

Good Practice Guidelines

Participatory Approach to Core Area Development A Guide to Good Practice

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Executive Summary & Overview

Participatory Approach to Core Area Development: A Guide to Good Practice

Executive Summary

The following Guide is based upon the findings of extensive research and fieldwork undertaken in Delhi, Jakarta and Recife. The research identified appropriate core area sites within each city and used detailed interviews with the resident low-income populations to investigate the social and economic nature of livelihoods in the core areas of cities. Workshops undertaken in each city and a computer-modelling tool (developed alongside this research) were used to generate and analyse different feasibility options for the development of the identified core area sites. The findings of each of these development briefs represent different design and management arrangements and are brought together here as a series of topic related Fact Sheets.

Aim

This Guide to Good Practice aims to illustrate ways in which some of the increasing land values accruing in the central and strategically located areas of cities can be used to generate economically viable low-income community development (housing, business and employment) or redevelopment, primarily within the context of developing countries. In this way a major disruption to the economic and social opportunities and livelihoods of the urban poor can be avoided. Sustainable city centre redevelopment contributes reduced energy use, the building of an inclusive society and the maintenance of the fragile fabric that keeps urban centres alive, self-sustaining, stimulating and prosperous. The Guide comprises urban design and development tools – methods, principles and examples of good practice – which set out the processes that enable low-income communities to live close to the sources of their livelihoods within the commercial centres of cities.

Target Audience

The overview and accompanying fact sheets together act as a practical guide for those involved in the development of mixed-use space in core urban areas, with a particular emphasis on poverty reduction. They provide specific

advice on how to respond to the range of development scenarios commonly encountered in core urban areas. The Guide is intended for the range of stakeholders in the process, including:

- *Low-income communities* who need practical guidance in negotiating with landowners, developers, employers, NGOs and city authorities to maintain their presence where commercial and market pressures threaten their eviction;
- *NGOs, consultants and technical aid organisations* involved in aiding low-income urban communities on the ground;
- *Developers, land agents, landowners and financial institutions* who are most likely to be the initiators of development, the prime beneficiaries in commercial terms, and who need to negotiate with existing low-income communities and urban authorities in developing core area sites in cities;
- *Planning authorities, public development agencies and other urban management bodies* involved in facilitating partnerships between stakeholders in core area developments, who can benefit from the successful experience of others;
- *Policy-makers in donor organisations, governments and city institutions* involved in framing policies enabling the implementation of balanced, sustainable and integrated development in core areas of cities.

Dissemination

The different stakeholders concerned will have differing levels of access to information, resources, technical skills and support. As this Guide to Good Practice is intended for use not only by policy-makers, landowners, developers and NGOs, but also by the low-income communities who may have limited access to information technology and other resources, it is therefore necessary to tailor the means of dissemination of the Guide to the different target groups. A primary means of dissemination to policy-makers, developers and NGOs may be via web pages on the Internet, whilst a more appropriate means of reaching the low-income communities may be through local radio and any existing community resource infrastructure.

Structure of the Guide

The good practice guide is split into three different sections:

- *Overview*: explores the issues surrounding poverty-focused mixed use development, defining the key terms and discussing the principles involved, the stakeholders and their motives. The Overview outlines the key elements of the process that should be undertaken to achieve a successful outcome, and how and where the Fact Sheets would fit into this process.

- *Fact Sheets*: 11 Fact Sheets each address a stage in the mixed use development process and form the body of the Guide. The Fact Sheets expand upon each stage, providing further detail on the concepts, mechanisms and development scenarios, whilst identifying the actions that the different stakeholders can initiate to their benefit to achieve a mutually sustainable partnership.
- *Annex*: the final reference section comprises a bibliography, glossary of terms and index.

Participatory Approach to Core Area Development: A Guide to Good Practice

An Overview

Introduction: Understanding the Context

Most cities and city administrations face a fundamental dilemma arising out of the intrinsic nature of urban development. Where large numbers of people congregate to live and work, land becomes an increasingly scarce and expensive resource that commands ever-rising prices. At the same time, cities, of necessity, must accommodate the many poor, or less well off people, who are unable to afford the costs associated with high and rising land values.

Cities are concentrations of wealth and centres of investment. The urban economy, of necessity, must also export. Cities need to export goods and services to surrounding regions and to more distant trading partners to pay for the imports of food, fuel and other resources to provide for the needs of their inhabitants. Around such export industries -typically manufacture and commerce, transshipment and warehousing, legal, financial and other producer services, government, higher education and other public services- grow a range of activities geared towards the needs of urban inhabitants themselves - retail, food and leisure, housing and real estate, transportation and local public services.

