice and Kosminek were approved by the City Council in December 1993; this has regularized the status of unauthorized buildings. Residents feel secure from both displacement and challenges to their right of occupancy. The Act for Support through Local Investment, passed in January 1994, commits the City to support the upgrading process through public/private sharing of infrastructure costs. Residents along each street designate representatives who negotiate with the City regarding the required improvements. Under the cost sharing agreement, the municipality covers 50% of the cost of water, sewerage and power lines, 70% of the cost of road and sidewalks, 100% of the cost of drainage and street paving. The municipal budget devoted to the Program has increased steadily from 3.8% in 1992 to 9.5% in 1994.

Young people who had left the site are returning to family real estate holdings that have become valuable assets. Multi-generational families are being reconstituted in houses where elderly parents had been living on their own for decades. Families who came to the area for the sole purpose of getting relocation apartments are investing in renovation and expansion of their premises. Local craftsmen, after years of repression, have emerged as entrepreneurs, establishing micro-enterprises and commercial activities. The built environment is being rehabilitated and renovated by enabling families to utilize their full productive capacities.

Luhlin has introduced participatory processes as an operational strategy in the municipality to foster rehabilitation and upgrading of the living environment at the neighborhood level. The City and the residents have gained considerable experience in promoting local initiatives. They are now able to structure an interface formalizing the partnership between them. The challenge lies in the transition from project to program. The partnership between municipality and community must be institutionalized so that it is no longer dependent exclusively on the goodwill and personalities of an elected official or a technocrat. This concern over sustainability and continuity looms large in the agenda of reform-minded mayors.

Adjamé's "Comités de développement de quartier": Creating a Capacity for Sustainable Community Based Development, Abidjan Adjamé's present mayor, Dembélé Lassina, first elected in 1985, has launched one of the most creative community based initiatives in West Africa. The transfer of administrative powers to elected mayors and municipal councils in Abidjan's "communes," has injected new vitality into urban management. Given the hardships caused by structural adjustment, the mayor has opted to experiment with innovative approaches to mobilize the energies and resources of local communities and channel their efforts towards improving their living conditions and economic situation.

Focusing on unemployment, poverty and environmental degradation, he established in 1988 neighborhood committees, referred to as "Comité de développement de quartier" (CDQ) to engage residents in the promotion of social, economic and cultural development. By 1990, eight CDQ's were operational. Today, Adjamé's 19 neighborhoods all have CDQ's. Membership in the CDQ is

open to all adult residents. Decision making is vested in the general assembly of members; policy formulation in the council of overseers appointed by the mayor; and implementation in the executive board with 5 elected members and ex-officio representation from community groups, the municipal council and the majority political party.

In Adjamé, no state aid is forthcoming to support community based initiatives while extreme poverty precludes reliance on volunteer workers. The municipality nurtures, supervises, and builds up the capacities of CDQs to initiate and sustain improvement programs. CDQs have taken an active role in:

- Street cleaning and garbage collection;
- Security services;
- Commercial enterprises including operating public fountains, stores, sports facilities, and public latrines;
- Small infrastructure projects such as road improvement, maintenance of drains and street lighting; and
- Social services including literacy campaigns and assistance to poor or abandoned children and the integration of the handicapped in local economic activities.

When they were first set up, the nineteen CDQs received from the Commune income generating assets and seed capital to cover start up operating expenses. Transferred assets include privatized public facilities such as public latrines and water fountains which can be operated at a profit as well as shops in markets built by the Commune which can be rented out. The CDQs are expected to generate their own revenues and fund their activities through the share of net profits they derive from user fees for the services they provide - such as security, sanitation and garbage collection and income from commercial leases and operations.

Beyond the seed grant, roughly equal to one month's operation, CDQs do not receive subsidies from the Commune of Adjamé. In a predominantly residential area, user fees account for over 85% of CDQ revenues. In commercial or mixed-use zones, total revenues are higher, by a factor of two to three. User fees account for 65%, leases for 10-15% and permit fees for 10%. Wealthy residents and community leaders usually donate furnishings and equipment for CDQ headquarters and cash contributions to cover operating deficits.

CDQs have no difficulties collecting fees for garbage removal, but this is not the case for street sweeping. Residents do not pay enough to adequately compensate the street sweepers and marginal shopkeepers complain they are overtaxed. The security service is quite popular and cross subsidizes street sweeping. Because of the revenues they provide, commercial facilities are the CDQ's most prized assets. Two CDQs manage sport stadiums: they rent them out for events and use them as an overnight parking lot. CDQ contribution to infrastructure maintenance ranges from pothole repair to major street improvements when heavy rainfall causes severe soil erosion of unpaved roads. In general, drainage ditches, grading and compacting are major activities; when CDQs are unable to take on the task, residents may do so on their own.

Adjamé is launching two new community-based programs. The first is a Health CDQ (CDQ Santé), which will be an independent organizational structure. The goal is to create a health center in each of the 19 neighborhoods. The first health center opened in September 1994. The Commune has paid for the renovation of an existing building and bought medical equipment. It will also pay the cost of building rent and the cost of supplies for the first few months of operation. The CDQ Santé will hire young medical school graduates awaiting the opening up of internship appointments. The health center will charge for visits to the doctor and paramedical staff at approximately 1/10th the rate currently charged by the public hospital and the private clinics. To balance its budget, the Center plans to buy pharmaceutical supplies from the Health Ministry and resell them at a markup.

The second new initiative combines micro-incubators and training programs to encourage young Ivorians to start their own commercial enterprises. In the initial phase, 40 young people will be trained in operating businesses. A retail store established in each CDQ will be operated by the trainees. The underlying premise is that they can accumulate sufficient savings to establish their own businesses. This is the first initiative which entails subsidy beyond seed capital from the Commune. The Mayor considers the subsidy an investment in human resources that is critical to the sustainability of Adjamé economic development.

CDQs provide a culturally adapted institution for partial empowerment in a situation of deprivation and economic hardship. They are enabling residents to make choices and improve their living environment. They have been nurtured, controlled and supervised by the municipality. During his second term in office, the Mayor has been restructuring the governance of the CDQs to empower them and give them greater autonomy. Legally they will become "associations reconnues d'utilité publique." Their new status will enable them to access funds directly from central agencies, intermediary NGOs and other sources. Paralleling this evolution, the commune is changing the way it oversees their operation. The old framework consisted of two committees: the CDQ commission affiliated with the City Council and the Council of CDQ Presidents under the Mayor's chairmanship. The new framework establishes three committees: the Monitoring Committee which oversees the management of CDQs, the Standing Council of CDQ Presidents which coordinates their activities and the Projects Office which provides them with technical assistance in developing proposals, seeking funds and implementing projects. In general, CDQ presidents appreciate the wider powers and increased independence resulting from their new status, but are apprehensive as to the degree of self-reliance it entails. On his part, the Mayor views this evolution as a fundamental step towards building sustainability in the community-based development process he has institutionalized.

Concluding Remarks

Carrying complex urban issues to the community level is no easy task. Successful outreach, mobilization and organization efforts are based on the family as the building block and the neighborhood as the first functional tier of an inclusionary participative structure that extends to the municipal government. An interface that reaches out to lower income families must build on the informal processes and networks which structure their lives. It must open up a range of opportunities to create points of engagement for the integration of marginalized groups in the community development process. It must foster focused activities which can become catalysts for the mobilization of residents, the emergence of civic leadership and the coalescence of public/private partnerships.

There are striking similarities in the issues faced by municipalities as they engage in productive dialogues with communities, initiate participatory planning and management processes and structure efficient and sustainable interfaces for public/private cooperation. Similarities of concerns should not obscure major differences in strategies and mechanisms.

In the more affluent countries, well-developed institutional frameworks offer an array of programs that channel resources to support community based initiatives. The challenge is for the city and the community organization to learn to structure creative financing packages enabling them to access funding, diversify activities and maximize the leveraging potential of public and private inputs.

In poorer countries, municipalities can neither rely on central transfers nor on international aid to provide steady resource streams. Community based initiatives must be funded out of locally generated public and private resources. The challenge is for the city and the community to devise creative strategies to mobilize these resources. Sustainable organizational structures capable of managing the array of activities required to meet local needs have to be institutionalized in order to provide a framework affordable to both the municipality and the community that eventually must take charge of activities which support and shape its development.

In the face of shrinking budgets and stiff competition for available funds, community organizations in the richer nations will have to put greater emphasis on mobilization of community resources. In the less affluent nations globalization of the economy, market reforms and institution building are leading to the emergence of more elaborate systems linking public and private actors. Local governments and community groups must learn to operate within this more sophisticated framework. In redefining their respective roles, they will have to put greater emphasis on networking and financial packaging in order to tap resources available outside their locality. As concepts underlying their operational strategies converge, local entities will increasingly draw on and learn from ideas and experiences across nations, regions and continents.

In this perspective, an interface between municipality and community that nurtures and supports the development of human resources and build up the capacity of institutions to deliver to families the inputs they need to improve their lot will make the most valuable contribution to sustainable community based development, environmental improvement and the development of a civil society.

**COMMUNITY BASED DEVELOPMENT
EXPERIENCES ACROSS CITIES**

PART II

CASE STUDIES SYNOPSIS

CASE STUDY

**SUCCESSFUL INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF
COMMUNITY BASED DEVELOPMENT
IN THE COMMUNE OF ADJAMÉ**

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Dembélé Lassina

**Maire, commune d'Adjamé
Mairie d'Adjamé
03 B.P. 238
Abidjan
Tel.: 225 22 04 96**

Coulibaly Seydou

**chef du bureau des Activités
extra municipales
secrétaire permanent des CDQ
Mairie d'Adjamé
Tel.: 225 224 317**

Diabate Ibrahima

**conseiller Municipal
Président du Comité PDCI-RDA
Williamsville 1
B.P. 75 Bingerville
Tel.: 225 30 31 28**

Successful Institutionalization of Community Based Development in the Commune of Adjamé, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Adjamé's present mayor, Dembélé Lassina, first elected in 1985¹, has launched one of the most creative community based initiatives in West Africa. In a context of dramatic declines in income, civil unrest and changing political structures, crisis management of cities in sub-Saharan Africa is occurring within an institutional framework suffering from imbalances and ambiguities. The transfer of administrative powers to the elected mayors and municipal councils in Abidjan's different districts, referred to as "communes," has injected new vitality into urban management. Communes set their own priorities for capital and operating expenditures, raise revenues, and implement small scale works. Given the hardships caused by structural adjustment, the mayor has opted to experiment with innovative approaches to mobilize citizens and generate resources locally.

Background

Adjamé is one of Abidjan's oldest urban districts and is also the city's present commercial core. It has the largest markets in the city accounting for 25% of all mercantile activities. Adjamé is also Abidjan's principal transportation node where regional highways intersect and the interurban and suburban bus terminals are located. A wide range of public facilities are strung alongside its Boulevard and major streets. The current population of Adjamé is estimated at approximately 220,000, about half of whom have immigrated from neighboring countries in search of employment opportunities.

During the economic boom of the 1970's, rents in Adjamé rose by a factor of six. Despite the recession, real estate values continue to rise and are roughly three times the Abidjan average. The deepening recession has been diverting business from upscale shops in the CBD to the popular markets, contributing to the spillover of formal and informal activities into Adjamé. Today, along major roads three to four story buildings are appearing as "modern" commercial development and gentrification occurs. Commercial taxes, the mainstay of municipal finance which account for over 50% of revenue have increased sharply.

The impact of infrastructure improvements on living conditions have been mitigated over the years by densification. Absentee landlords refrain from making any improvements to their premises, while owner occupants confine improvements to their own premises. The vast majority of residents still continue to purchase water from vendors and use overloaded on-site waste water disposal systems in areas where densities reach 800-1000 persons per hectare. Services provided to lower income communities by the privately operated water supply, electricity and solid waste collection services are highly inadequate. The bulk of the refuse is not collected and ends up on the road bed or in drainage ditches. It is hardly surprising that sanitation ranks highest among pressing problems in the poorer neighborhoods.

¹The municipal Council is the governing body of the commune. It consists of 46 members which are elected as a slate (representing a political party). The Council chooses the mayor, although their choice is known prior to the election. The campaign, therefore, is as much an election for mayor as an election for the Municipal Council.

