



CCGHS Informal(04)5

Interim Structure of ComHabitat

Introduction

The structure of ComHabitat has been subject to much discussion, by the CCGHS, within management group meetings and between management group members. The purpose of this paper is to outline a structure for ComHabitat based upon its historical evolution, but taking into account new developments, including the tendering out of the ComHabitat Secretariat function. Approval of a structure will allow energies to be focussed on ComHabitat's work.

2. The ComHabitat structure should facilitate support to work by Commonwealth members towards the attainment of MDGs relevant to human settlements and the Commonwealth goal of:

“Demonstrated progress towards adequate shelter for all with secure tenure and access to essential services in every community by 2015”.

3. The structure should also ensure:

- effective governance of the ComHabitat mechanism, whilst allowing for flexibility and change as ComHabitat's work develops;
- effective follow-up to CCGHS decisions and implementation of the agreed Work Plan;
- representation of all sectors in society; and
- representation from all regions in the Commonwealth in the work of ComHabitat.

4. This paper remains a working paper until such time that the interim structure can be presented and approved at a formal CCGHS meeting. It should be read alongside the ComHabitat Work Plan for 2004-2006.

Background

5. The matter of structure was considered at a consultation meeting held in London (4-5 December 2000), which started work on a Commonwealth Input for Istanbul+5 in June 2001. This meeting suggested:

- the CCGHS structure should be simple and flexible so that it could readily adapt to changing circumstances and national constraints;

- the CCGHS should meet to evaluate reports on project implementation, make an overall review of policy and structure in regard to the project, and agree and endorse any new work programme;
- a 3-tiered structure comprised of: CCGHS (formulating policy/taking decisions); Steering Group comprised of the key partners and 5 regional representatives nominated through High Commissions (giving form and substance to CCGHS decisions, and implementing and monitoring the work plan; and an Operational Group (managing projects); and that
- CCGHS would seek to develop partnerships with all levels of government, civil society, private sector and individuals to promote pro-poor programmes.

6. Building on these proposals, and addressing the twin concerns of ensuring effective follow-up to CCGHS decisions and representation of all sectors in society as well as all regions in the Commonwealth in the work, the fifth session of the CCGHS (Nairobi, 7-8 May 2003):

- Renamed the CCGHS framework (in its entirety) as ComHabitat
- Agreed a 2-tier structure:
 - *ComHabitat Council*: the intergovernmental group (i.e. CCGHS) and representatives of local government, civil society groups and others. Discussions would be open to all, with expertise co-opted as needed, though decision making remains with national government representatives.
 - *ComHabitat Management*: combines Steering Committee and Operational Group proposed earlier. This group would oversee the work of ComHabitat host and liaise with Commonwealth High Commissions in Nairobi.

7. Given the recent changes within ComHabitat's management arrangements, and the relatively small number of governments that were represented at the last CCGHS meeting in Nairobi, the (Interim) Management and Advisory Group proposes that the structure of ComHabitat be finalised and formally adopted at the sixth session in April 2005.

8. The proposed structure is outlined below. This takes into account all previous discussions and current working arrangements. It also acknowledges that ComHabitat should be clearly seen as belonging to the CCGHS, albeit with strong and effective linkages to other interest groups.

9. **Proposed Structure**

(a) **Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS)**

ComHabitat is governed by the intergovernmental Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS). The CCGHS will:

- ✓ Be convened by the Commonwealth Secretary-General and served by the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- ✓ Be open to all 54 Commonwealth Member States.
- ✓ Meet as required by Ministers, generally on an annual basis in the wings of the UN Habitat Governing Council, or another suitable forum.
- ✓ Elect a Chair on a regional rotational basis for a period of 2 years, or as decided by the CCGHS.
- ✓ Be responsible for appointment of the ComHabitat Management and Advisory Group.

- ✓ Be responsible for determining broad programme of ComHabitat.
- ✓ Be open, when appropriate, to observers from other agencies representing civil society, local authority and private sector interests.

(b) ComHabitat Management and Advisory Group

Providing detailed oversight of ComHabitat and composed of up to 7 individuals¹ appointed by CCGHS (probably senior civil servants with high level responsibility for implementing the Habitat Agenda within their own countries and/or responsible for representing their countries within UN Habitat) and up to 7 representatives co-opted by the 7 appointees from the range of other interest groups that have previously been identified. The Management and Advisory Group will:

- ✓ Be composed of up to 7 representatives appointed by the CCGHS, the senior representative of the ComHabitat Secretariat, together with up to 7 representatives co-opted from a broad range of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and local authority groups.
- ✓ Have a chair, which will rotate as determined by the group.
- ✓ Attend CCGHS meetings.
- ✓ Meet twice a year, or as determined by the Group.
- ✓ Oversee the work of the ComHabitat Secretariat and responsible for approving and monitoring the detailed annual work plan of the ComHabitat Secretariat.
- ✓ Be responsible for liaison with the Committee of Permanent Representatives Nairobi.
- ✓ Provide advice to the CCGHS and ComHabitat Secretariat.
- ✓ Assist in the organisation of ComHabitat Network events.

(c) ComHabitat Network

To facilitate a broader engagement by many more organisations and individuals a broad forum, the ComHabitat Network will be developed. This will be made up of the CCGHS and a full range of other interest groups. The Network would normally meet on an annual basis at a time and place that coincides with meetings of the CCGHS. The network will:

- ✓ Be composed of organisations and individuals within the Commonwealth including government, local authority, NGOs, CBOs, the private sector, professional associations, academics and researchers.
- ✓ Have one annual meeting, which is also attended by members of the CCGHS.
- ✓ Serve as a mechanism for learning, exchange and support.
- ✓ Provide the contact and experience base for ComHabitat's referral role.