With this great range of economic activity comes a diversity of employment, wealth, level of income and social status. In particular, in the fast-growing cities of developing countries, there are growing numbers of low-income inhabitants who act as providers of cheap labour and low cost services to their fellows and the better-off residents of the city. Most of their economic activity is characterised as 'informal' – unregulated street selling or small scale manufacture in homes or local workshops, self-employed domestic service work, and the like. Yet for the well-off and not-so-well-off, much of this low-cost activity provides an essential – and subsidised – basis for life in the city. Rapid population growth and in-migration can contribute to unemployment or 'under-employment'. However, all-too-often, the importance of the livelihood activities of low-income inhabitants to the urban economy goes unrecognised.

With this rapid expansion of urban populations, economic pressures on the central areas of cities in many developing countries are giving rise to large-scale commercial developments that displace or fail to accommodate the low-income households with livelihoods based upon central service employment. Core area commercial redevelopment has too often caused an exodus of residents to the outlying areas of the city, in areas often remote from the source of their livelihoods.

Box 0.1: What are Core Areas?

The term 'core area' is used in this report to cover the central and most accessible locations where the livelihood opportunities of the urban poor are often concentrated and where the potential for capturing land value for social benefit is greatest. Because of this accessibility, these are the parts of the city where land values are highest and where the density of development is greatest. The focus of the guidelines is on the redevelopment of core area sites to release potential commercial land value (part of which can be used to improve the living conditions of the resident community) that is currently unrealised in the present use of the site. Any core area site that is currently used at below its potential land value could be redeveloped for high value uses and/or social benefit of this kind. Generally, all core area sites will have some kind of existing urban land use and renewal will involve redevelopment and/or change of use, rather than the development of new sites, which are unlikely to be found in core areas.

Historically, poor neighbourhoods in centrally located areas have been bulldozed and relocated to the outskirts of cities in order to make way for commercial development. While mass evictions are now less evident than they were, they still occur in many cities. Some form of 'gentrification' that makes it difficult for poor communities to afford to live in central urban areas all too often follows on from development pressure. The large-scale relocation of existing urban communities in this way is unsustainable. It leads to the disruption of existing networks that tie communities together within neighbourhoods and link neighbourhoods to nearby city districts through commercial, political and other contacts (i.e. social capital).

When households are moved to more peripheral locations, they may be forced to travel long distances to their existing workplaces which, even if affordable in time as well as money, is likely to place a significant strain on household resources. Travel times and costs increase for the urban poor and the increased travel impacts on the environment through increasing energy use and air pollution. Alternatively, the poor may be forced or chose to find sources of livelihood that are closer at hand in the outskirts but this can take some time to establish and is likely to place further pressure on the household. In any case, by definition employment opportunities are much less dense, fewer in variety and more spread apart than in central areas.

Box 0.2: What is Mixed Use Development?

Mixed use can be defined as development comprising more than one use and value on a single plot or within a single building or an area where site and buildings of different uses and values are grouped together.

A city centre 'super block' of 15ha or more divided into separate specialist sites for office buildings, supermarkets, condominiums, or retail malls with hotels over is often described as mixed use but is better defined as a development of large sites with single uses.

The term 'mixed use development' used within this guide is used to describe areas with modest sites and buildings that have grown incrementally or been allowed to develop in city centres with flexibility to meet the changing needs of individual landowners, occupiers and tenants whether commercial or residential. It is when such sites are amalgamated into 'super block' development that the human life and quality of the city centre is threatened. This does not mean there should be no 'super blocks' but that areas of new 'mixed use' should be included within 'super block' developments or existing 'mixed use' areas retained within the city centre planning strategy.

Even in situations where people work from home, they are bound by location, relying on networks of local vendors for raw materials, on central wholesale markets and street markets or hawking in better off and more densely populated central locations to sell their wares. Most service activities, like domestic service, are based in wealthier areas where the poor cannot afford to live or where they are under constant threat of eviction in order to make way for higher value development uses, rendering the resident low-income populations very vulnerable to displacement.

Strategies that integrate the commercial interests of urban land markets and housing needs of the urban poor need to be encouraged, if cities are to become inclusive rather than exclusive living environments. Combating low-income vulnerability to displacement should be achieved through a main policy thrust to establish security of tenure.

