

Commonwealth Secretariat

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Commonwealth Consultative Group  
on Human Settlements

Gigiri, Nairobi, 6 April 2005

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Provisional Agenda Item 5

CCGHS(05)3

**COMHABITAT PROGRESS REPORT**

A Paper by the Commonwealth Secretariat

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March 2005



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# COMHABITAT PROGRESS REPORT<sup>1</sup>

## Executive Summary

1. ComHabitat consists of the Ministerial Group – the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS) initiated in September 1998 – and a collaborative partnership of agencies from government, local government, civil society and the private sector. The combination of inter-governmental consultations with an implementation-oriented partnership, involving a wide range of stakeholders to support activities in member states, is one of the strengths of this mechanism.

2. This paper summarises progress made by ComHabitat to date in responding to the broad policy objectives set by the CCGHS. It also presents the current Work Plan. Annexes provide more detailed information relating to each of these areas as well as a report on a ComHabitat Networking event held at the World Urban Forum in Barcelona in September 2004. The key areas of the Work Plan are as follows:

- ***The CCGHS process.*** The CCGHS sets the strategic objectives for ComHabitat. It also draws on the Commonwealth's strengths in consensus building and policy development, to provide a platform for member states to exchange views and practical experience of implementing the Habitat Agenda.
- ***Research and information sharing.*** Two research projects have been initiated to help member governments and other stakeholders to assess: progress on internationally-agreed goals on human settlements; and the availability of, and options for, urban development finance. By establishing close links with other agencies and developing a framework for its research, ComHabitat ensures that its contribution complements, and does not duplicate, efforts in these areas.

ComHabitat is also developing mechanisms to deliver useful information to Ministers and other practitioners, such as: the results of ComHabitat's own research; links to useful web sites; key documentation from UN Habitat and other agencies; and resource centres where good practice has enabled significant progress on implementing the Habitat Agenda. The strategies include the ComHabitat web site and networking events. The first such networking event was held during the World Urban Forum in Barcelona in 2004, when city-community partnerships in Mumbai and Nairobi shared their experience in moving away from the forced eviction of railway-side slum dwellers, to negotiated resettlement.

- ***Networking and advocacy.*** ComHabitat can promote CCGHS priorities and international goals on human settlements, both within the Commonwealth and the international community. ComHabitat aims to build a range of contacts in the form of a wider 'ComHabitat Network', to secure access to skills and experiences that member states can draw on in implementation of their development goals.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was prepared with the assistance of Homeless International in its capacity as the ComHabitat Secretariat. It has also benefited from comments and inputs from the other members of the Management Group, namely: the Commonwealth Foundation; Commonwealth Human Ecology Council; Commonwealth Local Government Forum; and the UK Department for International Development.

## Issues for Ministers

3. Ministers may wish to:
  - a) Comment on the Work Plan in terms of the following:
    - General balance of the programme.
    - The degree to which it will achieve the objectives set by the CCGHS (see paragraph 2).
    - The focus and approach taken in the two research projects on:
      - the availability of, and options for, urban development finance; and
      - measuring progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and working towards the Commonwealth goal and related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
    - How best to develop the ComHabitat web site to provide maximum value to member states.
  - b). Endorse the ComHabitat Work Plan for May 2004 to June 2006, as proposed by the Management Group (detailed in Annex 1).
  - c) Give their views on ComHabitat activities and future priorities beyond June 2006. The discussion could include:
    - i. Further development of existing areas of work, such as effective approaches to disseminating the research findings and ensuring their practical application.
    - ii. Emerging priorities for new work.
    - iii. Priority areas for networking, particularly areas where the exchange of practical experience in addressing human settlement concerns is most needed.
    - iv. Priorities for activities at the World Urban Forum in 2006.
    - v. The adoption of key themes to guide further activities (for example: integrating human settlements and urban development issues into national poverty alleviation programmes<sup>2</sup> and wider policy debates; or managing partnerships for negotiated resettlement<sup>3</sup>).
4. Ministers may also wish to consider practical approaches to: the inclusion of government representatives in the work of the Management Group; development of the wider ComHabitat Network; and procedures for the involvement of all stakeholders in deliberations by the CCGHS.

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<sup>2</sup> Defined as a major objective in *The Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5*.

<sup>3</sup> This theme relates to the priority areas of action of “good governance and secure land tenure” and “development of mutually supportive partnerships” identified in *The Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5*. The Commonwealth Development Framework for Human Settlements, outlined in *Focus on the Habitat Agenda*, also stresses security of tenure, and partnerships between community-based organisations, NGOs and local/national government.

## I. BACKGROUND

5. The Commonwealth Secretary-General formally established the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS) in September 1998, building on earlier work by the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council (CHEC) to harness expertise and experience throughout the Commonwealth.

6. The CCGHS is an intergovernmental group made up of Ministers who are responsible for implementing the Habitat Agenda in their own countries. At its first meeting, held in Nairobi in May 1999, the CCGHS adopted a Commonwealth goal of: “*Demonstrated progress towards adequate shelter for all with secure tenure and access to essential services in every community by 2015*”. The objectives of the CCGHS (finalised in May 2003), are as follows, to:

- Provide basic services to households, neighbourhoods and villages
- Incorporate shelter provision into national poverty alleviation programmes
- Promote good governance
- Promote security of tenure
- Remove systematic discrimination against women especially in respect of title to property and inheritance rights, with general support for the Commission on Human Rights resolution on the equal rights of ownership of and access to land
- Promote attainment of the Commonwealth goal.

7. In June 2001, CCGHS met in the wings of the UN General Assembly Special Session and adopted the *Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5*. This document discusses activities for the CCGHS under five broad headings, which capitalise on the strengths that the Commonwealth has to offer in terms of consensus building and the exchange of information, experience and advice. These headings are:

- Development of partnerships
- Identification of new innovative resources and use of existing funding more effectively
- Promoting the sharing of ideas, experience and lessons learned
- Capacity building and country reports
- Promoting good governance and security of tenure.

8. In April 2004 Homeless International was selected to host a Secretariat to support the ComHabitat partnership and developed a Work Plan (Annex 1) guided by the Management Group<sup>4</sup>. The Work Plan aims to complement ongoing work being implemented by members of the CCGHS, the Management Group and wider ComHabitat Network.

9. Believing it was important to initiate work early and demonstrate progress to the CCGHS, the Management Group adopted the Work Plan as a ‘working document’ for immediate action, and presented it to an informal meeting of the CCGHS in the wings of the UN-Habitat World Urban Forum in Barcelona in September 2004. The Management Group also agreed a working Structure for ComHabitat (Annex 2) and a draft Research Strategy (Annex 3).

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<sup>4</sup> Members of the Management Group are: Commonwealth Foundation; Commonwealth Human Ecology Council; Commonwealth Local Government Forum; Commonwealth Secretariat; Department for International Development; and Homeless International.

10. Funding for ComHabitat's activities comprises £60,000 per year from DFID and £30,000 per year from the Commonwealth Foundation, with contributions in kind from the Commonwealth Secretariat and other partners. The existing funding arrangements come to an end in June 2006.

11. The Management Group now formally presents the Work Plan to the CCGHS for its consideration and endorsement.

## **II. COMHABITAT WORK PLAN, MAY 2004 – JUNE 2006**

Full details of the Work Plan are provided as Annex 1.