The shortage of public resources prompted the mayor to organize an action group to implement programs for the improvement of living conditions in Adjamé's neighborhoods and to mobilize residents to actively participate in these efforts which focused primarily on urgent health and sanitation issues. The Comité d'Actions Sanitaires et Sociales, a 25 member group represented the political and social leadership and emphasized the interests and concerns of women and youths. Ten members were from the Association des Femmes Ivoiriennes (AFI) and another 10 from the Union des Jeunes d'Adjamé (UJA). The committee's most successful initiative has been the street sweeping project for the main commercial artery and the immediate vicinity of the central market, a major generator of garbage and trash. The project was initiated in October, 1988. The team consists of 24 women to sweep the streets and collect the refuse and 16 men to convey the collected garbage to the dumpsters and supervise the work. Team members are remunerated through contributions collected from merchants in the market area. About 2000 businesses pay this remittance. Attempts to replicate this project in the residential quarters have been less successful. The contributions collected from households simply fail to provide for adequate remuneration of team members.

The committee's activities demonstrated the benefits of citizen participation but also brought to light the need for outreach at the neighborhood level. The deepening recession entailed that residents had to assume primary responsibility for the improvement and management of their neighborhood. To underscore this new strategy and redefine its role as the support group for a new layer of grass roots organizations, the committee changed its name from "Comité" to "Groupement"(GASS).

Adapting the French model he observed in Marseilles to local conditions in Adjamé, the Mayor established in 1988 neighborhood committees, referred to as "Comité de développement de quartier" (CDQ) to engage the energies of residents for the promotion of social, economic and cultural development. Focusing on unemployment and poverty as the root causes of social ills and environmental degradation, their strategy is to promote economic activities and provide jobs for the unemployed. In the process they try to alleviate the most pressing environmental and social problems in the neighborhood.

CDQs have taken an active role in organizing teams to undertake badly needed sanitation tasks. For these services they charge a fee which generates revenue to compensate the work. They provide crews to pump out sewage tanks in housing compounds, clean open drain ditches and sweep streets.

By 1990, eight CDQs were operational. Others were in the process of being organized. Today Adjamé's 19 neighborhoods all have CDQs. Some are very dynamic and innovative. This is the case of the Williamsville II CDQ serving one of the poorest districts in the city where infrastructure is lacking, "bidonvilles" and informal settlements abound, and sanitation is a major challenge.

CDQ Organization

The original structure of the CDQ is interesting in that decision making is vested in the general assembly, policy formulation in the council of overseers appointed by the mayor and implementation in the executive board with five elected members and ex officio representation from local officials of GASS, AFI, UJA, the Municipal Council and the Party.

Today, the administrative structure is more representative and the process somewhat more democratic. In order to be eligible to vote, residents must pay a small fee of 25 cents. There are around seven thousand active members of the CDQs in Adjamé. The CDQ organization varies slightly from one neighborhood to the other but it always includes the two basic components: the president and the executive council (bureau executif), whose members all must be residents of the area. The president is elected to a three year term. The executive council is composed of at least one or more vice-presidents, a general secretary and assistant general secretary, a treasurer and assistant treasurer, plus members at large. None of the council members receive a salary. Only the hired staff, a guard or clerk, gets a monthly stipend. This fact is not well known; and CDQ council members are often perceived as employees of the commune. The additional members of the council are usually local elders, civic leaders, merchants and "wisemen." Sometimes there is a separate council of "wisemen."

Restructuring the Interface between the Commune and the CDQs

During his second term in office, the Mayor has been restructuring the governance of the CDQs to empower them and give them greater autonomy. The CDQs are to change status soon. They will become "associations reconnues d'utilité publique." This will allow them to access grants and other categories of funds directly from central agencies, intermediary NGO's or other sources. Paralleling this evolution, the commune is changing the way it oversees their functioning. The old framework consisted of two committees: the CDQ commission (Commission des CDQ) affiliated with the City Council, and the Council of CDQ Presidents (Conseil des Presidents de CDQ) under the Mayor's chairmanship. The framework establishes three committees:

1. Monitoring Committee (Comité de Suivi) works most directly with CDQs and oversees their management. It will be composed of the mayor, two members of the Municipal Council, two CDQ Presidents and a General Secretary.
2. Communal Executive Council of the CDQs (Bureau Executif Communal des CDQ) is the standing committee of CDQ Presidents. It coordinates the activities of the CDQs and proposes projects to the Municipal Council through the Projects Bureau.
3. The Projects Bureau (Guichet Unique des Projets) will collect, analyze and prepare the proposals submitted by the CDQs for presentation to the Municipal Council, the central government and funding agencies. It is envisioned, however, that individual CDQs could also prepare projects and seek funding independently. The Office will provide them with technical assistance to package their proposals. The Commune hopes that the central government will provide the Bureau with experts and in general encourage CDQs to draw on existing expertise in the Municipal Council.

CDQ Activities and Finances

The CDQs are involved in many different activities, to varying degrees of success. These include:

- Street cleaning and garbage collection;
- Security services;

- Commercial enterprises, including running public fountains, stores, sports facilities, and public latrines;
- Small infrastructure improvements, such as road improvement and maintenance of drains and street lighting; and
- Social services, like literacy campaigns, helping poor or abandoned children and the handicapped.

When they were first set up, the nineteen CDQs received seed capital from the Commune in the form of cash contributions and physical plant. A total of three million CFA was allocated to them to open a bank account and initiate activities. The amount of the grant depended primarily on the population of the area and its relative wealth (the poorer areas received more).

The Commune also transferred to the CDQs privatized public facilities such as public latrines and fountains which can be operated at a profit and premises in the markets built by the Commune where small businesses could start up. These microenterprises retain the income generated from their operations and become self-financing. The sponsoring CDQ receives a share of net profits as working capital to fund new activities. CDQs have repeatedly requested authorization to manage the enterprises themselves. The mayor has encouraged them to refrain from doing so pointing to the higher efficiency of independent private entrepreneurs. The one latrine under CDQ management is inoperative due to litigation and few fountains return significant revenue due to the high fees and large deposit demanded by the SODECI, the water company. Having to rely on the resources they generate to finance their activities, CDQs have sought to diversify their revenues as well as their activities, given the limited amounts that can be derived from any one source. Revenues fall into two basic categories:

1. User fees for services delivered by the CDQ, such as security, sanitation and garbage collection.
2. Income from commercial leases and operations.

In a predominantly residential area, such as Indénie, user fees account for over 85% of CDQ revenues. In commercial or mixed use zones, such as Mairie II, revenues are higher by a factor of two to three. User fees account for 65%, leases for 10-15% and permits fees for 10%. Wealthy CDQ presidents and community leaders usually donate furnishings and equipment for CDQ headquarters, as well as cash contributions to cover operating deficits. Indénie's CDQ has received from its president a cash donation amounting to 10% of its revenues in addition to the rent free use of the premises it occupies, including utilities, office furniture and equipment, and a telephone line. Except for the start up seed capital, CDQs do not receive transfers from the commune of Adjamé. At this time, none of the 19 CDQs are subsidized through the municipal budget.

Street Cleaning and Garbage Collection

Depending on the neighborhood, the CDQ will either sweep the streets or collect garbage, or both. Garbage is collected from each household and brought to the collection station where the waste management company picks it up. In relatively well-off residential areas they do neither as the privately operated city services do the job. In the market areas, the Mairie II CDQ sweeps the streets

after the market closes at sunset. In the informal settlements of Williamsville II, the CDQ is unable to provide either service. The CDQs charge monthly fees of 10-25 CFA for street vendors, 400-500 CFA for small shops, and 1,000 CFA for larger stores. Households are charged according to the size of the dwelling they occupy: 250 CFA for 1-2 rooms, and 500 CFA for three or more rooms. Street sweepers or garbage collectors are paid 10,000 CFA/ month. At first, CDQs had no problem collecting fees. Today, they still have no problem with fees for garbage collection but do for street sweeping. In the market area, for example, shop owners complain that they are overtaxed and do not have sufficient revenues to meet these various exactions during a severe economic recession when people are curtailing purchases of goods and services. In the Mairie II CDQ area there are 1,000 stores of which 200 are vacant, which is an unprecedented situation. Of the 800 stores, only 250 pay street sweeping fees regularly.

The street sweepers are both young men and women. They are provided with uniforms, brooms and garbage carts. Williamsville II financed its initial purchase of the equipment in a creative manner. The CDQ asked the street sweepers and the security guards to forego one and a half months of their salaries, and used the fees it collected to pay for the equipment, along with some seed capital from the Commune.

Security

With the onset of the economic crisis, security has emerged as a major issue that the CDQs have felt compelled to address. Fees are collected from households and businesses and young men from the neighborhood are hired to patrol the streets and control access to the market area. The guards are given uniforms, a whistle, and a flashlight. They are paid 10,000 CFA per month. The fees that the CDQs charge are 200-500 CFA per month for businesses and 250-500 CFA for households.

The security service is quite popular and the funds collected initially were used to cross-subsidize the street sweeping activity. CDQ presidents complain that fees have become harder to collect, affecting the sustainability of the street sweeping activity. The new reluctance to pay is alternatively attributed to perception of safer streets, inadequate services or mismanagement.

Commercial Activities

The range of activities undertaken by CDQs depends on assets transferred to them as well as their locational advantages.

1. Public Latrines and Fountains

The current contracts of many public latrines are due to expire at the end of 1994. The CDQs are making a bid to take over their operation. They seek to do the same for public fountains. However, leases are still awarded by the Commune and there is no guarantee that CDQs will be authorized to do so by the City Council. The recent devaluation of the CFA has effected the feasibility of infrastructure and sanitation projects. The Mairie II CDQ, which has the major market located within its geographic boundaries, wants to build a large modern public latrine.

2. Commercial Facilities

Because of the revenues they provide, commercial facilities are the CDQs' most prized assets. The commune has given Mairie II a store which it leases out for 50,000 CFA/ month. In addition, it has received a one time fee of 1.5 million CFA. It is negotiating to lease space to open a café. The CDQ has recently acquired a small flour mill which it wishes to lease. Other CDQs lack Mairie II's strategic location, opportunity and infrastructure. The less endowed CDQs would like to buy chairs and awnings to rent out for special functions, despite the fact that they would be competing with private businesses offering similar services. Two CDQs have been awarded contracts to manage sports stadiums located in their territory which they lease out for events and use as an overnight parking lot. They are responsible for the management and maintenance of the facility but receive no funds from the Commune. One of the two stadiums is Adjamé's sports complex.

3. Infrastructure Construction and Maintenance

There is a keen awareness of urban infrastructure as a valuable capital asset for the residents, the CDQs and Adjamé. There is a general consensus that infrastructure must be maintained and valorized despite the curtailment of central transfers. The CDQ contribution ranges from pothole repair to major street improvement after heavy rainfall and the subsequent severe soil erosion of unpaved streets. The CDQs usually purchase fill material. The problem they have is finding the funds to pay for the rental machinery, particularly bulldozers and backhoes. SODECI, the private company that operates the water and sewerage services, has a regular maintenance schedule but it is not frequent enough to prevent blockages, given the common practice of dumping garbage in drains. CDQs complain that the SODECI does not respond to service calls. Open drain channels can be cleaned by the residents but underground sewers require specialized equipment that CDQs do not have.

The Habitat-Extension CDQ convinced the residents on the street where the new health center is located, to contribute money to hire a plumber in order to install a sewer line to channel water to the street. In the unserviced informal settlement of Williamsville II, the residents themselves, not the CDQ, built drainage ditches. Some CDQs, such as Habitat-Extension, have put in speed bumps which are very popular given the overwhelming predominance of pedestrians and the large number of children playing or walking in the streets.

New Activities

The commune of Adjamé is launching two new CDQ initiatives. The first is a Health CDQ (CDQ Santé), which will have an independent administrative structure. The goal is to create a health center in each of the 19 quarters, managed by a health CDQ, whose executive council will consist of an elected president, a doctor, the manager of the health center, a representative of the local CDQ, and a representative of the Mayor.