The guidelines suggest ways in which these objectives can be achieved by:

- providing accessible housing to reduce commuting by ultra low-income service workers, with benefits for both their quality of life (reduction in travel costs and time) and for the environment (reduction in energy use);

- providing land and buildings for affordable low-income housing with improved standards of space and servicing;
- avoiding large scale, segregated and socially-divisive public housing schemes;
- maintaining existing community structures and integration of low-income residents in commercial areas;
- making provision for small-scale and informal business activity and development, coupled with micro-enterprise credit and home base payback schemes;
- expanding employment opportunities for low-income residents in the service sector and increasing employment of local people in the development process;
- improving community and social facilities for low-income residents

Box 0.3: What are the Objectives of the Approach?

- To improve public health and the quality of life of the ultra low-income service workers and their dependant population
- To reduce impact on the environment
- To secure a balanced and integrated community and a balanced mix of land uses providing vitality and security in core commercial areas
- To maintain a viable local service workforce
- To facilitate new employment and small business development opportunities

Sustainable local development

Ensuring that new development respects the local urban context and population and addresses wider environmental concerns.

Acknowledging the rights and contribution that existing core area communities make to the sustainable economic success of redevelopment.

Facing up to and finding a way to meet the often-strong economic and social arguments put forward by commercial developers that mixing uses reduces value and creates social conflict.

Ensuring diversity and sustainability through maintaining local long-term urban low-income livelihoods, housing and workspace (affordable, needs oriented); minimising work-home travel distances and maximising local choice and opportunity.

Maintaining social capital and promoting community economic development (and acknowledging the hidden costs in terms of loss of social capital associated with relocation policies).

Creating management frameworks for perpetuity of low-income occupation in core areas.

Maintaining an economic balance between lower value and higher value activities; balancing commercial development with social benefit.

Enabling land markets to work, understanding their potential and capabilities.

Capturing value (development gain) from commercial development to ensure low-income inclusion as an integrated part of core area redevelopment.

Balancing capital investment to ensure stakeholder commitment: commercial, public subsidy and investment by the community.

Establishing community investment through access to appropriate/flexible banking and mutual aid.

Community organisation

Establishing ways and means of strengthening community organisation to enable effective negotiation.

Enabling indigenous leadership to drive the process – community can lead as ‘developer’ or act as a strong development partner to other interests.

Ensuring support to communities from outside organisations and capacity building programmes.

Establishing co-operatives and/or development trusts to ensure long-term community interests and rights.

Participatory and partnership-based approach

Achieve ‘political’ and stakeholder commitment to the process.

Open and co-operative stakeholder dialogue established early.

Municipal and/or NGO support to facilitate negotiation and partnership.

Align community aspirations and expected outcomes.

Ensuring the process contributes to broader social aims: social integration, institutional development and economic viability.

Governance: appropriate controls and mechanisms

Municipal flexibility & innovation: address existing statutory constraints/conflicts: operate outside ‘normal’ processes or review existing controls.

Develop appropriate regulatory mechanisms: conditions and incentives or partnership approaches to address constraints & create ‘level playing field’.

Establish a flexible planning framework, to operate at the wider city scale and within core commercial areas and responding to specific sites with briefs/guidelines based on local community interests as well as commercial success.

Certainty through binding agreement and legal enforcement by statutory authority, setting out details of any negotiated and agreed development plans.

Higher densities and reconstruction

Increasing residential densities to release land for commercial purposes, which will in turn subsidise the residential development.

Reconstruction (either part or whole) of the residential element is usually a necessity to increase the residential density.

Balancing residential and commercial densities may enable only partial re-housing of existing communities; displaced residents to be compensated and/or relocated.

Typical Development Scenarios

Typical scenarios where the mixed use approach to core area development may be appropriate are outlined below; however, they broadly fall into two different categories:

- Where there is commercial pressure (or commercial potential) acting upon the core area site, but re-development measures are constrained due to conflicting interests of the developer or landowner and the site occupants, or due to the nature of ownership or occupation of the site; or
- Where local or central government has the political will to proactively address the issue of sustainable livelihoods for the urban poor in core areas, or to improve or regenerate core areas (including those pockets of land that may have developed incrementally through the action of urban settlers establishing local livelihoods).

In redevelopment programmes or projects, each indigenously acceptable tenure land right system must be established and recognised, respected, worked with and through, in the case of each individual development. It is important that the intrinsic values of rights as understood by the various stakeholders - the one as against the other - are understood and evaluated¹.