12. The Work Plan recognises that members of the CCGHS, the Management Group and wider ComHabitat Network are already working towards the Commonwealth Goal, the Habitat Agenda and the MDGs. It aims to complement and add value to that work.

13. The Work Plan and its activities have been developed pragmatically, to take into account issues such as available resources and current international policy agendas. ComHabitat is still establishing its work. The current Management Group is comprised of the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Department for International Development, and Homeless International, which is hosting the ComHabitat partnership. Within Homeless International, a dedicated staff member acts as ComHabitat Programme Co-ordinator, spending 70 per cent of her time on this work, supported by the Chief Executive. Other staff and institutional resources are also drawn on to provide support in areas such as financial accounting and web site development. Management Group partners provide inputs to the ComHabitat initiative as part of their own programmes of work. As the initiative develops, inputs will be sought from an increasingly wide range of groups across the Commonwealth, to deliver practical support in implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

14. Given the anchor of ComHabitat in the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS), one of its main objectives is to act as a referral and support base for CCGHS itself, as well as for non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), local government, and others. It is important that ComHabitat is anchored in real practices rather than idealised notions of "what should be". Research and efforts to build a wider ComHabitat Network are vital in ensuring that ComHabitat can take this realistic approach.

The Work Plan aims to add value to other's work in three key areas:

### **The CCGHS process**

15. One of the strengths of ComHabitat is its combination of a inter-governmental Ministerial group (the CCGHS) – drawing on the lead role that Ministers have in facilitating implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the MDGs – with a partnership between the sectors that are critical to implementing those commitments, including government, local government, slum dwellers' organisations, NGOs and the private sector. This is the basis for ComHabitat's research, information sharing, networking and advocacy roles. The CCGHS has set a number of priorities – both through documents such as the *Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5* and its meetings – as outlined above. The April 2005 CCGHS meeting may

decide on further priorities or specific actions relating to ComHabitat activities and the current international agenda.

### **Research and information sharing**

16. The Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5, stated that the “CCGHS, through partnership with other concerned sectors of the community, will assist Commonwealth countries to implement the Habitat Agenda in practical ways which include: . . . Promoting the sharing of ideas, experience and best practices . . . [and] . . . Assisting in capacity building through for example, increased access to relevant information including web site”. More recently, the Management Group has identified research and information sharing as a means by which ComHabitat can assist the CCGHS in meeting these commitments.

17. ComHabitat has developed a draft Research Strategy, which outlines principles for ComHabitat to consider in implementing research projects. These principles include: avoiding duplication and working in partnership; ensuring research is relevant and research results are accessible; and facilitating linkages and dialogue. The draft Research Strategy is included as Annex 3. ComHabitat has already initiated two research projects, the first of which is concerned with measuring progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and working towards the Commonwealth goal and related Millennium Development Goals. The second project is looking at the availability and options for urban development finance.

18. Research on measuring progress will help Ministers to promote the inclusion of urban poverty and shelter data into national poverty alleviation strategies, such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs). The research reports will also draw out interesting case studies of practical progress made in implementing the Habitat Agenda within different national contexts. These will be shared through the ComHabitat Network and its web site.

### **Networking and advocacy**

19. ComHabitat has the potential to promote the CCGHS priorities, Habitat Agenda, Commonwealth Goal and MDGs, including raising awareness of effective approaches, within the Commonwealth. ComHabitat can also advocate Commonwealth concerns internationally on the basis of Commonwealth experiences. It is important for ComHabitat to establish links with key campaigns and institutions, and also to build up a network of contacts to form the envisaged ComHabitat network<sup>5</sup>. Networking will not only be achieved through specific ComHabitat funded activities, but through Management Group partners’ and other’s activities.

### **Internal capacity**

20. Targets have also been set relating to administration and systems development, governance and structure, and fundraising and promotion.

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<sup>5</sup> See Annex 2 for more information about the ComHabitat network.

### III. ACTIVITIES TO DATE

#### CCGHS process

21. In September 2004, an informal meeting CCGHS meeting was held during UN-Habitat's World Urban Forum in Barcelona, and included discussions on the draft Work Plan and planned research<sup>6</sup>. The meeting was attended by representatives from 7 member states (Canada, Sri Lanka, Malawi, Swaziland, Uganda, United Kingdom and Zambia). Representatives of the following organisations also attended: Commonwealth Association of Planners, Commonwealth Human Ecology Council, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, Commonwealth Secretariat, Development Initiatives Network (Nigeria) and Homeless International. Zambia's Minister of Local Government and Housing, Hon. Sylvia Masebo, M.P, chaired the meeting.

#### Research and information sharing

22. A draft research strategy was produced and approved by the ComHabitat Management Group as a living document, which will evolve with the research work of ComHabitat (the current version is included as Annex 3). The Management Group also agreed that future versions of the document should bring out the progress that had been made to date on research and the linkages established with initiatives such as the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory.

Two areas of work are being developed:

**(a) *Measuring progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda.***

CCGHS has prioritised monitoring and gauging progress and defined “*incorporating shelter provision into national poverty alleviation programmes*”<sup>7</sup> as a major objective; this incorporation will only be achieved if those influencing the design of these programmes have access to information about lack of shelter<sup>8</sup> provision. Statistics currently in use are often inappropriate due to the questionable validity of the indicators used and problems in the accuracy of the data. The first phase of this research project aims to draw together and assess existing information and indicators - produced both at country and international level – in order to identify key indicators that will enable effective tracking of implementation of the Habitat Agenda. It is hoped that the first research project will not only complement the work of UN-Habitat, but also enhance the ability of Ministers to advocate for inclusion of urban poverty and shelter data into national poverty alleviation strategies, such as PRSPs.

**(b) *Availability of, and options for, urban development finance.***

In *Focus on the Habitat Agenda*<sup>9</sup> the CCGHS highlighted “*the creation of new and innovative funds for housing and land development*” as a key element of the framework for action. A crucial element of encouraging the development of new and innovative funds must be an appreciation and analysis of existing funds, the context in which they have operated and lessons learnt. ComHabitat has chosen to focus on

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<sup>6</sup> A summary record of this meeting has been circulated.

<sup>7</sup> CCGHS (2001) *Statement by member countries of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements at the Special Session on Habitat II*, New York, June 8, 2001.

<sup>8</sup> Shelter is taken to mean adequate, safe, secure housing and the associated infrastructure.

<sup>9</sup> CCGHS (1999) *Focus on the Habitat Agenda: The Commonwealth Development Framework for Human Settlements*

researching finance for human settlements in urban areas for a number of reasons including: a recognition that poverty is becoming increasingly urban; and that in densely populated urban areas scaling up solutions will require larger scale and more complex financing arrangements than has been the case in the past. This will provide information to ComHabitat members on the best options for urban development finance and approaches that encourage the development of new and innovative funds.

23. Management Group members involved in the research projects have agreed a sample of 12 Commonwealth countries<sup>10</sup> for both research projects, and have begun work on four country papers and some thematic papers.

24. The ComHabitat Networking Event - an official side event in the World Urban Forum programme, entitled '*City-Community Partnerships in the Commonwealth*' - enabled the sharing of practical learning on city community partnerships. Multi-sectoral teams from Nairobi and Mumbai presented their experiences of moving from a situation of confrontational evictions of railway-side slum dwellers, to negotiations with slum dwellers' federations resulting in mass voluntary resettlement. There was a wide-ranging discussion that focussed on: how the complex negotiations necessary for such a large-scale resettlement process had occurred; how the social, economic and livelihoods aspects of resettlement had been managed; and how this programme could be replicated in cities as diverse as Calcutta and Accra. Speakers emphasised that political will is needed, together with the willingness of the slum dwellers to engage in planning for resettlement.