The first CDQ health center is at Habitat-Extension and will be opened on September 17, 1994. The Commune has paid for the renovation of an existing building, medical equipment, rent and supplies for the first few months of operation. The cost to the Commune is about 7 million CFA. Their hope is that the health center will be financially self-supporting. The CDQ health center will charge for the services of the doctor and paramedical staff approximately 1/10th of the rate currently charged by

the government hospital. Very few private clinics in Adjamé have doctors. Most are run by paramedical staff and lack basic equipment. Even there, the fees are unaffordable to lower income residents. Adjamé hopes that, at first, the fee for the nurse and the assistant will be covered by the state so that the CDQ would only have to pay minimum wages. After the first few months of operation, the fee structure, as well as the operating expenses will be reviewed to ensure financial viability. In the longer term, the Commune expects the health center to train paramedics on its own. It also anticipates that the CDQ will be able to buy pharmaceutical supplies from the Ministry and resell them with a 10% markup. At this time, the Commune does not have the capacity to finance health centers in other districts. However, it is developing a long term strategy to use the resources of all 19 centers to set up a health clinic.

The second new initiative combines micro incubators and training programs to encourage young Ivorians to start commercial enterprises, a sector they have overlooked, preferring to seek clerical jobs during the economic boom. In the initial phase, 40 young people will be sent to a three month training session on operating commercial businesses. A retail store will be established in each CDQ and will be operated by the trainees. The first will be located in CDQ Mairie I and will be run by two young persons from the neighborhood. It is expected that the young men and women will be compensated from sales revenue and will be able to establish their own businesses within a year or two. The CDQ store would then continue to be run by the next generation of students. Municipal backing has allowed the CDQ to find companies willing to supply merchandise to the store on credit. This economic development program is the first initiative which entails subsidy beyond seed capital from the Commune. It is considered an investment in human resources that is critical to ensure the future economic development of Adjamé.

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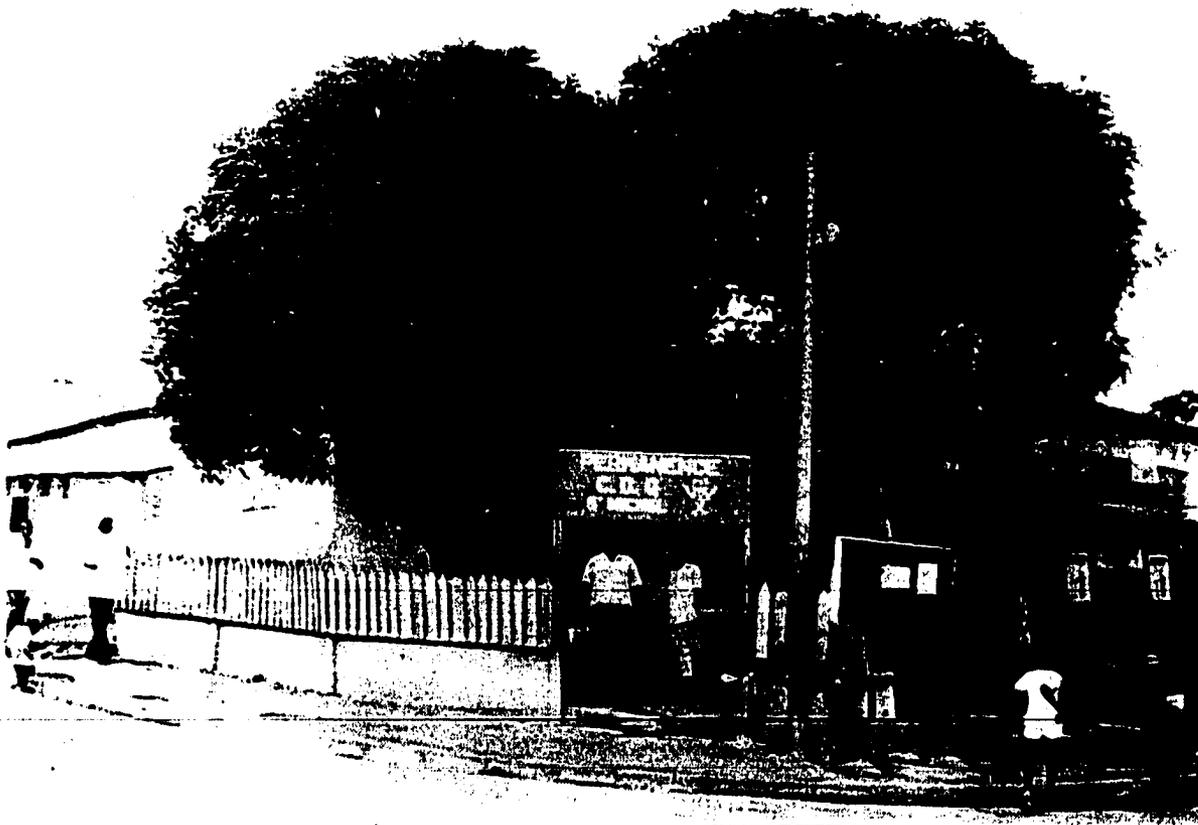
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TRANSPORT TERMINAL IN ADJAME

Fig. 1



ST MICHEL CDQ HEADQUARTERS

Fig. 2



SECURITY IN THE MARKET - CDQ INITIATIVE

Fig. 3



STREET SWEEPING INITIATIVE - MARIETHERESE CDQ

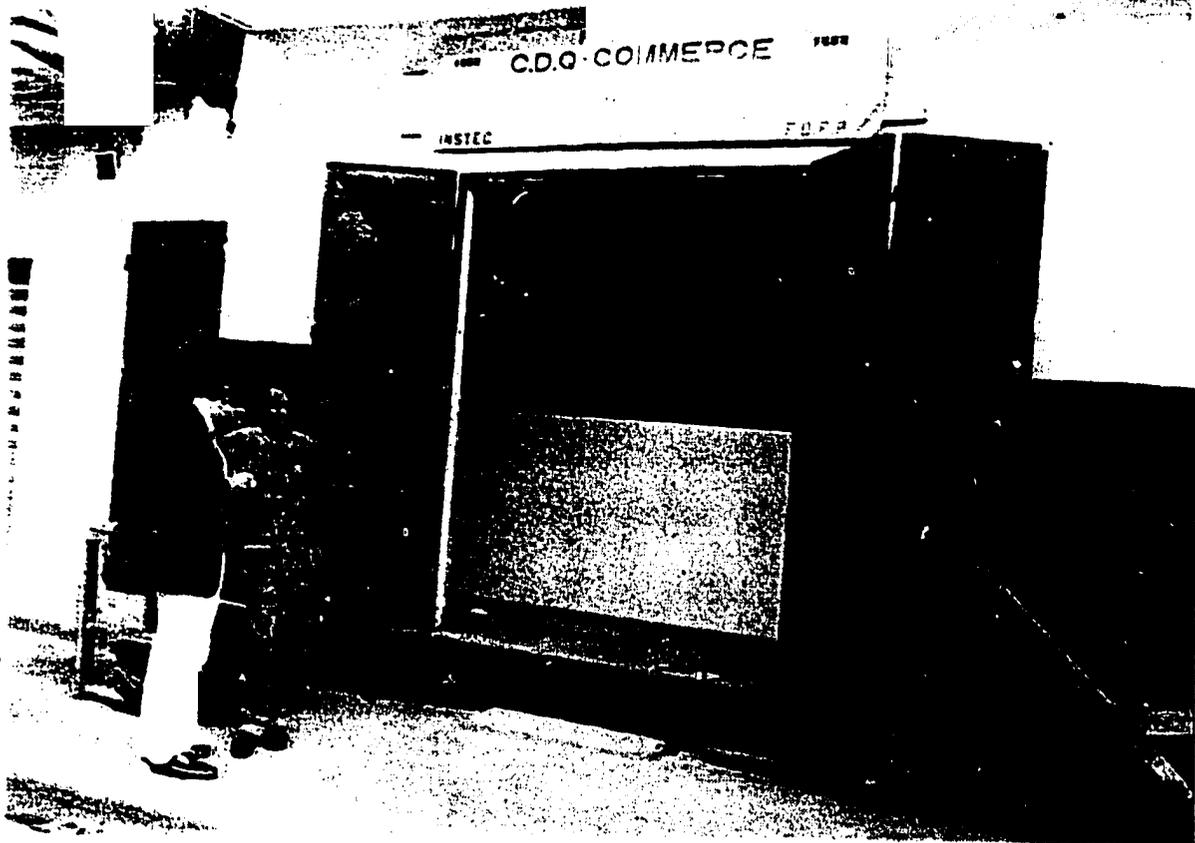
Fig. 4



NEWLY CONSTRUCTED DRAINAGE DITCH - AFTER Fig. 5



STREET WITHOUT DRAINAGE DITCH - BEFORE Fig. 6



NEW COMMERCIAL INITIATIVE-THE FIRST STORE

Fig. 7



NEW HEALTH PROJECT - CDQ HABITAT EXTENSION

Fig. 8

CASE STUDY

**AN EFFECTIVE MODEL FOR
COMMUNITY DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT:
DORCHESTER BAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Boston, Massachusetts, USA

David Knowles

**Executive Director
Dorchester Bay Economic
Development Corporation
594 Columbia Road
Suite 302
Dorchester, MA 02125
Tel.: 617-825-4200**

**An Effective Model for Community Driven Development:
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation
Boston, Massachusetts**

During the past decade, there has been considerable growth in the number and capability of community-based organizations. In Massachusetts, there are now more than 60 such organizations of which 26 are located in Boston. The Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC), under the dynamic leadership of its Executive Director David Knowles, has expanded and diversified its activities from an initial concentration on housing issues to a broad-based economic development agenda. DBEDC's creativity and organizational strength is reflected in its readiness to explore new approaches to neighborhood development and in the speed with which it builds up capacities in order to pursue successful strategies.

When operated efficiently and effectively and developed to its full potential, a Community Development Corporation (CDC) becomes an organizing force in the community and the primary contact point to network and access government, private enterprise, banking, etc. A successful CDC develops into a permanent institution that provides housing, supports businesses, creates jobs, and builds civic pride in the community. A key feature of CDCs lies in their ability to set up profitable subsidiaries and recycle the profits from housing, banking, retail, industrial, commercial, and other activities in order to grow and return profits to the community in the form of enhanced services.

The Organizational Structure of DBEDC

DBEDC was incorporated on August 3, 1979, through the efforts of three contiguous neighborhood civic associations (Columbia-Savin Hill, Jones Hill, Virginia-Monadnock) in recognition of the critical need for an organization to address the problems of economic disinvestment, the deterioration and abandonment of housing stock, the drastic decline in the area's only commercial center, a general lack of public works and services and the high unemployment levels which had plagued North Dorchester over the previous two decades. While the associations had compiled impressive records dealing with the area's social and civic problems, they lacked the resources necessary to attack the more complex economic issues of large-scale housing rehabilitation, commercial revitalization and job creation. The three sub-neighborhood organizations, along with the Columbia-Savin Hill Neighborhood Housing Services, jointly created a community development corporation, the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation.

The initial DBEDC Board of Directors was composed of 15 members, nine of whom were to be elected at-large from the general membership of community residents. The remaining six members were to be appointed by the three participating civic associations: the Columbia-Savin Hill Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. (CSHNHS), the City of Boston, and a representative of the business community. As a result of a controversy in the business community over whether their representative should come from the local business district or from one of the other developed commercial/industrial sections of the DBEDC service area; the business representative seat was never filled and later deleted from the by-laws. The elected Board members serve three-year staggered terms. Although never reflected in the by-laws, an informal tradition began with the founding of DBEDC that respects a balance among the elected seats so that roughly three seats are

filled by Columbia-Savin Hill residents, three seats by Jones Hill residents, and three seats by Virginia-Monadnock residents. This ensures adequate representation from the sub-neighborhood areas and maintains a balance among stable areas and areas of need.

From 1979 to 1989, all members of the Board of Directors were homeowners. However, in 1989 DBEDC became responsible for the ownership and management of 192 units of low-income rental housing with the assistance of the Boston Housing Partnership (BHP). After DBEDC helped to organize the tenants in these buildings, twenty-one tenants became general members of the DBEDC, bringing total membership to 160.

DBEDC Programs and Activities

1. Initial Economic Development Projects

DBEDC entered the arena of economic development at its 1979 founding with three projects that stretched into the mid-1980s. The first of these, a collaboration with the Community Development Finance Corporation (CDFC) to provide funding for a local waterbed manufacturing company, gave DBEDC its first exposure to the real world of business. Although the project was intended as a pass-through of CDFC funds directly to the manufacturer, DBEDC Board members monitored the progress of the waterbed maker to better understand the factors that would insure success. Despite the best efforts of management, consultants from CDFC and the DBEDC contribution, the company ultimately failed.

