



Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements

Gigiri, Nairobi, 6 April 2005

Provisional Agenda Item 3

CCGHS(05)1

SUMMARY RECORDS OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Note by the Commonwealth Secretariat

1. The Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements last met on 7 and 8 May 2003 in Nairobi. *The summary record of the session is provided at Annex 1.*

The meeting:

- Amended and finalised the objectives for the CCGHS;
 - Agreed a 2-tier structure:
 - *ComHabitat Council*: the intergovernmental group (i.e. CCGHS) and representatives of local government, civil society groups and others.
 - *ComHabitat Management*: to oversee the work of ComHabitat host and liaise with Commonwealth High Commissions in Nairobi.
 - Renamed the CCGHS framework (in its entirety) as ComHabitat;
 - Requested the ComHabitat Management group to proceed in finding a new host organisation to take over from the Commonwealth Foundation.
2. An informal meeting of the CCGHS was held in the wings of the World Urban Forum in Barcelona on 14 September 2004 to consider the new proposed work plan for May 2004 – June 2006. *The summary record is provided at Annex 2.*
 3. Matters Arising:
 - a) *Structure*: Discussion of the structure of ComHabitat has continued in the Management Group and at the informal CCGHS meeting in September 2004, with a view to evolving a simple and flexible structure that satisfies the principles agreed in the Commonwealth Input for Istanbul+5 in June 2001 and by the CCGHS in May 2003. This matter is further considered under Agenda Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda and in document CCGHS(05)3.
 - b) *Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting* (Abuja, December 2003). Through their adoption of the Report of the Committee of the Whole (paragraph 25), Heads of Government noted “the establishment of ComHABITAT, the support structure for the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements, as a collaborative partnership involving the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth

Foundation, the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council (CHEC), the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and other governmental and non-governmental agencies”.

- c) *Host for the partnership:* Following a tendering process, Homeless International was selected in April 2004, to host the ComHabitat partnership. It subsequently developed a work plan for ComHabitat in close consultation with the Management Group. This matter is addressed in Agenda Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda and in document CCGHS(05)3.

4. **Issues for Ministers**

Ministers may wish to:

- Consider, comment on, and approve the draft summary record of the CCGHS Meeting of May 2003.
- Consider, comment on, and approve the draft summary record of the informal CCGHS Meeting of September 2004.
- Note the matters arising and take up any further discussion on these under Agenda Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda.

**Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements
7 and 8 May 2003, Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya**

Summary Record

Introduction

The meeting was chaired by the Zambian Minister of Local Government and Housing the Honourable Sylvia Masebo. Representatives from 11 Commonwealth government delegations participated. There were also representatives of civil society organisations from an additional 4 Commonwealth countries (see participant list).

Report of the CCGHS Secretariat, presented by the Programme Manager, Azim Manji

1. The primary focus of the work of the CCGHS would be Millennium Development Goal 7; Objective 11, which calls for the improvement in the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020. Partnerships would be a key factor in the successful delivery of the goal.
2. Activities undertaken by ComHabitat included:
 - Assistance to Kisumu (Kenya) and Mombassa (Kenya) for a CDS Application to Cities Alliance;
 - Participation in: for Dissemination; the Habitat Best Practices Scheme Steering Committee and on the Standing Committee of the Local Leadership Programme; the Prague Institute for International Development International Advisory Board; the Building Social Housing Foundation Assessment and Study Tour of OPP Best Practice – Pakistan; the Dubai Awards for Best Practice Working Group and Ceremony;
 - Liaison with World Bank WSP on South Asia and East Africa Measuring Microfinance Effectiveness for the Benefit of Poorer Communities;
 - Development of CCGHS Web Portal, which includes a link for access to the UNHSP Best Practices Database;
 - Strengthening of institutional ties with UN agencies (in particular UN Habitat).
3. Potential activities for ComHabitat.
 - Citizens and Governance-TriSector/CCP/CDS Partnerships;
 - MDG Research with UN Habitat GUO;
 - NGO/CSO ToolKits on Funding and Resources for Settlement Improvements;
 - Promotion of Web-Based CCGHS Networks and Learning Tools;

Discussion and Conclusions

1. **Justification for the CCGHS.** ComHabitat should not duplicate the work of other organisations. The Commonwealth was seen as a forum in which member countries could reach a general consensus on implementing the Habitat Agenda. The meeting stressed that the CCGHS should recognise and elevate the role of member states to implement the CCGHS objectives.
2. **CCGHS Objectives.** Participants reviewed and agreed changes to the objectives as set out in the Commonwealth Statement to the UN General Assembly at Istanbul+5 in June 2001. In particular, reference to corruption was deleted, and references to good governance and security of tenure were separated and given prominence as individual objectives.