25. Revision of the ComHabitat web site – *www.comhabitat.org* – is in progress and will involve developing its information sharing function.

### **Networking and advocacy**

26. ComHabitat can advocate Commonwealth concerns and raise awareness on human settlement issues and policy approaches. The ComHabitat Secretariat and Management Group members have participated in a variety of meetings internationally, which has contributed to raising the profile of ComHabitat. The ComHabitat Secretariat has met with various elements of UN-Habitat, Commonwealth Professional Organisations and attended the Commonwealth Local Government Forum's regional symposium in Fiji Islands. The informal CCGHS meeting and the ComHabitat Networking event held during the World Urban Forum also provided opportunities to raise the profile of ComHabitat and identify contacts that could become part of the ComHabitat Network. More importantly, the Networking Event enabled discussion of how practically to develop working partnerships between national government, local government and civil society to tackle a complex issue that affected not only slum dwellers but also the wider city economy. A report on the ComHabitat Networking event is provided as Appendix 4.

### **Internal capacity**

27. Homeless International has established the administrative systems necessary to operate the ComHabitat Secretariat. A ComHabitat leaflet has been produced, and an article was written for the Commonwealth Association of Planners newsletter. The web site is being further developed in consultation with the Management Group.

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<sup>10</sup> Canada, Dominica, Fiji Islands, Ghana, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Malawi, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Tanzania & Zambia.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

28. Following a period when ComHabitat worked primarily to establish its objectives and approaches, much progress has been made since April 2004 to develop and initiate a Work Plan to addresses the broad policy objectives set by the CCGHS.

29. A successful networking event was delivered at the World Urban Forum in Barcelona (September 2004), which demonstrated the potential of ComHabitat to highlight examples of approaches that work, and to stimulate the exchange of experiences between countries, communities and sectors. Research has been initiated to identify indicators to help measure progress on the Habitat Agenda in a realistic way, and to examine the options for urban development finance. Systems have also been put in place to support the delivery of information that is of use and interest to practitioners in the Commonwealth, and to build a wider network of contacts for ComHabitat to draw-on in all of its work.

30. The current funding allocation from the UK Department for International Development concludes in June 2006. The challenge for ComHabitat, is to continue this progress and develop a solid programme of work that attracts further future funding from development agencies and other partners.

# **Annex I - The ComHabitat Work Plan**

## **1. Work Plan Development**

On 7 June 2004, the Management Group agreed a Work Plan, which had been developed by the ComHabitat Secretariat in close collaboration with Management Group members. This Annex is an elaboration of that Work Plan and includes targets for both added value work<sup>11</sup> (Section 2) and internal capacity<sup>12</sup> (Section 3). Targets are given for each area of work, together with a brief description of how the targets fit into the larger framework and priorities. Appendix 1 includes tables for each work area that illustrate the targets, the key activities to achieve each target and the timing of activities. At this stage, key activities for the period have been identified but other activities will be added as ComHabitat develops and new opportunities arise. In addition certain targets are short-term – for example, concerning the establishment of systems – whilst other targets are more strategic and long-term. In particular, the ComHabitat Secretariat hopes to develop projects to seek external funding.

Believing it was important to initiate work early and demonstrate progress to the CCGHS, the Management Group adopted the Work Plan as a ‘working document’ for action and presented it to an informal meeting of the CCGHS in the wings of the UN-Habitat World Urban Forum in Barcelona in September 2004. Activities to date are detailed in Section 4 of this Annex. A budget to utilise the existing committed funding, and expenditure to December 2004, are presented in Section 5 of this Annex.

This Work Plan is a ‘working document’, designed to evolve as a result of discussion among ComHabitat’s partners and is presented to the CCGHS for its consideration in April 2005.

## **2. Added value**

Members of the CCGHS, Management Group and wider ComHabitat Network are already working towards the Commonwealth Goal, Habitat Agenda and achieving the MDGs. ComHabitat should seek to add value to that work, rather than replicate it. Targets have been identified in three areas of added value:

- networking and advocacy;
- research and information sharing; and
- the CCGHS process.

These three areas are interlinked and to a large extent mutually dependent. ComHabitat needs to establish and strengthen its network, before it can advocate successfully. Information and research findings need to be disseminated through ComHabitat’s network, and can also form the basis for advocacy. Perceptions of the success and relevance of CCGHS meetings and ComHabitat events will influence the growth of ComHabitat’s network.

The limited budget currently available for ComHabitat activities means that the development of an effective web site and electronic communication will be vital to achieving the targets in

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<sup>11</sup> The CCGHS process, research/information sharing and networking/advocacy.

<sup>12</sup> Administration, governance/structure and fundraising/publicity.

these added value areas. Management Group partners also have an important role in keeping the ComHabitat Secretariat, and each other, informed of their activities.

Achieving the targets outlined in the following four areas will enable ComHabitat to move towards the vision for 2006.

#### **Vision of ComHabitat in 2006<sup>13</sup>**

ComHabitat will be recognised as an established, credible and respected facility working at international level and offering the following:

- An effective mechanism for promoting and monitoring, within and between Commonwealth countries, the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and associated Millennium Development Goals.
- An information and referral service for CCGHS and other governmental, local authority, non-governmental, community, professional and private sector agencies seeking assistance in strengthening their capacity to implement the Habitat Agenda, particularly in the area of creating alternatives to forced eviction.
- An active network within the Commonwealth enabling dialogue and exchange between all the key partners involved in implementing the Habitat Agenda.
- A means of strengthening dialogue between the Commonwealth and other agencies and networks concerned with ensuring safe and secure shelter for all.

## **2.1 Networking and advocacy**

ComHabitat differs from other agencies and programmes in its position with respect to the CCGHS: Ministers have a lead position in facilitating implementation of the Habitat Agenda and achieving the MDGs most relevant to human settlement development and the Ministerial Group is an integral part of the ComHabitat structure. ComHabitat's networking and advocacy should stem from both this unique position, and its base in partnerships between the sectors that are critical to implementing the Habitat Agenda (including government, local government, NGOs and private sector). A number of the Commonwealth's characteristics make it an ideal forum for exploring implementing the Habitat Agenda and achieving both the Commonwealth Goal and the MDGs. There are Commonwealth countries on every continent. Commonwealth membership is diverse in terms of size, income and type of economy, but members share a common working language and similar legal, political and educational systems. The Commonwealth also has a tradition of working through consensus based on shared values.

ComHabitat has the potential to promote the CCGHS priorities, Habitat Agenda, Commonwealth Goal and MDGs both within the Commonwealth, and also to the global community on the basis of Commonwealth experiences. Although some activities can be planned in advance, the nature of advocacy is such that there needs to be flexibility in responding to current events and issues.

It is important for ComHabitat to establish links with key campaigns and institutions, and also to build up a network of contacts to form the envisaged ComHabitat network<sup>14</sup>. Networking will not only be achieved through specific ComHabitat funded activities, but through Management Group partners' and other's activities. Networking will be partly

<sup>13</sup> Taken from Homeless International's proposal to host ComHabitat.