DBEDC's second and third economic development projects were focused on the Upham's Corner business district, whose severe decline in the late 1970s resulted in the loss of the neighborhood supermarket. DBEDC enlisted the services of professional consultants to develop guidelines for commercial revitalization and advise it as to the best implementation strategies. Following the consultant's advice, DBEDC did not try to purchase or redevelop the 96,000 sq. ft. market building for a new supermarket, because a configuration of the building simply did not lend itself to modern grocery store merchandising. Instead DBEDC acquired a neighboring vacant building and carefully renovated the structure for a smaller supermarket. A succession of private merchandisers eventually operated in the building but none were successful until DBEDC was able to attract the present tenant.

DBEDC's third economic development project was a building which had been mostly abandoned for nearly ten years. The late 1970s wisdom of private owners was that upper floors were a liability that was best managed by "mothballing" all but the street level commercial spaces. DBEDC found that there was a local demand for renovated upper-floor spaces, and formed a syndicated limited partnership to redevelop the whole building for mixed use occupancy, completing the project in 1985. The success of this project, which has maintained full occupancy and a healthy balance sheet, inspired new confidence in the commercial district that lasted into the 1990s, when the collapse of the real estate market in Boston led to the dramatic failure of the local bank. The loss of 100 jobs from the local economy further underscored the devastating impact of unemployment and declining real incomes on the commercial district. In response to this crisis, DBEDC again entered the arena of economic development/commercial revitalization.

2. Housing Projects

During the five years when housing dominated its development agenda, the DBEDC was the only non-profit developer serving North Dorchester. It provided and improved housing covering a range of ownership and rental accommodations designed to meet the needs of poorer families as well as to retain moderate-income residents in its service area. It purchased and rehabilitated abandoned residential properties and sold them to moderate income owner-occupants.

In 1981, it launched a Homesteading Program in cooperation with the City of Boston. The City channels federal community development block grant funds to the CDC in order to subsidize the cost of rehabilitating deteriorated, abandoned residential property. The rehabilitated units are then sold to owner occupants. From 1981 to 1987, DBEDC's Homesteading output of 15 buildings, comprising 37 units, made a significant impact in reversing the North Dorchester psychology of decline and disinvestment.

Beginning in April 1983, DBEDC put together a multi-unit rental housing renovation project funded through the Boston Housing Partnership (BHP), an intermediary NGO. From 1983 to 1991, a total of 12 buildings comprising 192 rental units were renovated at a cost of \$11.5 million. In 1992, building on this experience, DBEDC applied for and received a Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) to renovate 147 units in a package of 51 at-risk buildings. Renovation of the fully-occupied buildings were completed in December 1993 at a cost of \$10.4 million. It also developed a limited equity cooperative housing project comprising 38 units through the Boston Co-Op Initiative at a cost of \$6.5 million.

3. New Economic Development Projects

The Board of Directors of DBEDC have recognized that the objectives defined in the charter required an expansion of the definition of the community-based development process. This implied redirecting program resources to meet the changing needs of the community. DBEDC expanded its staff, and its budget to meet this new challenge. It launched a "Neighborhood Enterprise District" for the revitalization of its commercial district in partnership with the City and signed an "Enterprise Collaboration Agreement." The City's Neighborhood Enterprise Business Manager assigned to the district is working with the CDC to reuse vacant and underutilized buildings, and attract new businesses as anchors to the district. The manager puts prospective developers in touch with property owners, obtains loan guarantees from the City, works with banks on the financial packaging and coordinates between departments to obtain the necessary licenses and permits. A new anchor supermarket, a multi-ethnic grocery store, "America's Foodbasket" opened in December 1992 in DBEDC's supermarket building. Its success has helped change the image of Uphams Corner.

The CDC is now planning to take advantage of the soft real estate market to acquire key parcels for future development. Driving crime from the revitalized area is also a major concern, and the CDC is working with the Boston Police Department and its courts to keep repeat offenders off the streets. Through a collaborative agreement with the city, two creative women entrepreneurs have been able to offer community based armed security services to public agencies, NGOs, and private companies. The business employs 120 persons from the neighborhood.

Most recently DBEDC has launched an ambitious project to reestablish an industrial base in the district. It is working with the city, the state, and academic institutions to create an Enterprise Park for environmental technology, manufacturing, and training. The park would offer "build-to-suit" facilities and technical assistance to high-tech firms as well as traditional manufacturing activities and provide job training for adults and youths.

DBEDC is acquiring the site of a manufacturing plant closed down in 1987 to start the initial phase of the project. The city and the Electric Company are helping market the development and secure prospective tenants. Predevelopment financing is provided by the city, an intermediary NGO, and the community. Federal funds channeled through the State will provide equity grants. Permanent financing will be provided by the city and two Boston banks. The development of this 15 hectare site as an incubator for microenterprises and a small business park would be no small achievement for a CDC. As it looks forward to the next stage of its growth, the models of larger organizations that it could emulate have strong activity centers in three areas: housing development, economic development, and financial intermediation. DBEDC, therefore, is strengthening its economic development activity and establishing a community-based financial service entity.

Assessment of DBEDC's Experience

The conditions of the late 1970s and early 1980s which drew DBEDC to undertake economic development seemed less pressing during the regional real estate boom of the late 1980s. Once it subsided, disinvestment recurred and most of the economic issues of the late 1970s began to reappear. By the same token, during the boom, DBEDC and many other CDC's were drawn to housing development by publicly-funded programs that were designed to address an acute shortage of affordable housing. DBEDC gained experience through developing 432 housing units at a time when comparable resources to undertake economic development were unavailable. In practice, the CDC has had to shift emphasis among intervention areas in accordance with objectives and priorities set by agencies which can provide the necessary financial resources.

In the late 1970s, the inner-city economic development and commercial revitalization strategies which guided DBEDC were influenced by the failure of a neighboring CDC's effort to develop a supermarket. In that case, the CDC made the mistake of trying to operate the market itself. Their failure was cited for more than 10 years as the reason why inner-city supermarkets simply would not work, no matter who developed them. The neighboring CDC's failure destroyed their organization, whereas, by contrast, DBEDC was able to survive its supermarket development by limiting its risk. And while the result of DBEDC's supermarket was considered, over the years, to be somewhat lackluster, it is now apparent that DBEDC not only rescued the building but laid the foundation for the very successful current occupant, America's Foodbasket. In formulating economic development strategies, it is critical for CDCs to consider the longer-term perspective rather than addressing the immediate crisis without relating to larger-scale economic trends.

In an overwhelming majority of cases, the decline that inner-city commercial areas experience occurs over an extended period. Often, problem identification is restricted to short-term causes and effects, and solutions are reactive and focus on the immediate future. A majority of CDC's, as was the case for DBEDC, are created in response to these immediate threats and, as such, devote much effort to

reactive solutions. But over the course of DBEDC's operations, the evaluation of problems over extended periods of time has led it to define a series of proactive roles which have made it one of the most successful and sophisticated community-based organizations in the Boston area in spite of a high incidence of poverty and the physical deterioration of the neighborhoods it serves.

DBEDC's Interface with Government and Intermediary NGOs

DBEDC has established working relationships with multiple actors including the local community, government, intermediary NGOs, as well as the business, university, medical and philanthropic communities. This network of relationships is carefully nurtured in order to attract maximum resources to the community. All DBEDC activities are formulated, designed, and implemented as a participatory process with neighborhood residents.

In structuring a relationship with intermediary NGOs, DBEDC must determine which activities it wishes to undertake directly on behalf of the community and which should be undertaken by NGOs which can better access and channel resources to the community. DBEDC views its relationships with the community and intermediary NGOs as critical and thus strives to structure them to highlight mutual benefits.

The DBEDC executive directors and members of the board, are skilled negotiators who keep transactions as transparent as possible to nurture mutual trust. This skill is important as the CDC seeks to develop more complex projects that often involve commercial and industrial properties which have to be held for prolonged periods and transferred incrementally.

Planning the Future for DBEDC

Using a Strategic Plan to Select Projects and Programs In response to concerns expressed by board members (who are mostly community residents) regarding the increasing diversity and complexity of DBEDC activities and projects, a Planning Committee of the Board of Directors was established in 1992. The definition of the organization's mission statement was given priority.

After weighing the alternatives, the Board members settled on a policy to "Access Resources to Meet the Community Needs" and only then proceeded to consider operational strategies. Policy decisions regarding projects are taken with reference to the strategic plan and the necessity to balance resources and needs in light of the mission statement.

DBEDC Long-Term Organizational and Financing Strategies Having established a strong track record in housing and economic development, DBEDC is considered to be one of the most sophisticated CDCs in the Boston Area. DBEDC remains committed to its purpose and mission of addressing the problems of economic disinvestment, unemployment and underemployment, deterioration of the housing stock, and a lack of services. DBEDC's focus shifted, at the beginning of the 1990s, from physical development of housing and commercial buildings to a comprehensive development strategy, encompassing physical development, economic development, and a social development component which stems from tenant organizations.

Over the past few years, DBEDC has been able to develop some financial independence:

- Approximately 60% of its ongoing revenue has been staff cost fees on construction projects;
- It has completed several large projects on time and within budget, entitling the CDC to collect a developer fee from each of the projects;
- It has established a financial management/asset management division with capacity to handle its planned organizational expansion. In order to maintain this position, DBEDC must undertake one major development project per year. The financial cushion which has been accumulated from past developer fees serves as a reserve to mitigate the impacts of downturns in the regional economy. It also serves as seed money to finance the CDC's future growth strategy.

A portion of DBEDC's earned developer fees are to be reinvested as seed money to capitalize a new business revolving loan fund. In addition, DBEDC has approached national NGOs to obtain funding, and has received preliminary approval of \$250,000 in loan capital. It is now seeking grants to support staff to initiate accompanying credit programs for low- and moderate-income clients.

DBEDC's strategy for growth and development in the immediate future is to undertake several smaller residential and commercial projects while expanding its range of credit services. Simultaneously, the strategy calls for initiating a large-scale housing development which will generate the fee revenue needed to support other initiatives. The combination of a well-structured continuum of projects, together with organizational integration and access to resources within the broader institutional framework, will ensure DBEDC's long-term sustainability and foster its growth.

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DERELICT MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING, DORCHESTER BAY - BEFORE

Fig. 9

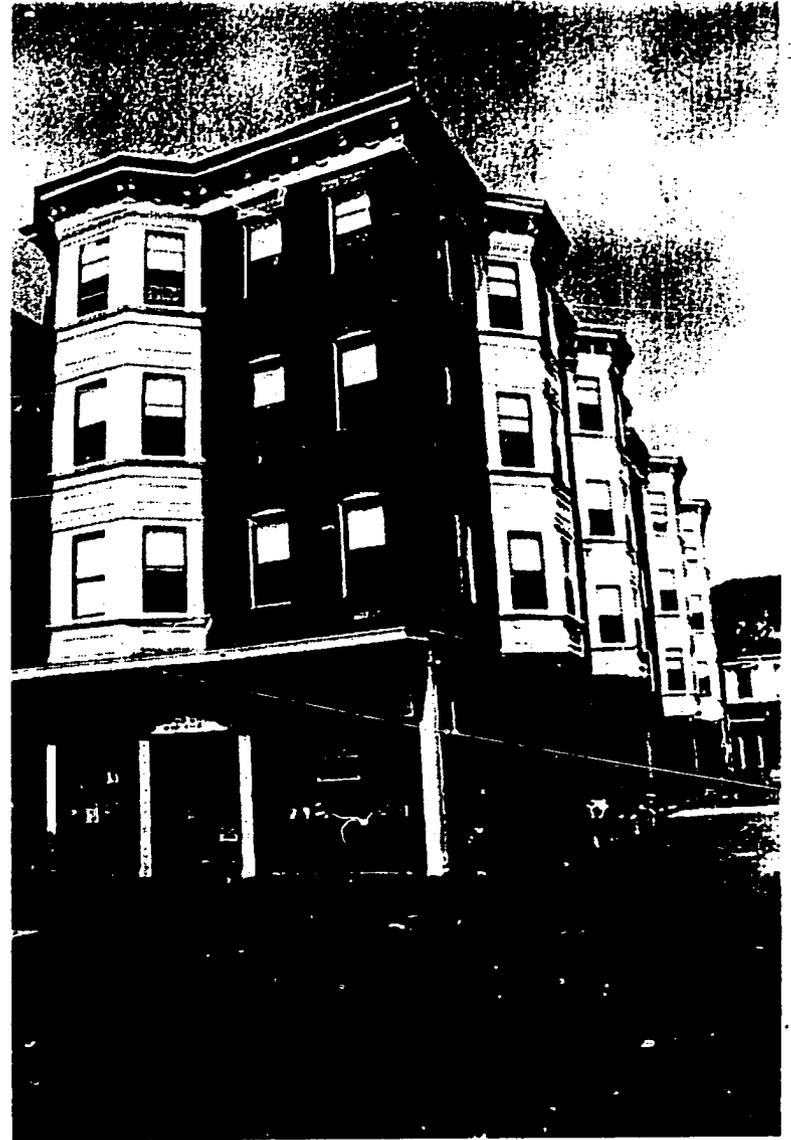


REHABILITATED HOUSING: A DBEDC INITIATIVE - AFTER

Fig. 10



DETERIORATING BUILDINGS, DORCHESTER BAY - BEFORE
Fig. 11



REHABILITATED HOUSING STOCK & LOCAL BUSINESS
ESTABLISHMENT, A DBEDC INITIATIVE - AFTER Fig. 12

CASE STUDY

**SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR
LOWER INCOME COMMUNITIES:
THE AIN SHAMS DISTRICT PILOT PROJECT**