The Objectives of the CCGHS now read as follows:

- (a) Providing basic services to household, neighbourhoods and villages.
 - (b) Incorporating shelter provision into national poverty alleviation programmes.
 - (c) Promoting good governance.
 - (d) Promoting security of tenure.
 - (e) Removing 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.
 - (f) Promoting the attainment of the Commonwealth goal.
3. **Proposed Structure.** The Programme Manager presented proposals on the structure of the CCGHS, noting the need to:
 - Make it more representative of the broader Commonwealth, both geographically and sectorally;
 - Encourage flexibility to adapt to change and respond to members' requests;
 - Encourage the involvement of the Commonwealth's broad and diverse expertise from all sectors;
 - Foster innovation, learning by doing, sharing knowledge, forging networks and partnership-based working.

Following a lengthy and detailed discussion on possible structures for the CCGHS, the Meeting agreed that:

- a) For clarity, the structure as a whole should be known as ComHabitat;
- b) ComHabitat comprises: the CCGHS (the Ministerial Group responsible for setting the strategic direction for ComHabitat), a ComHabitat Council, and a Management Group.
- c) The Steering Council should include representatives from Commonwealth High Commissions in London, and the Management team should include a representative from Commonwealth NGOs.

- d) The **Steering Council** would be organised and function as follows:
- The Commonwealth Secretariat calls the meetings of the Council
 - If the Council meets in the wings of another event, the Council will meet prior to this event
 - The Ministerial Group is open to all 54 Commonwealth Member States.
 - The Ministerial Group will elect a Chair on a Regional basis
 - CSO/NGO/Private Sector/local government will be represented at the highest level
 - Discussion is open to all.
 - Expertise can be co-opted on a needs basis.
 - Only Ministers or their representatives have 'voting rights'
 - The Council should endeavour to meet at least once per year
 - The intergovernmental group can meet separately if it so desires, as can the other groups in the Steering Council
- e) The **ComHabitat Management Group** allows for overseeing the Programme Manager, while feeding information from the field back to the Council. It would function as follows:
- The Management Group consists of the Programme Manager plus seven representatives from each group on the Council. Representatives should ideally be involved with programmes in the field
 - The Programme Manger is managed by the representatives
 - Representatives report back to their respective official on the Council
 - The Programme Manger reports to the Chair of the Ministerial Group
 - The Management team should liaise with the Commonwealth High Commissions in Nairobi

4. ***Functioning of ComHabitat.*** The meeting agreed that:

- a) ComHabitat would pursue the Habitat Agenda through Commonwealth structures by supporting activities in member states.
- b) The Ministerial Group should be responsible for informing the Commonwealth on matters concerning human settlements. This would require the status of ComHabitat to be confirmed by Commonwealth Heads of Government. The ComHabitat Programme Manager will investigate the procedures necessary to achieve this.
- c) To influence directions within UN Habitat, ComHabitat should obtain observer status on the UN Commission for Human Settlements. As an observer, the Chair would present the views of ComHabitat to the Commission.
- d) The Management Groups should proceed in finding a new host organisation to take over from the Commonwealth Foundation.
- e) To date, ComHabitat has met in the wings of other meetings, usually that of the Commission Human Settlements. Participants felt that this practice was not ideal, as it gave ComHabitat secondary status. Instead, ComHabitat should endeavour to hold stand-alone meetings. However, it was pointed out that due

to the considerable cost, the tendency is now to hold fewer Commonwealth Ministerial meetings.

5. ***Budget.*** The meeting approved the budget, but requested that in future more detail be provided in a full financial statement so that the actual cost of activities could be scrutinised. These should be cross-referenced against activities.

6. **Date/Venue of Next meeting and Adjournment**

- a) It was suggested that ComHabitat could meet before the meeting of the CLGF in London in mid October.
- b) The Chair thanked all of the valuable contributions and the dedication of all those that attended towards the ComHabitat initiative. The Hon Minister also encouraged the momentum gained during these meetings to be maintained towards the next meeting and CHOGM in Abuja, Nigeria.

**Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements
7 and 8 May 2003, Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya**

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**Informal Meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements
14 September 2004, Barcelona**

SUMMARY RECORD

An informal meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements was held in the wings of the World Urban Forum in Barcelona, on 14 September 2004 from 8:30am to 10:00 am. It was attended by representatives from 6 member states (Canada, Sri Lanka, Malawi, Uganda, United Kingdom and Zambia) and representatives of the following organisations: Commonwealth Association of Planners, Commonwealth Human Ecology Council, Commonwealth Local Government Forum, Commonwealth Secretariat, Development Initiatives Network (Nigeria) and Homeless International. The meeting was chaired by Zambia's Minister of Local Government and Housing, Hon. Sylvia Masebo, M.P. A list of participants is provided as an annex to this report.

Agenda Item 1: Opening Remarks and Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting was opened by Hon. Sylvia Masebo, who welcomed the delegates and outlined the history of the CCGHS, which is the Commonwealth's initiative to implement the Habitat Agenda. The Minister noted that this was an informal session to appraise progress by the ComHabitat partnership, review the Work Plan and prepare for the next full meeting of the CCGHS in April 2005 in Nairobi.

The provisional agenda CCGHS(04)2 was adopted with no amendments.

The Hon. Sylvia Masebo invited the Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General, Mr Winston Cox, to make his opening remarks. Mr Cox spoke about the recent changes in the ComHabitat partnership and the objectives of this informal session. He noted that this was the first opportunity to take the process forward at the inter-governmental level, and sought the feedback and involvement of Commonwealth member states in the Work Plan that had been developed to address the priorities set out in the 'Commonwealth Input to Istanbul+5'. Mr Cox concluded by expressing his sympathy and condolences to the governments and people of Caribbean countries that had recently suffered the devastating consequences of Hurricane Ivan.

Carl Wright of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum reported to the Group on a number of developments since it last met, including CLGF's involvement in the Steering Committee of UN-Habitat's Global Campaign on Urban Governance. He noted that Commonwealth Heads of Government, at their last meeting in Abuja, had supported action to give constitutional and legal recognition to the sphere of local government. The deliberations at CHOGM had also resulted in closer collaboration between the CLGF and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Mr Wright called on ComHabitat to proceed in a spirit of partnership and equality and invited delegates to the CLGF Conference to be held in Aberdeen from 15 to 17 March 2005.

Zena Daysh of the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council provided the CCGHS with a longer perspective on efforts to address human ecology through the Commonwealth. Work on human settlements had begun in the Commonwealth with efforts by CHEC to bring together an 'Ad Hoc Ministerial Group on Human Settlements'. This had now evolved into the CCGHS and ComHabitat. Mrs Daysh noted that human settlement concerns were broader than simply providing roofs over heads. They included health concerns, and those related to water, sanitation, energy and environmental protection. She outlined two recent initiatives by CHEC: a pre-CHOGM meeting in Abuja organised jointly with CHEC-Nigeria and the Commonwealth Association of Surveyors and Land Economists; and a recent meeting on human ecology in Guyana.

Michael Parkes of the UK Department for International Development said that Zena Daysh's contribution had been recognised by UN-Habitat which had awarded her with a Habitat Scroll of Honour in 2003, presented by the UK's Minister for State for International Development, Hon. Hilary Benn, M.P. As a donor, DFID was pleased that the hosting of ComHabitat had been resolved through a thorough selection process, which had agreed that Homeless International would take on the role. DFID looked forward to concrete action by this initiative over the next two years.

Agenda Items 2 and 3: Feedback on the ComHabitat Work Plan 2004/6 and the Interim Structure of ComHabitat

The Chair said that discussion of the Work Plan would be the main agenda item for the meeting. Noting that ComHabitat's structure was evolving and would continue to evolve, the Chair asked that discussion on the structure be kept to a minimum, since this would be covered by the CCGHS in April 2005, and had been discussed at length by the last CCGHS meeting in May 2003.

Homeless International had recently assumed the role of host organisation for ComHabitat: its Chief Executive, Ruth McLeod, introduced the Work Plan for 2004/6, outlined in paper CCGHS(04)4. This was a living document that would develop over time. The intention behind the plan was to provide practical assistance to Ministers and others involved in implementing the Habitat Agenda. The Group's feedback was essential to its evolution. Key objectives of the Work Plan were to link up practices that work and support practical, pragmatic working partnerships; as well as to support the collation of meaningful information on how the Habitat Agenda was being implemented within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals and National Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. Such information can help tracking progress and support efforts to integrate human settlement concerns into macroeconomic frameworks and wider political agendas. ComHabitat is looking for about 12 countries from across all Commonwealth regions to be involved in the research programmes on indicators/progress and urban finance. Other aspects of the Work Plan (such as the development of the web site), and the structure of ComHabitat, were supportive of these main objectives. Ruth McLeod stressed that initiatives under the Work Plan would avoid any duplication of work done by other initiatives.