<sup>14</sup> See Annex 2 for more information about the ComHabitat network.

achieved through attending key events, however it is vital that criteria for attendance by the ComHabitat Secretariat are established, in order to ensure that resources (both time and money) are not wasted in attending too many events. The (interim) Management Group has discussed a timetable of key events that ComHabitat should attend and further events, which Management Group partners may be attending and which ComHabitat should track. ComHabitat should have a focused theme to take to the various events it will be attending; the (interim) Management Group identified partnership as the theme for the first year.

Targets in the area of networking and advocacy include:

- To establish linkages with relevant organisations in the UK and other Commonwealth countries.
- To establish linkages with UN-Habitat's campaigns on urban governance and secure tenure.
- To establish linkages with UN Millennium Project task force 7 (water & sanitation) and task force 8 (improving the lives of slum dwellers).
- To organise ComHabitat network events, including at the World Urban Forum.
- To attend relevant Commonwealth, UN-Habitat and other events to promote ComHabitat and develop its network.
- To build on linkages with Commonwealth Consultative Group on the Environment.

## **2.2 Research and information sharing**

There are numerous research agencies, academic institutions and programmes actively researching issues surrounding the Habitat Agenda and related Millennium Development Goals, based in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. ComHabitat, with its limited resources, should not be trying to duplicate these programmes, but rather to build on these, complement their approaches and provide a Commonwealth perspective. ComHabitat can play an important role in making existing information accessible – particularly through its website – and also in developing research projects specifically geared to the CCGHS process. A draft research strategy for ComHabitat is included as Appendix 2 to this Work Plan.

Targets in the area of research include:

- To develop a framework for research to identify, in collaboration with other agencies and programmes, key indicators that will enable effective tracking of implementation of the Habitat Agenda.
- To produce documentation and design and build a database detailing the current status of Commonwealth member states in implementing the Habitat Agenda and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, on basis of above research.
- To develop a framework for research on the availability and options for urban development finance.
- To disseminate research findings widely and through most appropriate media and fora (including use of web site and international events).
- To identify key resource centres where good practice has enabled significant progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and where personnel are able and willing to share their methods, learning and insights with others.

- To identify and provide web site links to key UN-Habitat (and other agencies') research and documentation outputs.

### **2.3 CCGHS process**

The Commonwealth Secretariat will continue to convene both formal and informal meetings of the CCGHS. Homeless International, as ComHabitat Secretariat, will support the Commonwealth Secretariat in the preparation of papers and documentation.

It is envisaged that members of the CCGHS will wish to continue holding consultations in the wings of UN-Habitat meetings - with the next formal meeting during the 2005 UN-Habitat Governing Council - and to advocate Commonwealth concerns at international meetings. Forthcoming opportunities include the 13<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), which will address the themes of water, sanitation and human settlements, and the MDG review. The CCGHS may consider linking up with discussions in the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Environment (CCGE) during CSD.

## **3. Internal capacity**

Targets have been identified in three areas of internal capacity:

- administration and systems development;
- governance and structure; and
- fundraising and promotion.

ComHabitat is now being hosted by an established organisation; therefore some of the challenges previously faced in establishing internal systems no longer apply. In particular, ComHabitat Secretariat will be using Homeless International's existing Financial Procedures, Schedule of Delegated Authority, Per Diem Policy and Personnel Policy.

### **3.1 Administration and systems development**

Targets in the area of administration and systems development include:

- To finalise a contractual arrangement between the Commonwealth Foundation and Homeless International by the end of June 2004<sup>15</sup>
- To liaise with the Commonwealth Secretariat, and others as appropriate, to clarify roles with respect to organising CCGHS meetings.
- To establish and maintain a management information system for ComHabitat's network contacts and other information.
- To manage the budget and funding:
  - operate ComHabitat as a separate 'company' within Homeless International's SAGE accounting system; and
  - report to the Commonwealth Foundation on a quarterly basis.

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<sup>15</sup> It has been agreed that the Commonwealth Foundation will continue in its existing Memorandum of Understanding with DFID and will subcontract the hosting of ComHabitat to Homeless International.

- To co-ordinate organisation of Management Group meetings and ensure the adequate production of relevant background documentation and briefing papers.
- To design templates and a house style for ComHabitat documents, based on branding exercise, by end July 2004

### 3.2 Governance and structure

Targets in the area of governance and structure include:

- To agree a proposal for the future structure of ComHabitat at the (interim) Management Group meeting in June 2004, and present this at the next formal meeting of the CCGHS (target completed, paper presented as Annex 2).
- To investigate options for the registration of ComHabitat as an independent legal entity and present these to the appropriate body for decision by June 2006.

### 3.3 Fundraising and promotion

Targets in the area of fundraising and promotion include:

- To develop and maintain the ComHabitat web site as an effective means of communicating ComHabitat activities and sharing information.
- To produce appropriate publicity material and distribute at key events and through networks.
- To develop a communications strategy for ComHabitat
- To mobilise the necessary resources to sustain a long-term resource, advice and referral centre<sup>16</sup>.

## 4. Budget and expenditure

The annual budget, together with expenditure from May 2004 to December 2004 is presented in the table below. Expenditure on meetings and events is higher than budget because of a generous additional grant from DFID to facilitate participation of speakers from the South at the World Urban Forum.

Budget line	Budget Year 1	Expenditure 31-Dec-04
Personnel & Research	£60,000	£29,69
Office facilities & supplies	£12,000	£12,13
Equipment	£3,000	-
International travel	£5,000	£3,76
UK travel	£500	£74
Documentation & website	£5,000	£76
Accounting and Audit	£1,000	-
Meetings and events	£3,500	£6,80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£90,000</b>	<b>£53,91</b>

<sup>16</sup> Detailed fundraising proposals will developed after the April 2005 CCGHS meeting, in order to take into account the priorities identified by the CCGHS.





# **Annex 2 - A Proposed Structure for ComHabitat**

## **4. 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 Annex is to outline a Structure for ComHabitat based upon its historical evolution, on-going discussions in the Management Group, and new developments, including the tendering out of the ComHabitat Secretariat function. Approval of a working Structure will allow energies to be focussed on ComHabitat's work.

The ComHabitat Structure should support 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”*. 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;
- participation of all sectors concerned with human settlements issues (Government including central government, local government and donor governments; civil society organisations including slum dwellers organisations, professional associations, trade unions, NGOs, independent research institutions; and business.);
- participation from all regions in the Commonwealth in the work of ComHabitat; and
- a partnership approach to addressing Habitat Agenda objectives.

It is recognised that ComHabitat's Structure will evolve and become increasingly refined as a result of its practice and as additional resources become available. The Structure shown schematically in section 3 is proposed as a possible end goal by June 2007. Key issues to be addressed in this period will be: widening membership of the Management Group (both geographically and sectorally); and developing the broader ComHabitat Network.

## **5. Background**

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.

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.

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 Group proposes that the evolving structure of ComHabitat be considered at the meeting in April 2005. The proposed structure outlined below 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. However it is recognised that the proposed structure is one that it will take time to achieve and that the development that takes place will be incremental rather than sudden.

## **6. Proposed Structure**

### **6.1 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 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 the appointment of one or more government representatives to the ComHabitat Management Group<sup>17</sup>, who will also participate in CCGHS meetings.