Cairo, Egypt

Dr. Wafaa Abdalla

**Social and Cultural Center
Institute of National Planning
Salah Salem Street
P.O. Box 11765
Nasr City, Cairo
Tel.: 20-2-263 1053**

**Afaf El Bathy
Hassan Said**

**Engineers,
Public Open Space Division
Ain Shams District
Cairo**

Sustainable Improvement Strategies for Lower Income Communities: The Ain Shams District Pilot Project, Cairo, Egypt.

Working in collaboration with Dr. Wafaa Abdalla of the Social and Cultural Center of the Institute of National Planning, the Unit for Housing and Urbanization at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design developed a training program for the municipal officials responsible for community outreach and the improvements of public open space. The program sought to reshape their roles and responsibilities and to develop their capacity to become catalysts and enablers of community based initiatives. The training focused on outreach mobilization and empowerment. The program was funded by the Ford Foundation and was successfully tested in one of the most degraded areas of Ain Shams district, the public housing estate of Ehlal.

Background

Between 1960 and 1986 approximately 456,200 units of public housing were built in Egypt. These dense public housing estates were constructed in fringe areas where large tracts of land in public ownership were available. During the 70s and 80s Cairo's urbanized area doubled and the estates became embedded in the city's fabric. Local authorities were overwhelmed by demand for services and found it difficult to maintain the deteriorating infrastructure in the project sites. The living environment experienced severe degradation due to overuse and lack of maintenance.

In the late 70s public housing was privatized and former renters became owners. In the face of an acute housing shortage, which resulted in multi-generational and extended families living in the small apartments originally designed for nuclear families, the residents eventually organized themselves to enlarge their living units. These unauthorized extensions were carefully planned by the residents and demonstrated that people could be organized to solve a pressing problem affecting their life: in this case, overcrowding which had reached levels of over three persons per room.

The Cairo program sought to structure the interface between the municipal government and the communities in the housing estates in order to institutionalize a cooperative process. It drew its inspiration from a self-reliance initiative by the residents in the community of Khalafawy who organized to improve the degraded public spaces, upgrade obsolete infrastructure, and remove nuisances in vacant lots. The program also built on the experience of demonstration projects implemented by the Cairo Governorate Cleanliness and Beautification Authority (CCBA) that had been funded by the Ford Foundation.

Reassessment of Self-Reliance Activities

Revisiting the Khalafawy Site and Projects (Road El-Farag, El-Abageia, El-Amereia, and Zeinhoum) where the Cairo Governorate had earlier launched demonstration projects to improve environmental conditions in public housing estates, helped identify critical factors contributing to the sustainability of community development initiatives.

In two communities where improvements were maintained, the community leaders initially involved in the project became elected members of the Community Development Association (CDA). As the leadership and the residents became more confident, they made additional improvements.

In other sites, the initial improvements began to deteriorate when the governorate staff withdrew from the project area. The process used to initiate them represented a one time effort that failed to stimulate further self-reliance initiatives within the community. The original leadership structure was not well organized and did not strengthen over time. Poor training and lack of follow-up by local officials compounded the problem.

Comparing Road El-Farag, one of the more successful government sponsored demonstration project and Khalafawy, where the improvement process was driven and implemented by the residents without outside assistance is interesting in that these two community-based initiatives have been sustained (3 and 10 years respectively). The two public housing projects were built in 1965. Environmental conditions in the public areas of both sites had deteriorated to the point that residents avoided using public open spaces and began to board up their balconies to shut themselves off from outside nuisances. In both sites, there was a direct relationship between the improvements of public spaces and subsequent household efforts to upgrade infrastructure, build community facilities, repair buildings and refurbish apartments, opening them up once again to the upgraded environment.

The site layout conditions strongly influenced the selection of environmental improvement activities. Their priorities were defined through a participatory process, and the phasing of improvements had to be linked to the capabilities and resources of the participating families.

Because community participation is a critical contributor to long-term sustainability, the methodology used to organize the community, define priorities, and identify leadership, has to clearly articulate the benefits of proposed actions to the households and to the community. A sense of ownership among residents is needed to engage and sustain participation. As the leadership and residents acquire skills and confidence, their initiatives will broaden in complexity and scope.

In Khalafawy, residents had a clear idea of the benefits of community improvements with respect to their quality of life. In Road El-Farag, the initiatives did not move beyond the sphere of the leadership and the process was more dependent on the municipality.

Public/Private Cooperation In public housing estates, the interaction between local authorities and the community is sporadic, inconsistent and often contentious. From the perspective of the residents, agencies responsible for providing and maintaining services rarely respond to their complaints. From the District's viewpoint, the lack of resources hampers the maintenance of obsolete infrastructure systems.

To break this cycle, the Unit's team proposed to help shape an institutional framework for public/private partnership between the District and the community; to train district staff in community mobilization and empowerment techniques, and to initiate a pilot project to test the effectiveness of the training program and its operational strategies.

The institutional approach was refocused from the Governorate to the District level as it is the elected body closest to the issues, problems, opportunities and constraints at the neighborhood level. The methodology condensed the formal training period for District staff, expanded on-the-job training and included community leaders, residents and the local Community Development Associations.

After training, two engineers responsible for community outreach and the promotion of self-reliance activities in the Public Open Space Division of Ain Shams District of Cairo, applied the community mobilization strategy in two housing blocks of the Ehlal housing estate. The estate houses a lower-income community relocated to the site from an old slum cleared to make way for new commercial development in the downtown zone.

The Ain Shams District Pilot Project.

The Ehlal project was chosen as the site for the pilot project for its deteriorated physical environment and the fact that there had been no previous improvements and none were planned by neither the Governorate authorities nor the residents. The typical block layout consists of a varying number of groups of 4 five-story walk-up buildings located around a large open space and surrounded by a road.

Awareness Building and Education Phase The project team met with residents in buildings on a block by block basis. Including the entire family in the process allowed a better understanding of household use of public space and priorities for action. The families in each building elected a representative to the community working group which was to develop action plans.

As part of the training program, the district officials had specific guidelines to follow in their visits with households and meetings with community groups:

- Discussions were to focus on the physical problems that were of immediate concern to the residents.
- The officials could not make any commitments regarding improvements unless they could deliver on the promises.
- The initial information and mobilization period had to be concentrated within a short time span to build up awareness and arouse the enthusiasm needed to prompt active participation in the community improvement process.
- Complete freedom had to be given to residents from each building to choose their representative. A leadership structure that represents the real interests of the community is crucial to the continuity and sustainability of the improvement process.

This awareness and education phase allowed the District officials to understand the priorities of residents and clarify the linkages between environmental conditions and the well being of households.

Implementation of the Community Action Plan A high priority for the residents in the first grouping of buildings was the removal of a warehouse that the Ministry of Supply had built in the central open area without their consent. The building was a severe nuisance, bringing heavy truck traffic into the

square at dawn and dusk; it also constituted a health hazard due to accumulated trash and spoiled food. The residents, with assistance from the project team, requested that District Authorities remove the warehouse so that it might be replaced by a green area. The use and design of this central area was the subject of lengthy debates. Contributions from the Ain Shams District included materials (topsoil, curbs, plants, and paving) as well as technical assistance to repair the infrastructure. To protect the newly planted garden, residents mobilized their own resources to purchase fencing material. Women were instrumental in inspiring, driving, and sustaining the upgrading process and children were involved as partners in, as well as beneficiaries of, the improvement efforts.

In the grouping, the initial priorities included environmental problems related to the raising of goats and poultry in the public areas; the lack of solid waste collection; and broken water and sewerage pipes. A working committee negotiated with animal owning families to have them relocate unauthorized encroachments and animal pens. The immediate benefits from removing the animals was a reduction of the accumulated solid waste in the open areas. Residents also made a better effort to properly dispose of their garbage and cooperate with the private garbage collectors. The community representatives wanted to create a large open space with a garden similar to the first grouping. The District also provided soil, curbing and plantings with residents providing labor to build the garden and resources to fence it.

Improvement of the Area Surrounding the Open Squares The areas between the building and the roads were filled with accumulated garbage and sewage pools. There were no sidewalks and some public spaces had been appropriated to raise animals. Because of their location (along the backside of the buildings and between private and public spaces), dealing with these ambiguous spaces necessitated a greater degree of concertation and coordination between the public and private partners. Leaders and residents discussed planting options and they agreed to plant bitter orange trees and avoid lawns which would require more expensive maintenance.

As part of a long term project to upgrade the sewerage system, the District Authorities decided to give priority to those areas where residents were participating in self-reliance improvement activities. A condition for initiating new public works was the formation of a "Union of Owners" by residents in the housing blocks to help maintain the renovated sewerage system and the open spaces around buildings. Ehlal residents, having already developed a framework for community decision making and elected representatives among themselves, could easily formalize the process by establishing an association with an elected board to enter into maintenance agreements with the District.

Spillover Effects and Replication of the pilot program

The most striking feature of the Ehlal project was the demonstration of the potential of a constructive public/private partnership between Ain Shams District authorities and the 355 families living in the pilot project. Its success offered adjacent blocks a model they could emulate. Residents in a third block organized themselves spontaneously to seek technical assistance and support from the district team in the development of their improvement initiatives. The District provided vehicles to pick up the garbage, and equipment to help repair sidewalks, and create small fenced gardens. The community response to the District's support was overwhelming. Garbage was removed from the

streets and the leadership organized policing groups to control illegal activities, such as prostitution and drug abuse, which occurred in the degraded areas. Today these activities are no longer in evidence within and around the block. On their part, District government officials responded better to an organized community that demonstrated initiative and made commitments to maintain improvements.

As a rule, citizen-led initiatives reflect the community self-awareness of its own environmental needs, as in the Khalafawy area, while induced initiatives reflect the intervention of external catalysts. Trained municipal officials can mobilize, enable and empower a community to develop initiatives on its own, as in the Ehlal program. In both cases, spill over effects, often induce new actions formulated with reference to the successful models. The playgrounds in Khalafawy and those in Ehlal are examples of induced activities which are critical to the long term sustainability of the community based improvement process.

Creative initiatives occur whenever members of the community become convinced of their ability to control, shape, and improve their own living environment. The Khalafawy project embodies the model of a motivated and successful leadership. The Ain Shams pilot project established an institutional framework for partnership between the municipality and the community. The roles and responsibilities of district staff were reshaped from a static bureaucratic approach to a dynamic action-oriented approach as enablers, catalysts, and supporters of community environmental self-improvement efforts. Linkages to other units and levels of government concerned with urban services and relationships to NGOs involved in the community development process were considerably strengthened. Civic leadership emerged and a democratic framework for community decision making was formalized. To institutionalize the process, the Unit is developing a program to build up a permanent capacity within the Ain Shams District and create mechanisms and procedures to replicate the process in other districts, utilizing a training of trainers approach relying primarily on local resources.