During the discussion, representatives from CHEC, CLGF and the Commonwealth Association of Planners spoke about the need for the work plan and structure to reflect fully the nature of ComHabitat as a partnership, the roles of all the partners and the contributions that they make. The Chair noted these concerns and the meeting agreed that the Management Group would consider the matter in advance of the next CCGHS meeting in Nairobi in 2005.

Several speakers also emphasised the need to ensure that ComHabitat does not duplicate the work of others and that it make maximum use of existing data and networks in the Commonwealth. The Work Plan should emphasise the added value that the Commonwealth can bring to the work of UN-Habitat, for example, its work on the urban governance index. The role of the Commonwealth should be to help take UN Habitat's work forward and add value to it.

With respect to the balance of elements in the work plan, participants highlighted different aspects as being of interest. Sarah Ibanda of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications, Uganda, highlighted research as one of the most important elements and asked for more information regarding the approach that would be taken. Ruth McLeod said that the methodology had yet to be elaborated fully and that this would be done in consultation with participating countries and partners. She noted that a lot of work was already being done and that the programme would focus on gaps and ensuring that indicators were useful at the local level. Ruth outlined the discussions ComHabitat had had with the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory and the hopes for future collaboration with that unit. One starting point would be to map the issues across different Commonwealth countries and consult on the findings before agreeing, in detail, the way forward.

Cliff Hague of the Commonwealth Association of Planners was concerned that development finance should not dominate the Work Plan and highlighted Commonwealth-based networking and information exchange as some of the most valuable aspects of the Plan. Targets that ComHabitat could focus on were the next meetings of the Commonwealth Heads of Government and World Urban Forum. Cliff Hague also called for more discussion of the research by partners and the CCGHS.

Nicholas Watts of CHEC called for the involvement of small states in the Work Plan. Analysis was required on the capacity of small states to address the environmentally sustainable development agenda, both at the local and international levels. With respect to indicators, small states also require assistance in developing monitoring capacity. The Commonwealth has a role to play in advocating the concerns of small states at the Mauritius International Meeting on the Barbados Programme of Action on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (10-14 January 2005). In particular it should highlight the vulnerability of small states – so graphically illustrated by Hurricane Ivan – and the problems that they experience in accessing development assistance. Through its member states, the Commonwealth may also be able to engage with the European Union on small states' concerns in advance of the Mauritius meeting, particularly in view of the UK's upcoming presidency of the EU and the G8.

Kim Mullard, ComHabitat Programme Co-ordinator, requested that the CCGHS and all ComHabitat participants take a look at the ComHabitat web site and provide feedback to the ComHabitat Secretariat to help guide the site's further development.

Agenda Item 4: Consultations on the Chair for CCGHS-6

The Chair noted that the Caribbean region was due to assume the Chair of the CCGHS at its next session. The Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General said that as a result of Hurricane Ivan it was understandable that Caribbean delegations were not represented at this informal meeting. He informed the CCGHS that the Commonwealth Secretariat would shortly be writing to Caribbean member states asking them to consult with

one another so that they can propose their nominations at the next session in Nairobi in April 2005.

Agenda Item 5: CSD-13/CCGE

The Chair noted that the thirteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13) would address human settlements, water and sanitation. The Chair said that Ministers who had attended CSD-12 (which addressed the same themes), were principally those with an environment portfolio and not directly involved in the delivery of human settlements, water and sanitation. She noted the value of greater involvement by those with direct delivery responsibilities in the work of the CSD-13. Janet Strachan of the Commonwealth Secretariat requested information on plans by member states for CSD-13, in order to explore the value of bringing together the CCGHS with the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Environment to caucus on issues for CSD-13.

Agenda Item 6: Agenda for CCGHS-6

The Chair noted that the next formal session of the CCGHS will take place in the wings of the UN-Habitat Governing Council meeting in Nairobi (11-15 April 2005). Member states will be consulted on the timing and agenda for the meeting, which could include:

- A review of the ComHabitat Work Plan
- The Structure of the ComHabitat initiative.

Close of the Meeting

The Chair brought the meeting to a close, thanking representatives for their contributions, and suggesting that any further matters be raised at the ComHabitat networking event on Thursday 16th September 2004.

**Informal Meeting of the Commonwealth Consultative Group on Human Settlements
14 September 2004, Barcelona**

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