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<sup>17</sup> Given that Ministers are unlikely to be able to dedicate the necessary time to this function the CCGHS members might

- Be responsible for determining the broad work programme of ComHabitat.
- At members discretion, be open to observers from agencies representing other sectors concerned with the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

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decide to nominate one or more senior civil servants to this position.

## 6.2 ComHabitat Management Group

The Management Group will provide detailed oversight of ComHabitat. It will comprise:

Government representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central government: at least one government representative nominated by the CCGHS</li> <li>• Local government: represented by the Commonwealth Local Government Forum</li> <li>• Intergovernmental organisations: Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth Foundation</li> <li>• Donors: key contributors to ComHabitat (currently, DfID)</li> </ul>
Civil society representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commonwealth Professional Associations with an interest in Habitat Agenda issues [for example the Commonwealth Architects Association (CAA), Commonwealth Association for Surveying and Land Economy (CASLE), the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council (CHEC) and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP)]</li> <li>• Other civil society organisations - at least 3 representatives selected from the various Habitat civil society stakeholders, including slum dwellers organisations, women's organisations, trade unions, independent research institutions.</li> </ul>
Business representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be decided.</li> </ul>

A process will be put in place for selecting and rotating civil society representatives to ensure diversity of sector and geographical region.

The Management Group will:

- Have a chair, which will rotate as determined by the group.
- Attend CCGHS meetings.
- Meet twice a year (or as determined by the Group): ideally once prior to a CCGHS meeting, and once virtually.
- Oversee the work of the ComHabitat Secretariat and be responsible for approving and monitoring the detailed annual Work Plan and budget.
- 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.
- Initiate and develop new activities for consideration by the CCGHS.

## 6.3 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.

The broader aim of the Network will be to operate as a dynamic network that provides a means to access information and support for practitioners addressing urban poverty and slum upgrading challenges in Commonwealth countries.

The Network should provide<sup>18</sup>:

- **A means of finding out how solutions to specific human settlements problems have been developed in other countries.**

For example, in Mumbai the Municipality, the National Railway Authority, a Federation of Slum Dwellers and the State authorities found a way to work together to relocate more than 30,000 families from alongside railway tracks. The experience has been shared with the Kenyan Government and Railway Authority. As a result a resettlement strategy is being developed in Nairobi with a similar combination of key stakeholders and with the backing of the World Bank, which is financing infrastructure upgrading in the city. In Mumbai the process is being replicated to achieve negotiated resettlement of many thousands of households to allow implementation of the Municipal Urban Infrastructure Project. The approach provides a politically acceptable alternative to forced evictions and benefits not only slum dwellers, but also the city as a whole and the national authorities that have a responsibility to deliver important infrastructure services.

- **Support in ensuring that urban poverty and housing issues are recognised in national poverty alleviation strategies (including PRSPs and MDG reports).**

CCGHS has defined "*incorporating shelter provision into national poverty alleviation programmes*"<sup>19</sup> as a major objective; this incorporation will only be achieved if those influencing the design of these programmes have access to information about lack of shelter<sup>20</sup> provision. An increasing number of Commonwealth countries are developing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which seek to both analyse poverty and elaborate strategies to combat it and which increasingly influence national budget allocations and donor strategies. However, many PRSPs, fail to address issues related to the urban poor due to the way in which poverty is measured<sup>21</sup>,

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<sup>18</sup> ComHabitat's planned research will also contribute to a number of these objectives (see Annex 3).

<sup>19</sup> CCGHS (2001) *Statement by member countries of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements at the Special Session on Habitat II*, New York, June 8, 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Shelter is taken to mean adequate, safe, secure housing and the associated infrastructure.

<sup>21</sup> Mitlin, D. (2004) "Understanding Urban Poverty: what the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers tell us", *IIED Working Paper* (series on Poverty Reduction in Urban Areas), London: IIED.

- Access to policy instruments that have proved effective in strengthening local capacity to address urban poverty and slum upgrading issues.
- Access to experienced practitioners from government, civil society and the business world willing to share practical advice on slum upgrading with others.
- Information regarding options for financing slum upgrading and infrastructure provision given differing national contexts.
- Information regarding donor priorities and strategies relating to human settlements.
- A means of bringing together a diverse range of expertise from across the Commonwealth to influence global and local approaches to tackling urban poverty and slum upgrading.

#### **6.4 ComHabitat Secretariat**

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

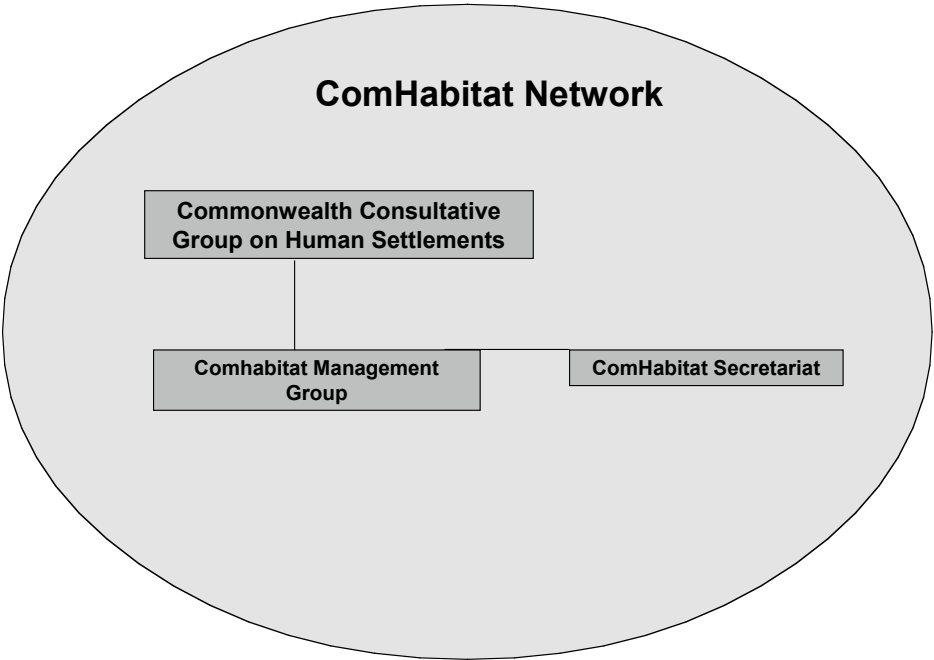
- Facilitate and be responsible for the implementation of day-to-day programme of activities of ComHabitat.
- Produce regular progress reports for the ComHabitat Management Group, the CCGHS and the ComHabitat Network.
- Co-ordinate the preparation and implementation of a ComHabitat annual programme of activities.
- Provide reference and advisory services to the ComHabitat partnership as a whole.
- Work with the Management Group to initiate and develop new activities for consideration by the CCGHS.

# 7. Positioning

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 is summarised schematically in Figure 2 below.