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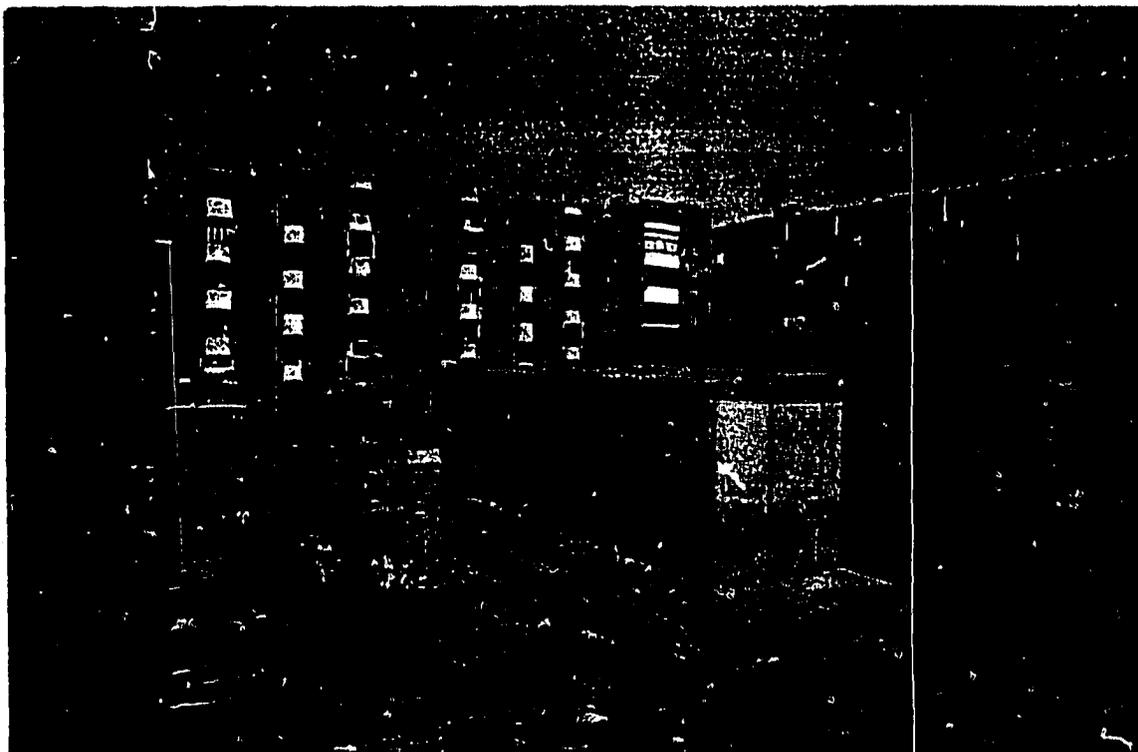


EHLAL HOUSING ESTATE - FLOODED & POORLY MAINTAINED COMMON AREAS Fig. 13

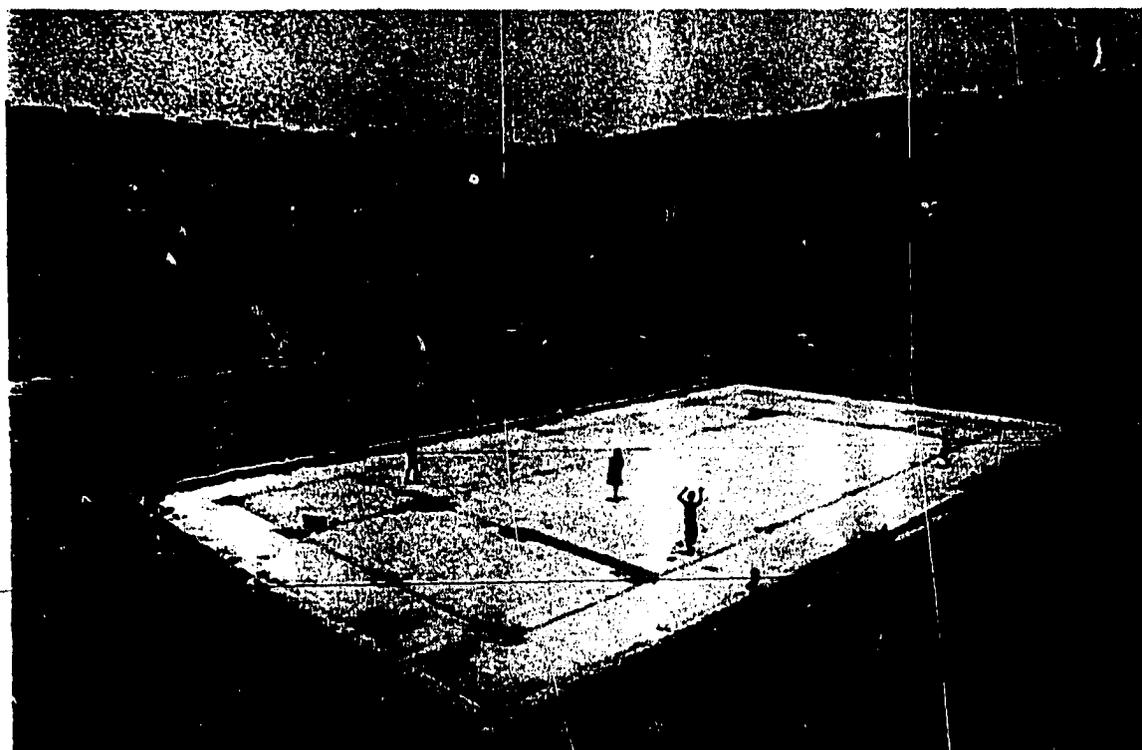


RESIDENTS PLANTING TREES IN IMPROVED CENTRAL SPACE

Fig. 14



EHLAL HOUSING ESTATE, FIRST SQUARE: BEFORE IMPROVEMENTS, OCT 1992 Fig. 15



CHILDREN PLAYING ON THE IMPROVED CENTRAL SPACE IN FIRST SQUARE, JUNE 1993
Fig. 16



GROUP DISCUSSION OF SANITATION ISSUES Fig. 18



NEW SMALL GARDENS AS PART OF SPIN OFF IMPROVEMENTS Fig. 17

CASE STUDY

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE FAMILY:
JOINT ACTION FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF
CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN COMAS DISTRICT**

Lima, Peru

Angélica Chong

**CESIP
Coronel Zagarra 722
Lima, Peru
Tel.: 51 14 713410**

**Oficina de Defensoria del
Niño y Adolescente
Municipalidad de Comas**

**Plaza de Armas s/n
Km. 11
Comas, Lima, Peru 1053
Tel.: 51 14 854171**

Olga Lidia Salvatierra

**Coordinadora, COMUPRODENICO
c/o Municipalidad de Comas
Plaza de Armas s/n
Km. 11
Comas, Lima, Peru
Tel.: 51 14 854171**

Field Research and Case Study By:

**Jeanine Anderson
For the Family & Local
Development Program
IULA/CELCADEL
Quito, Ecuador**

**Apartado 949
Lima 1, Peru
Tel./Fax: 51 14 493759**

Local Government and the Family: Joint Action for the Promotion and Defense of Children's rights in Comas District, Lima, Peru.

In November 1992, in the Comas district of Lima, Peru, fourteen organizations cooperatively created a committee to defend the rights of children: the Multisectoral Committee for the Promotion and Defense of the Rights of Boys and Girls in Comas (COMUPRODENICO).

Background

The Comas district has two distinct sub-areas. One is a working class agricultural valley with basic urban services. The other is a steep, rocky hillside, "invaded" by poor settlers. There is little or no sewerage, garbage collection, or public transportation. Over half the population is under 18 years of age, an indicator of the rural background of the community. Even though education is valued by the community; economic hardship has pushed many children out of school. Some have been put to work; others are on the streets.

In the 1980s, elected representation at the municipal level was reinstated, as part of a democratization and decentralization trend in Peru. Funding, though, did not follow to support local government. Hunger reached critical proportions. Men had to travel further to find work, giving less time to their families and communities. Women, especially those with ties to the Catholic Church, organized to start collective neighborhood kitchens to feed undernourished children. This initiative prompted the government to intervene and fund the so-called "Glass of Milk" program which still relied heavily on volunteers to take the milk rations to children and nursing mothers.

This woman-led volunteer energy is the driving force of the focus on children's rights and family welfare. In Lima, the number of collective kitchens grew from 100 in 1983 to 6,000 in 1993. The women not only buy, cook, and distribute food; they plan and manage the program and have been monitoring the heights and weights of participating children. Local government responding to social concerns began supporting effective volunteer initiatives already in place within their limited resources. Women's organizations proved valuable and effective as catalysts for improvement. CESIP, a non government organization evolved as a power base for women's organizations. With its main concerns revolving around the family, it convened participatory workshops with Comas community leaders. From these meetings, the committee COMUPRODENICO was born.

Structure and Mission of COMUPRODENICO

COMUPRODENICO illustrates the depth of conviction to move beyond immediate subsistence concerns to quality of life issues which necessitate a shift from short term endeavors to longer term cooperative action. Its 14 member organizations represent its diverse community support:

- ten local community organizations
- two larger NGOs: CESIP - working in integrated development projects for women, acts as an intermediary between the women's groups and the municipal government; and GAMB - advocating women's literacy

- INABIF (the National Institute for Family Welfare), an agency of the central government
- the District of Comas and the Municipality of Lima

Rarely do political and social issues distill so quickly among diverse groups as when children are threatened. The consensus reached was that a united effort was necessary to address priority issues affecting the fundamental rights of children:

- child abuse, including sexual abuse;
- child abandonment;
- malnutrition;
- poor quality education;

COMUPRODENICO's board of directors is working on a statute to enable it to take a central role in developing and administering a Children and Youth Center sponsored by the Comas district government. It is a clear indicator of the District's faith in the Committee's effectiveness, and reflects the District's more active role as a working member of the Committee.

The Rainbow Initiative

Rainbow is COMUPRODENICO's most important project. It was founded in December 1992, one month after the Committee was formalized. Its title and purpose reflect the cooperative spirit in which it was conceived. The *Rainbow* office is a place of conciliation and the staff act as mediators to resolve conflicts where children's welfare is at stake.

The District has provided *Rainbow* a room in the District city hall to enhance its accessibility. This perceived public backing legitimizes the program which is open daily for complaints and requests for assistance. It operates primarily with a non-professional, volunteer staff drawn from community organizations, with some volunteer and paid paraprofessional support. There is a secretary who acts as receptionist and prepares the written documents and forms (with a typewriter lent by CESIP). The only three professionals on staff are a social worker, a lawyer, and a psychologist, all provided by CESIP.

The social worker acts as coordinator, attending and participating in meetings and activities on behalf of children's defense and as a representative of COMUPRODENICO. Additionally, this position provides support for tasks outside the office. The lawyer comes to Comas twice weekly to develop legal procedures and documents. The lawyer provides legal training and case advice for the mediating volunteers, referred to as "delegates." The psychologist's duties vary according to need. Usually, training is the primary focus: training the delegates and trainers in various organizations and institutions.

In response to the increasing case load, a recent innovation has been to enlist the energy of university students. In their final year of social work, law, or psychology, they are encouraged to join *Rainbow* as interns. CESIP will provide orientation and supervision and the District government has offered to underwrite transportation costs.

Formal, written agreements between conflicting parties add a seriousness to the mediation process, although they are not legally binding contracts. The following two examples illustrate the strengths and limitations of *Rainbow's* mediating efforts:

A grandmother, concerned with her daughter's promiscuity and its effects on her children, reported her daughter to *Rainbow* for negligence. The daughter's children, some of whom were doled out to relatives and are products of different marriages, were suffering, according to the grandmother. The delegate brought the grandmother, daughter, and common-law husband together to discuss concerns and solutions. As a result, the daughter and her husband promised to attend family planning counseling with an obstetrician; they planned a return visit with the delegate; they will pay the bus fare for the delegate to check on a son living with an allegedly abusive aunt. However, there is no assurance they will abide by the agreement reached with *Rainbow*.