If a core area site (or part of a site) is occupied by unauthorised settlers and is subject to commercial (or political) pressure for redevelopment, the introduction of mixed-use development can allow profits generated from commercial development to cross-subsidise the provision of appropriate housing for existing residents. Under conditions where it would not be possible to clear the existing residents from the site, it allows a landowner to regain control of the site and realise its economic potential whilst re-housing all or part of the population already living on the site, illustrated in box 0.6. It provides an alternative solution either to eviction or to regularisation and upgrading of the existing settlements. The latter process can block the commercial development potential for an extended period. Since many

¹ See Fact Sheet 2.

residents of unauthorised low-income settlements also use their homes as workplaces, a mixed-use development has the potential to provide affordable workspace as well as affordable shelter. The scenario assumes a site sufficiently large for redevelopment with a number of buildings of different uses and configurations, i.e. 2-3 hectares minimum. It also assumes single ownership or a number of owners who are willing to co-operate.

Box 0.4: A Land Sharing Agreement – Manangkasila Project in Bangkok



Source : Duivesteijn, van de Wal 1994

The situation where a site is legally occupied by low-income residents and is subject to commercial pressure for redevelopment is often the case in inner city areas with a high proportion of low-income owner occupation or rented accommodation and where land prices are rising. If existing residential development is low rise, it should be possible to increase the density of development to allow commercial development whilst re-housing all or part of the existing low-income residential population. This solution can also overcome the displacement and loss of low-income accommodation caused by gentrification but its success will depend on the willingness of individual owners to agree to co-operate in a unified scheme as well as the existing density and type of development. The scenario assumes an early awareness on the part of the community that individual acquisitions are in a developer's mind. 'Hope' value or an outline planning consent can motivate acquisition.

If a site is legally occupied by low-income residents and does not have immediate pressure for commercial development but has an identifiable potential commercial value, then usually some kind of catalyst is required to kick start development in the area. The reasons for the site not being exploited for its commercial value would need to be established. The opinions

and desires of the existing residents would need to be identified – whether the community wished to take advantage of enhancing the commercial value of their location and what benefits they hoped to gain from it. Without community action, a process of ‘gentrification’ and the subsequent loss of low-income accommodation will be likely to take place in the longer term as the commercial potential of the area becomes apparent. Individual owners will of course benefit but the loss of centrally located low-income accommodation will be permanent with considerable costs to the city as a whole.

Where it is not possible to re-house low-income settlers on the actual site they currently occupy, then it may be appropriate to re-house the community elsewhere within the neighbourhood in which they currently live and gain their livelihoods. Examples might include street dwellers or those squatting on dangerous or unhealthy sites. In such cases, the local government or an NGO could initiate development by actively pursuing a planning policy that would afford the accommodation of low rent residential and business premises. This is achieved within the overall development plan by identifying and enabling the comprehensive development of suitable central sites where high land values could be exploited for on-site cross-subsidisation.

It is possible for the approach to be applied within the development of a commercially well-located site which has become redundant and where there are no legal or illegal residents. While suitable vacant sites are often in short supply in core areas, it is often the case that previously developed land falls derelict through the processes of economic change. Large areas of land previously used for goods yards adjacent to central railway stations or for heavy industry and warehousing may fall into disuse. Planned urban renewal and regeneration strategies for such areas should consider using a policy of cross-subsidisation to provide increased accommodation for the poor in these key locations. The process of implementation would be similar to that described above.

Another scenario where the approach may be appropriate is where land is publicly or privately owned and the government wants to undertake or encourage the redesign of urban space to accommodate mixed use solutions. Planned urban renewal and regeneration strategies for such areas should also consider using a policy of cross-subsidisation to provide increased accommodation for the poor in these key locations. The process of implementation would be similar to that already described above. The government can facilitate or enable appropriate mixed use development through the use of certain mechanisms that:

- Bring the land under central control;
- Pool and re-allocate land;
- Ensure developer compliance through conditions or incentives.

Box 0.5: Conditions and Criteria for the Approach

Availability of appropriate sites

- size of site needs to be large enough to accommodate both the re-distributed settlement, and a significant level of commercial development
- potential access and servicing to the site needs to be adequate to support new commercial development
- there should be the potential to increase the density of the site to accommodate as many of the existing residents alongside new commercial development

Positive attitudes of stakeholders

- commitment to the development objectives and a willingness to communicate and co-operate with the other stakeholders, as the process relies upon (and is built upon) a participatory approach

Adequate commercial development pressure upon the site

- ensuring scheme viability will enable cross-subsidisation of low-income accommodation and community amenities through commercial development

Adequate financial capability of the low-income population

- ability to contribute (at least a minimum) towards the cost of their housing and community amenities
- ability to access appropriate finance

Ability of local government to accommodate and enable the process

- ability to adapt/over-ride inappropriate policy mechanisms (planning, housing, funding, tenure)
- adequate inter-agency co-ordination
- ability to deal effectively with the development of private land
- adequate resources and political will to enforce developer compliance