Figure 1 - ComHabitat Structure



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

Central Government:	Commonwealth Secretariat
Donors:	DFID and the Commonwealth Foundation
Local Government:	Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF)
NGOs, Professionals:	Commonwealth Human Ecology Council (CHEC), Homeless International, Commonwealth Foundation (discussions underway with Commonwealth Associations of architects, planners, surveyors and engineers
CBOs,	None at present. Slum Dwellers International has wide commonwealth membership, is recognised by UNHabitat, and could be invited to participate.
Private Sector:	None at present, but consultations to develop the ‘Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5’ involved the Commonwealth Business Council

# Annex 3 - ComHabitat Research Strategy

## 8. Introduction

ComHabitat has developed a research strategy to contribute towards the CCGHS's mandates of measuring and gauging progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and providing practical assistance to Commonwealth countries in implementing the Agenda. ComHabitat, with its limited resources, should not be trying to duplicate existing research programmes, but rather to build on these, complement their approaches and provide a Commonwealth perspective. The diversity of Commonwealth membership in terms of country size, geographical location, income and type of economy, combined with a largely common heritage in terms of legislation relating to human settlements, makes the Commonwealth a particularly useful arena in which to carry out research. Commonwealth countries offer a broad and rich spectrum of experience in human settlements issues. ComHabitat can also play an important role in making existing information accessible – particularly through its website – and in developing research projects specifically geared to the CCGHS process.

In developing the Research Strategy, Management Group members have agreed both on some principles for ComHabitat's involvement in research, and on two initial research projects that are seen as working towards priorities set by the CCGHS. The principles identified for ComHabitat research were:

- Avoid duplication and work in partnership.
- Ensure research is relevant to the work of the CCGHS.
- Ensure research results are accessible by CCGHS and other Habitat Agenda partners.
- Facilitate linkages and dialogue between agencies concerned with human settlements.

The two initial research projects are concerned with:

- measuring progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and working towards the Commonwealth goal and related Millennium Development Goals; and
- ascertaining the availability and options for urban development finance.

CCGHS has prioritised monitoring and gauging progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and defined incorporating shelter provision into national poverty alleviation programmes as a major objective; this incorporation will only be achieved if those influencing the design of these programmes have access to information about lack of shelter<sup>22</sup> provision. Statistics currently in use are often inappropriate due to the questionable validity of the indicators used and problems in the accuracy of the data. It is hoped that the first research project will not only complement the work of UN-Habitat, but also enhance the ability of Ministers to advocate for inclusion of urban poverty and shelter data into national poverty alleviation strategies, such as PRSPs. Current work carried out by UN-Habitat seeks to simplify the collation of statistical indicators relating to inadequate shelter. In addition it is anticipated that the research will highlight practical examples of progress made in this area within different national contexts.

CCGHS highlighted the creation of new and innovative funds for housing and land development as a key element of the Commonwealth framework for action. A crucial element

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<sup>22</sup> Shelter is taken to mean adequate, safe, secure housing and the associated infrastructure.

of encouraging the development of new and innovative funds must be an appreciation and analysis of existing funds, the context in which they have operated and lessons learnt. ComHabitat has chosen to focus on researching finance for human settlements in urban areas for a number of reasons including: a recognition that poverty is becoming increasingly urban; and that in densely populated urban areas scaling up solutions will require larger scale and more complex financing arrangements than has been the case in the past. It is hoped that the second research project will result in practical recommendations of ways to increase the accessibility of urban development finance for a range of key actors.

## 9. Background to ComHabitat’s involvement in research

In *Focus on the Habitat Agenda*<sup>23</sup>, the CCGHS made a commitment to “*work through practical, hands-on approaches to providing shelter and improving human settlements*”, and identified “*monitoring and gauging progress*” as a key element of this work. The Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5<sup>24</sup>, states that the “*CCGHS, through partnership with other concerned sectors of the community, will assist Commonwealth countries to implement the Habitat Agenda in practical ways which include: . . . Promoting the sharing of ideas, experience and best practices . . . [and] . . . Assisting in capacity building through for example, increased access to relevant information including web sites . . .*”. More recently, research and information sharing has been identified as a means by which ComHabitat can assist the CCGHS in meeting these commitments. The proposal for hosting ComHabitat, which was accepted by the Management Group in April 2004, outlined a vision for ComHabitat in 2006 that placed monitoring and gauging progress, and sharing experiences at the centre (see Box 1 below). With the widespread adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) it is important to also consider how people will monitor and gauge progress towards achieving these goals.

### Box 1 – Vision of ComHabitat in 2006

ComHabitat will be recognised as an established, credible and respected facility working at international level and offering the following:

- An effective mechanism for promoting and monitoring, within and between Commonwealth countries, the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and associated Millennium Development Goals.
- An information and referral service for CCGHS and other governmental, local authority, non-governmental, community, professional and private sector agencies seeking assistance in strengthening their capacity to implement the Habitat Agenda, particularly in the area of creating alternatives to forced eviction.
- An active network within the Commonwealth enabling dialogue and exchange between all the key partners involved in implementing the Habitat Agenda.
- A means of strengthening dialogue between the Commonwealth and other agencies and networks concerned with ensuring safe and secure shelter for all.

## 10. Some principles for ComHabitat’s involvement in research

ComHabitat differs from other agencies and programmes in its position with respect to the CCGHS, and the lead position that Ministers have for facilitating implementation of the

<sup>23</sup> CCGHS (1999) *Focus on the Habitat Agenda: The Commonwealth Development Framework for Human Settlements*  
<sup>24</sup> CCGHS (2001) *Statement by member countries of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements at the Special Session on Habitat II*, New York, June 8, 2001.

Habitat Agenda and achieving the MDGs most relevant to human settlement development. It is important that this positioning be strengthened rather than diluted through the competencies that the ComHabitat Secretariat seeks to develop, including those in the area of research. Given the anchor of ComHabitat in the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS), one of the main objectives of the facility should be to act as a referral and support base for CCGHS itself, as well as for NGOs, CBOs, local government, etc. It is important that such a base be anchored in real practices rather than idealised notions of “what should be”. Research will play a key role in ensuring that ComHabitat can play this role.

There are Commonwealth countries on every continent. The diversity of Commonwealth membership in terms of country size, income and type of economy, combined with a largely common heritage in terms of legislation relating to human settlements, makes the Commonwealth a particularly useful arena in which to carry out research.

There are a number of principles that ComHabitat should consider in developing research projects:

- **Avoid duplication and work in partnership.** There are numerous research agencies, academic institutions and programmes actively researching issues surrounding the Habitat Agenda and related Millennium Development Goals, based in the Commonwealth and elsewhere. ComHabitat, with its limited resources, should not be trying to duplicate these programmes, but rather to build on these, complement their approaches and provide a Commonwealth perspective.
- **Ensuring research is relevant.** Research projects should be relevant to the work of the CCGHS and the priorities that it has from time to time outlined. In particular, research should work towards the aim of the CCGHS employing “*vision and innovation to establish new and practical solutions to the problem of providing shelter for all*”<sup>25</sup>. Research should also take account of wider movements in the field of human settlement development.
- **Ensuring research results are accessible.** This includes not only the results of any ComHabitat research, but also the research of others and is key to ComHabitat becoming established as a useful referral and support base for CCGHS and other Habitat Agenda partners. Accessibility not only involves availability – for example through the ComHabitat web site – but also presentation in appropriate language<sup>26</sup> and formats, for example case studies of real examples. The Communication Strategy currently being developed by the ComHabitat Secretariat will outline some ground rules for documentation.
- **Facilitating linkages and dialogue.** Research projects should provide material to feed into macro-level planning; particularly as such processes are frequently dominated by agencies, such as finance ministries, that lack a human settlements perspective. Both the processes and outcomes of ComHabitat’s research should focus on facilitating linkages and dialogue, rather than merely the production of research papers.

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<sup>25</sup> CCGHS (1999) *Focus on the Habitat Agenda: The Commonwealth Development Framework for Human Settlements* (emphasis added).