A mother came to the office to report that her husband was not supporting their three children and was living nearby with another woman and his new baby. The father and reporting mother were summoned to discuss options. The father agreed to pay child support if he got visitation rights. A few weeks later, the mother reported the ex-husband had not been paying. The delegate scheduled another meeting, but included the children this time. Their needs were discussed along with their feelings of family division. Two agreements were reached: one reconciled the husband and first wife and, in the other, the husband promised child support for the baby he had with his second partner.

Rainbow's mission extends further than solving the cases brought to it; it works to bring the community to recognize and prevent the problems. It disseminates child protection information to community groups, teachers, and mother involved as teachers in the "Wawa wasi" pre-school education program.

Public and Private Support to COMUPRODENICO and the *Rainbow* Office

Municipal support: Local government participation in COMUPRODENICO allows some of the scarce public resources to be channeled to support the supplemental legal assistance to *Rainbow* initiative. For example, municipal lawyers offer *Rainbow* case workers, in what has proven to be a fully cooperative spirit. The partnership with municipal government has also helped *Rainbow* in its outreach and prevention efforts including educational programs on child welfare in the schools.

However, the advantages derived from governmental support and recognition entails that COMUPRODENICO projects are affected by legislative changes on the national, provincial, municipal, and district levels. Dealing with multi-layered and intertwined governmental organization may affect the Committee's autonomy. So far, the Committee has survived political upheavals and restructuring as it is under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister's office.

NGO contributions: Funding from NGOs allows the Committee to avoid complete reliance on governmental support. However, spending is at the mercy of national and international shifts in

priorities. Furthermore, working with all the organizations involved creates problems of reconciling different agendas and procedures.

Volunteers: The advantages of having a predominately volunteer force have been critical to the initial success of the initiative. The roots the women have in the community and the people coming to them for help is based on mutual trust. Their only motivation is to help those around them; as a result, they have earned a status which gives them moral respect and authority. Arbitration on a personal, confidential level is more in keeping with the rural based culture ingrained distrust of the political and judicial systems. The volunteers, unfettered by bureaucratic rules, can judge the specific instance and find solutions based on common sense and accepted cultural traditions. Working within the community and the cultural framework allows the delegates to follow-up on negotiated agreements, mobilize peer pressure and bring it to bear to help ensure that agreements are honored. They also act locally, whereas, impersonal government intervention requires transportation costs, let alone fees, that few families can afford.

The drawbacks are also clear. A volunteer work force, particularly one drawn from a predominantly lower income community is not stable. The women have family obligations and economic responsibilities which preclude their being able to commit time and transportation costs on a regular long-term basis and attrition and turnover rates are high. As a result, jobs and training cannot evolve to levels of specialization or expertise needed to guide and manage the program and the program effectiveness is often left to chance: getting the right personalities for the jobs. These constraints limit the Committee's capacity for streamlining its programs.

Future Prospects

COMUPRODENICO recently adopted a statute making it an independent legal association. This redefinition of its institutional identity does not help it escape from its dependency on the personal energy and connections of those who work within it. Integration with the police and justice departments to act locally in cases of conflict would increase in the Committee's enforcement powers when mediation proves ineffective.

In the tradition of its predecessor, the collective kitchens, *Rainbow* keeps data on its participants, enabling some assessment of basic demand and of effectiveness of its program. Unfortunately, current documentation practices are inadequate for the analysis and projection of needs.

Funding continues to be a concern, especially when user charges work to limit outreach and exclude those with the most need. Basic programs like Child Protection cannot progress until cost burdens are removed from families in poverty. Government sponsored social programs are not part of Peru's history, so expectations hinge on the capacity of COMUPRODENICO to shoulder the financial and managerial responsibility and build up the capacity that will allow it to improve the quality of life in Comas for both children and adults.

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THE MAIN MARKET AREA IN
THE COMAS DISTRICT OF LIMA

Fig. 19



Fig. 20



MARGINAL SETTLEMENT IN THE COMAS DISTRICT OF LIMA

Fig. 21



VOLUNTEERS IN THE RAINBOW OFFICE]

Fig. 22

CASE STUDY

**COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS AND
CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP
IN BRONOWICE DISTRICT**

Lublin, Poland

**Leszek Bobrzyk
Andrzej Adamczuk**

**President, City of Lublin
Vice-President, City of Lublin
Ratusz
Plac Wladyslawa Lokietka 1
10 950 Lublin
Tel.: 48 81 22626**

**Elzbieta Macik
Ewa Kipta**

**Director
City Architect/Planner
Urban Planning, Architecture &
Construction Department
Wydział Buia
ul. Krakowskie Przedmieście 78
20 950 Lublin
Tel.: 48 81 20847**

Community Planning Process and City/Neighborhood Partnership in Bronowice District, Lublin, Poland.

In 1990, Ewa Kipta, Architect/Planner at the Unit for Urban Planning in Lublin, initiated a participatory planning process to engage the residents of the city in the development of their districts. Fifty years of centralized planning policy in Poland had left regional cities like Lublin with an assortment of urban problems, including inadequate infrastructure and housing. In 1990, the municipal planners, faced with dwindling central transfers and tight budgets, sought, innovative planning concepts that would mobilize community based resources for improvement of the urban environment. It became evident that the existing master plan was obsolete and that the City would have to adopt a strategic planning approach that made efficient use of existing local resources. Engaging the community in the planning process is a cutting edge concept in Poland for both the city planners and the population that had been excluded from any decision-making processes affecting their lives. The main objective of the City of Lublin was to build a pragmatic working relationship between the City and the communities, based on a shared vision of the future and "a lasting trust."

Background

After 1990, the plans for Lublin, based on centralized investment, were reworked in light of the changing political and economic environment. These changes included the introduction of market reforms, the re-establishment of full private ownership rights, administrative decentralization and most importantly, the emergence of the institution of local governance. Plans for the demolition and complete reconstruction of the older districts and rehousing their inhabitants in new housing estates became politically, as well as financially, unfeasible.

The new legal and institutional framework and the prevailing economic conditions made it necessary to use existing capital resources in the most efficient way. Local authorities started to learn to develop more sophisticated approaches which allowed for the sharing of functions, tasks and costs among private and public actors. Out of necessity, the city had to limit its own involvement and seek new partners in urban development. Mobilizing the energies and resources of local communities has become as important as attracting foreign investors.

An important change in the attitude of the local authorities has influenced urban planning decisions. The City's Unit for Urban Planning wants to make Lublin a livable city and preserve its unique character. A key element of this strategy is the revitalization of its older neighborhoods.

New Approaches to Urban Planning: The Rehabilitation Projects in Bronowice and Kosminek

In addition to Ewa Kipta's efforts, this challenging task could not be initiated without strong backing from within the City government: first from the City Architect and Director of the Urban Planning, Architecture and Construction Department, Elzbieta Macik; then from the Vice President for Technical Affairs, Andrzej Adamczuk. The reform minded City President, Leszek Bobrzyk, who was willing to experiment with innovative ideas, encouraged the department to pursue this approach and gave them the political support and budget allocations they needed to proceed. The new

approach was initiated in two underserved districts, Bronowice and Kosminek. The main objectives of the revitalization plan are:

- To rehabilitate the area and upgrade the infrastructure.
- To provide decent living conditions for the elderly population.
- To promote self-built and self-improved housing.
- To promote community maintenance of public spaces.
- To improve public security and change the "image" of the area.

Description of the Project Area

Bronowice has a population of 4,000 and encompasses an area of 73 hectares, 30 of which are residential. The population of Kosminek is approximately 2,000. The urban fabric to the two districts exhibits striking similarities. The 19th century nucleus of each site contains buildings which have historic value and the conservation authorities require that rehabilitation meets particular standards and that the integrity of the layout be maintained. Each consist of a core of multifamily housing originally designed for workers employed in nearby factories, an adjacent zone of good quality single family housing and more recent unserved extensions consisting of illegally built housing on agricultural land.

Owners have strong ties to the neighborhood; a significant number are long time, elderly residents. Renters are mostly newcomers with no attachment to the community. The majority moved in to qualify for communal housing flats to which they would be entitled under the relocation rules for urban renewal projects. A small minority, accounting for 5% of the population, live in substandard conditions and have caused social problems, prompting many residents to move out. Approximately half of the housing stock is privately owned and the other half consists of small rental apartments.

The districts encompass a broad range of housing types:

- Rent controlled units managed by the Housing Administration, mostly three or four storey buildings dating from the turn of the century.
- Private one-storey buildings built during the 1950's.
- Informal housing consisting of unauthorized buildings and additions. These ongoing building activities have densified the site and attracted new population groups.

Industries located in the project area are older state owned enterprises scaling down production and laying off workers. The existing community facilities, such as the kindergarten and the school for the handicapped in Bronowice, are integrated in the new plan for the area. For most public services, residents rely on facilities in the housing estates nearby.

Commercial uses were few in Kosminek and non-existent in Bronowice until two years ago when residents started opening unauthorized shops and workshops on their premises or in small temporary structures built on the street frontage. The most extensive developments are occurring along the paved wider streets, particularly on corner lots where the floor area was often doubled as a result of both vertical and horizontal expansion or complete demolition and reconstruction.

A significant part of Bronowice and a small sector in Kosminek lack adequate infrastructure. Small houses with no access to utilities were built on agricultural land that was subdivided into small plots adjoining unpaved roads. The infrastructure network developed since the war was intended to service the industrial zone by the river front and by-pass the residential areas. Since the districts were designated as urban renewal sites, residents were denied access to infrastructure on the grounds that all existing housing was "temporary" pending demolition. Connections to existing networks were also prohibited. Therefore, many houses fronting on serviced streets have continued to rely on public wells. Repairs of buildings were also prohibited except for major roof leaks. This state of affairs lasted over 40 years, resulting in resentment and distrust of public authorities, a deeply ingrained attitude that had to be overcome.

Strategies for Public Participation and the Community Planning Process

In Bronowice, the large size of the site and limited availability of manpower dictated an outreach strategy that could not entail visits to individual households. A questionnaire was sent to every family in order to elicit information on present living conditions, concerns, needs, priorities and hopes for the future. Regularly scheduled public meetings were held. Motivated residents on each street became the planner's contact persons, disseminating information about the planning process, recording opinions and organizing meetings. Although only 10% of the widely distributed questionnaires were returned, they played an important part in overcoming misgivings and building trust. They signaled to the residents a change in the public authorities' attitude. In Kosminek, the planners interviewed every household in the project area. In both districts, the groups of neighbors along each street were mobilized and residents became aware of the role they could play in shaping the future of their neighborhood.

The rehabilitation plans for both Bronowice and Kosminek were approved by the City Council in December 1993. The Act for Support of Local Investment, passed in January 1994, commits the City to stimulate rehabilitation and support local initiatives in the development of infrastructure and the sharing of infrastructure investment costs between the City and the residents. As an incentive to private rehabilitation of buildings, investors are granted a three-year exemption from property taxation.

Adoption of the plan by the Council has regularized the status of unauthorized houses built on illegally subdivided parcels. Residents now feel secure from both displacement and challenges to their right of occupancy. The City avoids being involved in tenure issues. Residents have to sort out their ownership and tenancy rights with the private parties involved. It is already apparent that participation and regularization have stabilized the two neighborhoods. Today they are experiencing regeneration and new economic life.

Key Features of the Rehabilitation

The rehabilitation plans for the two districts call for a partnership between the Municipality and the community to upgrade and extend services through the Joint Infrastructure Investment Program. New construction, renovation and additions of buildings relies on private investment by property owners.

The plans address problems in the surrounding zone which adversely impact the living environment in the area. These problems are particularly critical in Bronowice and account for the high cost of the rehabilitation program. The disused railway right-of-way is to be converted to a landscaped pedestrian spine leading from the center of the district to the river. The land along the river is to be converted to a park. The industrial zones contain vacant state owned land and factory buildings. Some buildings can be reused; others are dilapidated beyond repair. Fortunately, the heavily polluted industrial waste dump was cleaned up with funding from the Environmental Fund of Poland and is now maintained as a fenced off, landscaped open space.

In Kosminek, locational advantages and higher incomes have contributed to the economic regeneration. New construction and conversions, predominantly for commercial and office uses, are transforming the built environment. A strategy for the development of retail and commercial enterprises adjacent to public space is included in the plan. In the more marginal zones, the plan concentrates on defining guidelines for development of private plots allowing for the preservation of flower and vegetable gardens within the boundaries of the smaller lots.