The Process

The process for achieving sustainable mixed use development in core areas is largely based around a participatory approach. The principle of involving all of the stakeholders (and ensuring that the most vulnerable stakeholders are able to participate) is to ensure that the outcome seeks to align all of the aspirations of the different stakeholders. Who initiates and drives the process

(as outlined in A-F above). The reasons for initiating the process may be to release or 'unlock' prime land for commercial development (developer/landowner); to regenerate a core area, encouraging investment and addressing the physical issues of urban poverty (local government); or to improve the situation of a core area community under threat (local community). Although the approach is participatory and equitable in its make-up, it is likely that technical and professional support will be required to facilitate the process, particularly where intermediary roles are required. If the local community is the initiating stakeholder, then an increased level of support (from an appropriate NGO or government agency) is probably necessary from the outset.

The key stages in the mixed use, partnership approach to core area development are outlined in detail below.

1. Identify the situation.
2. Develop stakeholder relationships.
3. Knowledge building: developing a shared understanding of the available options.
4. Establish working partnerships.
5. 'Action Planning' exercises to develop proposals.

1. Identify the situation

The initial phases of the process should seek to establish all relevant factors, and define within what constraints the process must operate. It is critically important at an early stage to identify all of the relevant stakeholders, to establish early and ongoing dialogue between the parties, and to explore organisation and support mechanisms for the more vulnerable stakeholders. The initial appraisal and knowledge gathering stages may require technical support (from an NGO or government agency where appropriate), depending upon who is initiating and driving the process.

- ***Stakeholder Analysis – Fact Sheet 1***
- ***Urban Tenure Arrangements – Fact Sheet 2***
- ***Legislative Frameworks – Fact Sheet 3***
- ***Physical Factors – Fact Sheet 4***

2. Develop stakeholder relationships

In parallel with the appraisal and information gathering stage, it is important to establish contact and participation between the different stakeholders, to identify any shared aspirations and needs. Different ways of organising the community should be explored, to enable effective community participation from an early stage.

- ***Exploring Community Organisation – Fact Sheet 5***
- ***Bringing Stakeholders Together – Fact Sheet 6***

3. Knowledge building: developing a shared understanding of the available options

The ‘knowledge building’ phase of the participatory process should ensure that all stakeholders have a shared understanding of the situation, the constraints and any options that might be appropriate. This stage may require an ‘independent’ intermediary to act as ‘honest broker’, enabling objective round-the-table negotiation and discussion, enabling the most appropriate outcome for all parties concerned.

- ***Understanding the Mechanisms – Fact Sheet 7***
- ***Identifying the Appropriate Course of Action - Fact Sheet 8***

4. Establish working partnerships

The majority of mixed use developments usually depend on some form of partnership or social compact between stakeholders involved in the development. Partnerships provide stakeholders with an opportunity to engage and participate in decisions related to projects they are involved in. Through agreed consensus on the delivered product they set out the parameters of a project and identify the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. They are crucial to the success of any development involving a number of different interest groups and if well managed help in protecting the interests of vulnerable stakeholders. Implementing a participatory process between different stakeholders (with different motives, needs and wishes) requires that there is a procedural framework in place to establish the different parameters of the process. There should also be an enforceable means of establishing what the different parties have to undertake, and what the outcomes will be. Whether this is enforceable by law or by the statutory authorities (local or central government) should be agreed by consensus.

- ***Exploring Partnerships – Fact Sheet 9***

5. ‘Action Planning’ exercises to develop proposals

It is important to involve all of the stakeholders in the process of developing outline proposals, to ensure that the re-allocation of land and the development of an appropriate scheme provides mutual benefit to the different parties involved. Proposals should take into account local, contextual and cultural factors in the design to ensure that the development is appropriate, commercial and sustainable in the long term. While costs of any proposed mixed-use development can only be estimated, approximate values should be drawn wherever possible from the average costing of similar types and sizes of development locally. Identifying funding sources likely to support a mixed

use development may be difficult since, by definition it will not give a maximum return on capital although with careful planning a reasonable return should be possible. Other kinds of financial support, including the availability of government subsidy, tax incentives or external finance should also be explored. Testing different proposals (through stakeholder workshops) to explore the scheme viability in social and commercial terms is an important exercise to be undertaken. Ensuring that the development remains viable and sustainable (both in social and economic terms) can be achieved through the implementation of urban management frameworks. These address the issues of the management and maintenance of the area, and should be established as part of the participatory process to ensure that the needs and aspirations of the different stakeholders can continue to be met over the long-term.

- ***Participatory Site Planning – Fact Sheet 10***
- ***Social and Commercial Viability – Fact Sheet 11***