<sup>26</sup> Language here refers to terminology and style.

## 11. Initial research projects

### 11.1 Context

In the field of human settlement development, and development more widely, a number of trends have become apparent. The series of UN conferences during the 1980s and 1990s, together with their five- and ten-year reviews, led to the UN resolving to achieve a number of new, time-bound targets for economic and social development in order to free people from *“the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty”*<sup>27</sup>. Most bilateral and multilateral development agencies have taken since used these MDGs as a framework to guide their programme design and resource allocation.

Poverty has also become more widely defined as *“caused not only by inadequate income but also by many other (usually interconnected) deprivations”*<sup>28</sup>, many of which the Habitat Agenda seeks to address. Meanwhile, an increasing number of Commonwealth countries are developing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). These PRSPs have sought to both analyse poverty and elaborate strategies to combat it. However, in a review of 23 PRSPs, Mitlin (2004) identified an *“apparent confusion of approach, methodology and analysis”* in their measurement of poverty. As a result *“simple quantitative estimates based on poverty lines are failing to pick up issues relating to the urban poor”*<sup>29</sup>, but it is these estimates upon which countries’ and donors’ strategies are based.

Some agencies, including DFID, have begun to focus on urban/rural linkages and the World Habitat Day theme for 2004 was ‘Cities - engines of rural development’. The Habitat Agenda calls for *“a regional and cross-sectoral approach to human settlements planning, which places emphasis on rural/urban linkages and treats villages and cities as two ends of a human settlements continuum”*<sup>30</sup>. A recent paper argued that *“the rapid growth of capital cities like a Kampala or a Dar es Salaam, that perhaps offer the only prospects of serious poverty reduction in the country where they are located, is often prematurely curtailed by a failure to support the urban infrastructure necessary to fuel the growth process”*<sup>31</sup>.

Considering the breadth of vision of the Habitat Agenda, and the inter-dependent nature of the Millennium Development Goals, all of the MDGs could be considered as part of ComHabitat’s research remit. UN-Habitat has recognised this interdependence in its latest Urban Indicators Programme, which has broadened its scope beyond its traditional range of Habitat indicators to look at MDG indicators. However the most directly relevant targets to ComHabitat are likely to be those under Goal 7 “Ensuring environmental sustainability”:

- Target 10, to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to drinking water and basic sanitation; and
- Target 11, to achieve by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

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<sup>27</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution 55/2, *United Nations Millennium Declaration*, paragraph 11.

<sup>28</sup> Mitlin, D. and Satterthwaite, D. (Eds.) (2004) *Empowering Squatter Citizen: local government, civil society and urban poverty reduction*, London: Earthscan, p xii.

<sup>29</sup> Mitlin, D. (2004) “Understanding Urban Poverty: what the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers tell us”, *IIED Working Paper* (series on Poverty Reduction in Urban Areas), London: IIED.

<sup>30</sup> UNCHS (1996) *The Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda*, Nairobi: UNCHS, paragraph 104.

<sup>31</sup> Ellis, F. and Harris, N. (2004) *New thinking about urban and rural development*, Keynote paper for DFID sustainable development retreat, University of Surrey, Guildford, July 2004.

## 11.2 Design issues

ComHabitat has a limited budget with which to carry out these two research programmes, and is unable to fundraise for research until it can demonstrate concrete achievements in this area. As a result the first phase of research is essentially desk-based; in-country research has been limited to researchers' visits for other purposes, or work carried out by local partner organisations. The aim is to have completed four country studies by the time of the CCGHS meeting in April 2005.

The ComHabitat Secretariat and Management Group partners had detailed discussions regarding the research design, including the selection of countries for the research. The countries have been chosen to be broadly representative of the diversity of the Commonwealth; but there were also pragmatic reasons for choosing certain countries, for example the opportunity to travel there.

## 11.3 Research on measuring progress (indicators)

In carrying out research on measuring progress, ComHabitat is seeking to support CCGHS's commitment to "*monitoring and gauging progress*"<sup>32</sup>. The proposal for hosting ComHabitat, which was accepted by the Management Group in April 2004, outlined two research projects the first of which focused on indicators. The proposal included the following activities in its work programme:

- Carry out the necessary research to identify, in collaboration with other agencies and programmes, key indicators that will enable effective tracking of implementation of the Habitat Agenda.
- On the basis of research carried out, produce documentation and design and build a database detailing the current status of Commonwealth member states in implementing the Habitat Agenda and achieving the MDGs. Focus on key partnerships that enabled progress to be made.
- Identify key resource centres where good practice has enabled significant progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda and where personnel are able and willing to share their methods, learning and insights with others.
- Establish systems whereby those who need assistance are able to contact and establish linkages with relevant resource centres.

The following section describes how these proposed activities relate to the research principles outlined above.

There is much current work on indicators and measurement (e.g. UN-Habitat's Global Urban Observatory and the MDG taskforces). Many Commonwealth countries also produced National Habitat Reports for Istanbul+5. However, this information is often not accessible to practitioners. CCGHS has prioritised monitoring and gauging progress and defined "*incorporating shelter provision into national poverty alleviation programmes*"<sup>33</sup> as a major objective; this incorporation will only be achieved if those influencing the design of these

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<sup>32</sup> CCGHS (1999) *Focus on the Habitat Agenda: The Commonwealth Development Framework for Human Settlements*  
<sup>33</sup> CCGHS (2001) *Statement by member countries of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements at the Special Session on Habitat II*, New York, June 8, 2001.

programmes have access to information about lack of shelter<sup>34</sup> provision. Statistics currently in use are often inappropriate due to the questionable validity of the indicators used and problems in the accuracy of the data:

*“There is no lack of nonsense statistics on levels of urban poverty. Anyone with knowledge of Nairobi or any other urban centre in Kenya would be astonished to see that only 1.2 per cent of Kenya’s urban population was considered “poor” in 1998 . . . or that only 4 per cent of its urban population lacked sanitation in 2000”*<sup>35</sup>

Community-based organisations and local government are developing new ways of measuring and prioritising; for example the surveys carried out by federations of the urban poor affiliated to Slum/Shack Dwellers International<sup>36</sup>, or City Development Strategies being developed by many cities.

The research on indicators is seeking to:

- Develop working relationships with other research initiatives<sup>37</sup>.
- Review and synthesise Habitat National Reports.
- Review Commonwealth PRSPs with a view to analysing the degree to which they are supportive of Target 10, Target 11 and the CCGHS goal.
- Provide links to key web sites, documents and contact details of researchers through the ComHabitat web site<sup>38</sup>.
- Identify key indicators and the levels and methods whereby these indicators can be tracked and collated.
- Develop a database and provide overview syntheses and analysis on the ComHabitat web site.
- Identify key resource centres where good practice has enabled significant progress in implementing the Habitat Agenda.

### 11.3.1 Research questions

The following questions are being considered in the research:

- What is considered progress? Are the MDGs and Habitat Agenda being looked at, or are there other targets?
- What reports/strategies exist (Habitat National Reports & Plan of Action, PRSPs, City Development Strategies, Local Agenda 21, MDG progress reviews, National Strategies for Sustainable Development, etc)?
- Do these reports/strategies consider the following issues:
  - MDGs (particularly targets 10 and 11);
  - Urban/rural differences in poverty (and measurement of);
  - Human settlements, water and sanitation and their links to other aspects of poverty?
- What indicators are being used to measure progress?