In Bronowice, property owners are encouraged to develop ground floor commercial uses in their own buildings or other buildings in their block to help poor elderly owners valorize their property. Conservation of listed buildings through adaptive reuse and the redevelopment of the properties owned by the phased-out industries could also offer opportunities for creative public/private partnerships.

The greatest challenge in the rehabilitation process is the older sectors of rent controlled, multifamily buildings managed by the Housing Administration. Privatization depends on the ability of owners to derive sufficient income from the property to induce them to take it back and assume the cost of renovation and management. To date, the only feasible option is for the City to allow owners to move tenants to communal housing flats for a fee. This approach has worked in the case of properties that have clear commercial development potential. The recent enactment of national legislation establishing a system of housing allowances as part of the social safety-net has opened up new opportunities to deal creatively with this challenge without imposing undue hardships on the poor and the elderly.

Joint Infrastructure Investment Program

The concept of sharing land servicing costs between the public and private sector dates back to the 1960's. It was applied to privately built housing zones thereby directed at those who could afford single family housing. The program continued even as funds for public housing dried up. The Housing Crisis Act of 1991 authorized the use of a 50/50 cost sharing formula to provide serviced land for new privately developed housing projects.

Lublin's creative initiative extended the application of joint investment in infrastructure to existing residential areas. A backlog of partially serviced housing subdivisions need to be brought up to the service standards stipulated in development regulations and codes. More importantly, joint public/private investment in infrastructure can be used as part of the City's rehabilitation strategy in order to upgrade obsolete infrastructure and extend services to underserved marginal and

informally developed zones. The Act for Support of Local Investment, adopted in January 1994, commits the City to stimulate local initiatives in infrastructure development through the sharing of investment costs.

Residents along each street designate representatives who negotiate with the City on their behalf regarding required improvements. The representatives sign the cost sharing agreement for which they are held personally liable. They collect from residents and deposit the amount in a special bank account. When the local share is fully paid up, the City includes the project in its budget and proceeds with implementation of the infrastructure works. Under the program's cost sharing formula, the City covers 50% of the cost of water, sewerage and power lines, 70% of the cost of roadbeds and sidewalks, 100% of the cost of drainage and street paving. Residents pay the hook-up charges once the new network is in place. The cost sharing formula can be modulated through negotiations. The City's share could increase if the networks provided are to serve other streets as well.

The Program has been used mainly for improving local streets in areas where housing is privately owned. The budget allocated to the Program has increased steadily. Since it was first initiated three years ago, following the passage of the Housing Crisis Act, its share of the municipal budget grew from 3.8% in 1992 to 9.5% in 1994. The infrastructure improvements needed for the rehabilitation of Bronowice and Kosminek are being implemented under this program.

Impact of City Initiatives to Date

Young people who had left the site are returning to family real estate holdings that have become valuable assets. Multi-generational families are reestablishing themselves in houses where elderly parents had been living on their own for decades. Families who came to the area for the sole purpose of getting relocation apartments are now investing in the renovation and expansion of their houses, often establishing family businesses on the premises. Local craftsmen after years of repression, have emerged as entrepreneurs, establishing micro-enterprises and commercial activities. The built environment is being rehabilitated and renovated by enabling residents to utilize their full productive capacities.

Lublin's initiative is innovative in concept and design, opting for regularization, revitalization and inclusion. It has introduced participatory processes as an operational strategy in the municipality. It has laid the groundwork for the institutionalization of an interface between the municipality and the community based on partnership and support of community based development. The City is now in the process of institutionalizing the neighborhood partnership initiative as an environmental improvement strategy critical to orderly development in democratic society and key to growth in a competitive market economy. USAID is providing Lublin with technical assistance to support this endeavor.

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POORLY DRAINED & UNPAVED ROAD: BRONOWICE

Fig. 23



UNSERVICED & POORLY DRAINED URBAN EXTENSIONS: KOSMINEK

Fig. 24



CHILDREN FETCHING WATER FROM STANDPIPE - BRONOWICE
Fig. 25



**UNSERVICED URBAN EXTENSIONS - WATER BEING CARTED:
KOSMINEK**

Fig. 26



**LAYING UTILITY LINES UNDER SHARED COST PROGRAM:
KOSMINEK**

Fig. 27



IMPROVED STREET UNDER SHARED COST PROGRAM: KOSMINEK

Fig. 28



REBUILDING OF CORNER LOT WITH GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL: KOSMINEK

Fig. 29

CASE STUDY

**THE EL MOUROUJ COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
FOR THE PROMOTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Tunis, Tunisia

Adel Azzabi

**President
Association Comité des Habitants
d'El Mourouj
B.P. 849/1035
Tunis Rp., Tunisie
Tel.: 216 1 491 155**

Denis Lesage

Field Research by:

**Architect, Urbaniste Conseil
13 Rue Taieb Mehiri
2026 Sidi Bou Satd, Tunisie
Tel.: 216 1 742 112**

The El Mourouj Community Association for the Promotion of Environmental Quality, Tunis Tunisia

In the winter of 1987-88, a group of residents in El Mourouj II District of Tunis formed a committee to prevent further expansion of a landfill and contain its adverse environmental impacts on the neighborhood. The committee, headed by Adel Azzabi, organized and mobilized residents. It evolved into an association, El Mourouj II Residents Association ("L'Association des habitants d'El Mourouj II"), focusing on improving and sustaining the quality of the environment in the district.

Background

El Mourouj II project was developed by the Land Development Agency, "Agence Foncière de l'Habitat" (AFH), a public agency under the umbrella of the Ministry of Housing. It was the first planned new settlement developed by the Agency. The outlying location south of Tunis, bordering on marshes, referred to as *Sebkha*, complicated the logistics of construction which started in the mid-1970's. The AFH plan encompassed a mix of housing types comprised of 1,000 single-family homes and 2,000 apartments. By the early 80's, development had expanded sufficiently to justify the establishment of a new jurisdiction: El Mourouj II district. In 1987, the first residents moved to the site.

Environmental Threats to the New Settlements

When it was first designated as a municipal dump, the landfill site in the marshes, known as Henchir Lihoudia, was projected to extend over an area of about 16 hectares. In time, it expanded in an increasingly uncontrolled fashion. The accumulation of solid waste reached the boundaries of El Mourouj II and threatened three neighboring settlements (El Mourouj I, Ibn Sina I and II). The offensive smell and adverse environmental impacts became unbearable. Groups of scavengers moved in and around the dump. Burning of unusable trash and organic material polluted the air with dense smoke. Adding to the worsening stench, residents had to confront infestations of insects and rodents. Building activities in the district came to a standstill. Families were apprehensive about moving to the area and many finished units remained vacant.

The Mobilization of the Residents

The residents committee came together initially in 1982, growing out of a cooperative established by the National Tobacco Co. (Régie Nationale des Tabacs et Allumettes) as part of the El Mourouj II project. Headed by Adel Azzabi, an engineer at RNTA, the cooperative provided a structure for initiatives to mobilize residents. These activities ultimately led to the establishment of a permanent committee, El Mourouj II Neighborhood Committee.

During the winter of 1987-1988, heavy rains impeded access to the disposal site. Truck loads of solid waste were dumped on the main road (GP3), impacting even more on El Mourouj. Alarmed residents formed groups to discuss the deteriorating situation. They signed petitions and prompted newspapers to run articles about the disposal site. Public concern heightened. However, media coverage was directed at the distressing condition of the scavenger groups and the effects on the El

Mourouj II community were hardly mentioned. Frustrated residents decided to organize and take their grievances to the highest level of government. Community representatives, including Adel Azzabi, submitted a petition to the President of the Republic together with a complete file documenting their case.

The committee eventually changed its name and registered as a separate NGO, the El Mourouj II Residents Association. This distinction reflects a desire to stay rigorously independent in terms of organization and funding. The Association is classified as a humanitarian and social aid organization. It is directed by an elected board of 11 members. Reflecting its primary objectives, current activities remain sharply focused on environmental issues.

Several debates served to define the Association's objectives and the range of its activities. The priority short term objectives focused on the mobilization of residents to address pressing environmental hazards generated by the landfill. The long term objectives focused on participation in the improvement of the living environment and the establishment of working relations with Tunisian and foreign NGOs. The Association, however, recognizes the need for cooperation with elected representatives and mayors and appreciates the benefits to be derived from collaboration with local authorities on issues of concern to residents.

Mobilizing Government to Take Action

Already, under the RNTA cooperative, the initial neighborhood committee had initiated contacts with local, regional and national authorities. In early September 1991, the Association members met with the Mayor of Tunis, A. Boulaeimen, to discuss their concerns. The Mayor came to the site and discussed the issues openly and frankly with the residents. Concrete actions resulted. The entire dumping ground, covering 100 hectares, was sprayed to control insect populations. Municipal employees and cleaning equipment were mobilized. The Minister of Housing also met with the Association to address the environmental problems plaguing the settlement. This, in turn, prompted a visit by the President of the Republic on November 3, 1991. The next day, the Council of Ministers issued an order directing the Ministry of Housing and the Municipality of Tunis to clean up the landfill and progressively confine the dumping grounds to the 16 hectares originally allotted for this purpose.

Continuing the Focus

The start of the public works marked a major victory for the residents and became a milestone in the Association's history. The enthusiasm it generated encouraged residents to get more involved in the management of issues affecting the community. The hazards created by indiscriminate disposal of solid waste constituted a catalyst that sensitized the residents and sharpened their awareness of the links between environmental degradation, sanitation, health and the quality of life as it affects them in their homes. Vacant apartments were filled and construction of unfinished dwellings resumed.

Buoyed by this success, residents have become more involved in the Association's activities. They have increased their financial support and formed citizen groups to address other community-wide concerns. The Association's headquarters, a building known as "the City's house," provides a

meeting place for the board and the affiliated civic groups referred to as "syndics." High levels of participation, well-organized events, productive meetings and regular payment of dues and contributions are now the norm. The range of environmental improvements is being continually expanded. It now covers such diverse activities as landscaping and tree planting to green up the settlement, improving roads, developing recreational facilities, and operating a recycling program. The Association is adamant about keeping its outreach and activities sharply focused on environmental issues. Nevertheless, it cannot avoid becoming involved in pressing social and educational needs, including:

- Prevention of juvenile delinquency with training programs for unemployed youths.
- Organizing support groups for women heads of households to assist them in setting up income generating activities.
- Helping integrate disabled people in communal activities and provide them with support systems through joint programs with specialized organizations in Tunis and abroad.

Current Objectives of the Association

To pursue its ambitious mandate, El Mourouj II Residents Association defined guidelines and objectives for future development, reasserting its role as the major driving force in sustaining the quality of life in the community. The key objectives are:

- Encouraging civic pride, solidarity and a sense of belonging to a special place.
- Promoting citizen participation in the administration of the district.
- Fostering community empowerment.
- Sustaining the enthusiasm of residents and their involvement through well structured and highly publicized cultural, educational and recreational activities. Some of the activities are undertaken in cooperation with Tunisian NGOs, as well as foreign partners.
- Establishing a social center to serve as a focus for gatherings and events, outreach and education activities.

Conclusion

Having successfully fought off a threat that undermined their well being as families and their survival as a community, the residents of El Mourouj II are ready to take on new challenges in their quest to improve the quality of life in their district. They have become keenly aware of the negative and positive impacts that the environment can have on family health and living conditions. They have learned the value of mobilization, organization, resilience and sustained effort in seeking redress, even when this involves taking their case to the highest authority in the country. More importantly, the Association has matured and learned to move from confrontation with central local authorities to creating links and opportunities for collaboration. The dynamic and able leadership can now move steadily beyond advocacy and activism to the institution of a community driven development process.

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EL MOUROUJ II TOWNSHIP

Fig. 30



THE ASSOCIATION MEETING PLACE: "LA MAISON DE LA CITE"

Fig. 31



YOUTH INVOLVED WITH RECYCLING PROGRAMS

Fig. 32



YOUTH TEAMS COLLECTING RECYCLABLE PAPER AND CARDBOARD

Fig. 33



TRAINING SESSION FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Fig. 34



SITE GRADING WITH HEAVY MACHINERY PROVIDED BY THE CITY AT THE REQUEST OF THE ASSOCIATION Fig. 35