(d) ComHabitat Secretariat

The ComHabitat Secretariat will be hosted within Homeless International for the period May 2004 to June 2006. The Secretariat will:

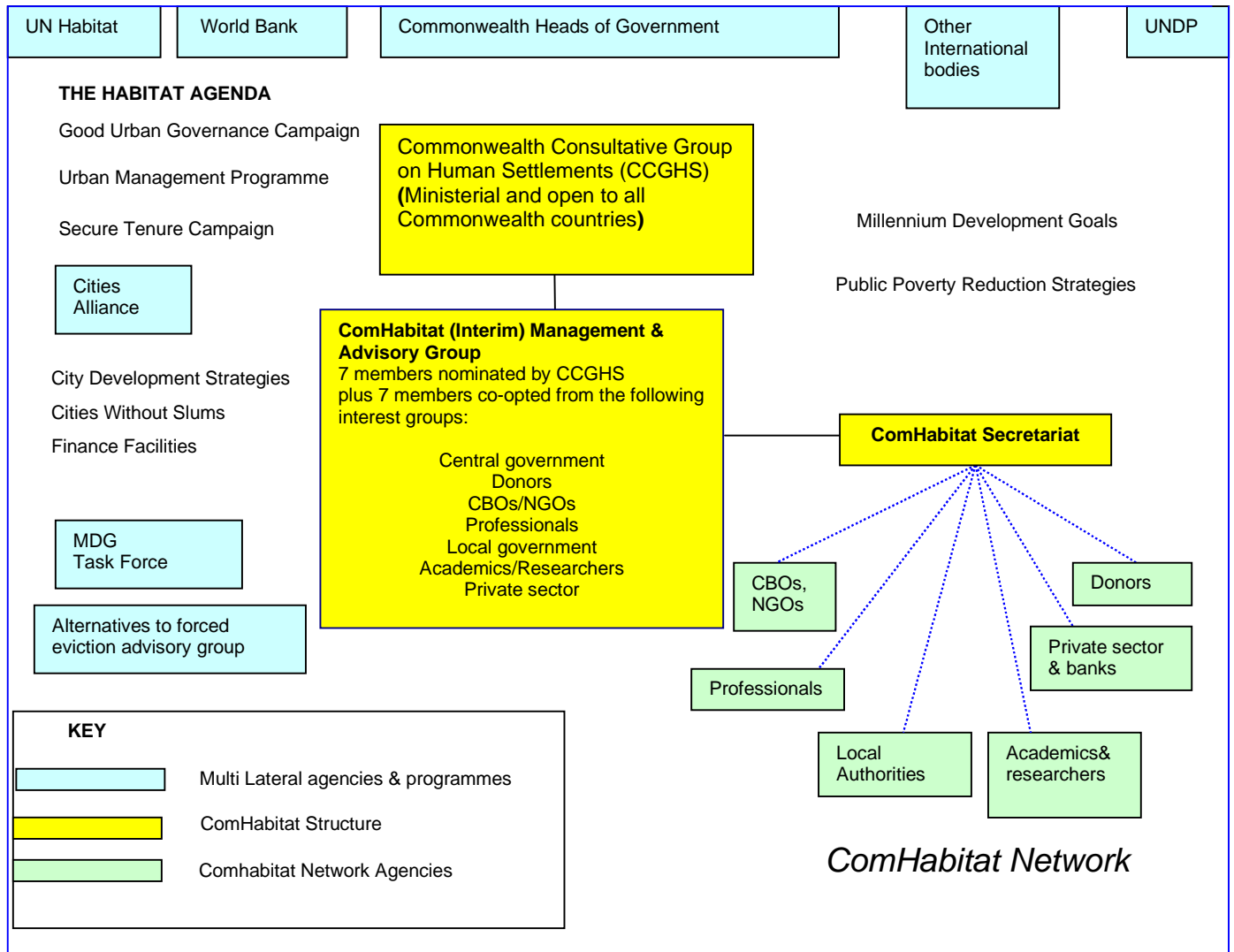
¹ This enables representation from all Commonwealth regions (Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Pacific, donor countries) and provides scope also for the CCGHS to co-opt other active governments/individuals, as they wish.

- ✓ Be responsible for the day-to-day programme of activities determined by the CCGHS.
- ✓ Produce regular progress reports for the ComHabitat Management and Advisory Group, the CCGHS and the ComHabitat Network.
- ✓ Prepare and co-ordinate implementation of a ComHabitat annual programme of activities.
- ✓ Provide reference and advisory services to the CCGHS and the wider ComHabitat Network.
- ✓ Initiate and develop new activities for consideration by the CCGHS.

Structure and Positioning

10. If ComHabitat is to be seen as a useful and relevant facility it is important that it develop a proactive role within the broader institutional context of the Habitat Agenda. This will necessitate the development and maintenance of strategic relationships with a range of key agencies and also close co-ordination with a number of campaigns and programmes being co-ordinated by those agencies. The proposed structure of ComHabitat and its location in terms of these campaigns and programmes is summarised schematically on the following page.

Proposed Schematic Positioning and Structure



Note: Current representation on the Management & Advisory Group is as follows:

Central Government:

Donors:

CBOs, NGOs, Professionals:

Local Government:

Private Sector:

Commonwealth Secretariat

DFID and the Commonwealth Foundation

Commonwealth Human Ecology Council (CHEC),
 Homeless International, Commonwealth Foundation
 Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)

None at present, but consultations to develop the
 'Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5' involved the
 Commonwealth Business Council