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<sup>34</sup> Shelter is taken to mean adequate, safe, secure housing and the associated infrastructure.

<sup>35</sup> Satterthwaite, D. (2003) “The Millennium Development Goals and Poverty Reduction” in Satterthwaite, D. (Ed.) *The Millennium Development Goals and Local Processes: Hitting the target or missing the point?* London: IIED, p 38

<sup>36</sup> See for example, Weru, J. (2004) “Community federations and city upgrading: the work of Pamoja Trust and Muungano in Kenya”, *Environment and Urbanization*, 16 (1), pp. 47 – 62.

<sup>37</sup> For example, the ComHabitat Secretariat has already met with Eduardo Moreno, Chief - Global Urban Observatory, UN-Habitat and WaterAid, and has identified further relevant research initiatives.

<sup>38</sup> For example the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory web site, or the reports of the Millennium Task Forces.

- Where does the information come from? Who collects it? How?
- Is the available information considered accurate?
- What other information is available, but not being used?
- How does information feed into planning/implementation? Is there a National Plan of Action for implementing the Habitat Agenda or an equivalent document? How do national poverty strategies link to national budget allocations?
- Institutional mapping. Which agencies are involved in human settlements issues? What are the relationships between the various agencies? Which ministries are responsible for housing, water, sanitation, local government, PRSPs, National statistics offices, etc?
- Are there interesting case studies of progress that could be considered as key resource centres?

#### **11.4 Research on urban finance**

In *Focus on the Habitat Agenda*<sup>39</sup>, the CCGHS highlighted “*the creation of new and innovative funds for housing and land development*” as a key element of the framework for action. A crucial element of encouraging the development of new and innovative funds must be an appreciation and analysis of existing funds, the context in which they have operated and lessons learnt. The second research project outlined in the proposal for hosting ComHabitat, which was accepted by the Management Group in April 2004, focuses on urban finance. The proposal included the following activity in its work programme:

- Carry out research on the availability and options for urban development finance and disseminate the findings of this research widely

ComHabitat has chosen to focus on researching finance for human settlements in urban areas for a number of reasons including: a recognition that poverty is becoming increasingly urban<sup>40</sup>; and that in densely populated urban areas financing needs are larger scale and more complex<sup>41</sup>. Research into financing human settlements development (including infrastructure) has been carried out by a range of institutions, including international NGOs such as Homeless International and WaterAid. It is important that ComHabitat seeks to build upon this work.

The research on urban finance is examining the following research issues:

- financial and banking regulations and their impact on settlement investment;
- the development of local financial markets;
- the range and status of local financial institutions, including banks, micro-finance institutions and non-formal institutions; and
- the range of products available (and affordable to different groups) for slum upgrading, home improvement, new build, land purchase, infrastructure development, etc.

<sup>39</sup> CCGHS (1999) *Focus on the Habitat Agenda: The Commonwealth Development Framework for Human Settlements*

<sup>40</sup> UN-Habitat (2003) *Slums of the World: the face of urban poverty in the new millennium?* Nairobi: UN-Habitat, p.12.

<sup>41</sup> Providing micro-finance to individuals often cannot help in improving housing and infrastructure in dense urban settlements, instead large-scale finance is needed, for example to construct community toilet blocks, or settlement-wide water and drainage systems.



# **Annex 4- Report on Networking Event at WUF**

## **City-community partnerships in the Commonwealth**

The Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements (CCGHS) is an intergovernmental group made up of Ministers responsible for human settlements. ComHabitat consists of the CCGHS supported in practical ways by agencies from government, local government, civil society and the private sector. The session was chaired by Hon. Sylvia Masebo, Minister of Local Government and Housing, Zambia and attended by a range of participants, including Government Ministers and senior civil servants. Multi-sectoral teams from Nairobi and Mumbai also presented their experiences of moving from a situation of confrontational evictions of railway-side slum dwellers, to negotiations with slum dwellers' federations resulting in mass voluntary resettlement. DFID provided funding to enable some of the speakers to participate.

In Mumbai, under the World Bank funded Mumbai Urban Transport Project, more than 60,000 people were resettled in less than two years, making way for improvements in Mumbai's railway system. The resettlement programme was underpinned by strong levels of community organisation among the population affected. Dr. Joshi, Metropolitan Commissioner, Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) spoke about the scale of Mumbai's slum population. The government's aim is to make Mumbai slum-free within 10 years, which would involve improving or replacing more than 1 million houses. He emphasised that this gigantic task can only be achieved by working together in partnerships, as in the railway resettlement.

Mr. Garud, Chief Engineer with Indian Railways described how railway-side slums – many of which had been in existence for more than 20 years – were affecting both existing services and work to develop the railways. A series of rulings by the Commissioner of Railway Safety had reduced the operating speed from 80 kph to just 10 kph, severely affecting efficiency. The Railways worked together with the other agencies to support a community-led survey of the slums, which found that 25,000 families were living within the 30-metre railway safety zone. It was agreed to clear a minimum 10-metre safety zone, involving moving 12,000 families. As a result of this resettlement, trains are now operating at 80 kph, and a typical commuter journey of 1 hour 20 minutes now takes 55 minutes.

Jockin Arpurtham, President of the National Slum Dwellers Federation described how communities had led the resettlement process, from surveying and mapping those to be moved through to allocating the new homes. He described how “for 20 years everybody said nothing is possible, these trains will not improve, the people will not move”, yet by working together with slum dwellers mass resettlement has been achieved.

Mrs Edith Jenkins, Estate Manager, Kenya Railways described her visit to India where, together with Ministry officials and community members, she had learnt from the Mumbai resettlement. Around 70,000 people live alongside the railway lines in Nairobi, and most of the structures immediately adjacent to the lines are commercial. Following the Indian exchange, Kenya Railways, the Ministry and the slum dwellers organisation – Muungano wa

Wanavijji – met to agree how to move forward. An immediate result was traders moving back to clear a 15-metre safety zone. The organisations are now working together to plan more permanent resettlement from a 30-metre zone. She said that “most important was the shift of the government’s thinking away from the policies that we had before into a policy where we now embrace the slum community.”

Ezekiel Rema and Joseph Muturi of Muungano wa Wanavijji described how their organisation was formed and operates, before outlining the development of their relationship with the Railways and Ministry. Ezekiel described how Muungano has worked with the Ministry on practical activities, such as mapping, and how through this their voice has been heard.

There was a wide-ranging discussion that focussed on:

- how the complex negotiations necessary for such a large-scale resettlement process had occurred;
- how the social, economic and livelihoods aspects of resettlement had been managed; and
- how this programme could be replicated in cities as diverse as Calcutta and Accra.

Speakers emphasised that political will is needed, together with the willingness of the slum dwellers to engage in planning for resettlement.

## **Annex 5 – Abbreviations & Acronyms**

CAA	Commonwealth Association of Architects
CAP	Commonwealth Association of Planners
CASLE	Commonwealth Association of Surveying and Land Economy
CBOs	Community-based organisations
CCGE	Commonwealth Consultative Group on the Environment
CCGHS	Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CHEC	Commonwealth Human Ecology Council
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
DFID	Department for International Development
Istanbul+5	United Nations General Assembly Special Session for an Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda, New York, June 2001.
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
UN	United Nations
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UN-Habitat GC	UN-Habitat Governing Council
WUF	World Urban Forum (2004)