

# City Development and Urban Upgrading Strategies 7

*In its first 10 years, the ROAP-Fukuoka has worked with the Cities Alliance, a global coalition of cities and their development partners committed to scaling up successful approaches to urban poverty alleviation, to formulate and implement City Development Strategies (CDS) and Citywide and Countrywide Slum Upgrading Strategies (CUS). The Cities Alliance provides CDSs and CUSs with development funds, while helping cities develop sustainable financing strategies and attract long-term capital investment in infrastructure and other public services.*

A CDS is developed by bringing a city's local authority, or municipal government, into a dialogue with local citizens, communities, civil society groups, academia, and the private sector, as well as with any interested national and international development partners.

This stakeholders' forum analyses and assesses their city's strengths and weaknesses, then, formulates a vision for its economic growth, its poverty reduction targets, its environmental rehabilitation and protection, its improved urban governance, and its financial sustainability, with actions and investments managed according to a clear set of priorities.

Focused on implementation, a CDS is an action-plan for equitable growth in cities and their surrounding regions, developed and sustained through participation with the intention of improving the quality of life for all citizens.

A CUS results from a similar participatory process, substantially involving poor slum communities themselves in gathering a citywide profile of existing slums and squatter settlements and their populations, as well as of the rates of rural-to-urban migration to estimate the city (or country's) future low-income housing needs.

This profile is analysed and assessed on a consensual basis to:

- Identify existing settlements that could be granted secure tenure.
- Identify shelter financing sources to upgrade existing slums, either temporarily or permanently



*Following a community-led CDS process there, in May 2003 the authorities agreed to upgrade 100 slums per year in Phnom Penh.*

- Develop innovative land and housing policies and long-term shelter financing measures to prevent new slums by providing affordable alternatives.

The ROAP-Fukuoka has supported CDS formulation processes in cities in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam; CUS processes in Dili, Timor-Leste, and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, as well as a national-level upgrading project in Nepal for slums and squatter settlements, following the cessation of conflict in the country.

Over the last 10 years, the ROAP-Fukuoka's approach to supporting CDS has evolved by:

- Expanding Spatial Focus: From single city to multi-city and to cities in a regional context.
- Addressing Diverse Development Needs: Focusing on diverse development needs and agendas of developing cities.

- Country-specific Institutional Strengthening Focus of CDS: From CDS-orientated institutional coordination to “build a country wide CDS network” to “institutionalising CDS” in national urban development and planning frameworks.
- Planning and Project Formulation Aspects, including focusing on financial resources: From the straightforward “strategic planning” to “action planning” and, then, to developing capacities for project profiling and formulation, and investment programming.
- Environmental Issues: Expanding the focus to include urban environmental issues, as these become more pronounced in the region’s cities.

The implementation process has moved from working in one city at a time, such as in Peshawar, Pakistan and Colombo, Sri Lanka, to working jointly with several cities within a country, such as in the Philippines and Indonesia, leading to the emergence of countrywide CDS networks.

### CUS in Mongolia

Nowhere is the visual impact of rapid urbanization and unplanned urban growth more striking than in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia. In this predominantly nomadic pastoral nation, incoming migrants from rural areas bring their traditional *Ger* (felt tent) houses and erect them around the city’s central core, wherever they can secure space. They do so without any real understanding of the problems that this poses for providing essential infrastructure and services and for optimising the city’s spatial development to accommodate future population growth.

Presently, there are three distinguishable categories of *Ger* areas wrapped around Ulaanbaatar’s central built up area. The innermost is the Central Ger-area, which is closest to the city’s planned core, and has the highest likelihood of gaining access to water supply, paved roads and solid waste collection. At the same time, a strong commercial demand to develop the same area into apartments and commercial buildings is causing pressure for evictions.

The “Middle” and “Peri-urban” Ger area communities

have progressively less access to services and, thus, endure increasingly unhealthy and hazardous environmental conditions. Currently, it is the Peri-urban Ger areas that are growing at an accelerating rate and having a negative impact on natural resources.

To help the authorities tackle this increasingly large and complex problem in a ‘pro poor’ way, the Cities Alliance has funded the preparation of the *Ger-area Upgrading Strategy and Investment Plan* (GUSIP). This plan will be implemented through a consultative process involving public sector agencies; district and sub-district offices and their resident communities; private sector and civil society organisations; as well as academic and training institutions.

Since the Mayor of Ulaanbaatar formally inaugurated the GUSIP project in March 2006, the ROAP-Fukuoka and the project team have assisted the Municipality in gathering and analysing a lot of data for the preparation of several baseline information tools for the consultative process, including reviewing environmental, land planning & management; urban poverty; and community organisation reviews. This process has led to the development of the citywide pro-poor Ger-area Upgrading Strategy.



*A traditional Ger (felt-tent) house.*



*The peri-urban Ger areas in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, are spreading at an increasing rate.*

## Community-based City Upgrading in Timor-Leste

Rebuilding Dili, the capital city of Timor-Leste, the world's newest nation, has been a major focus of international efforts in the years since its devastation in 1999, when 70 percent of its housing was destroyed. As a result of these investments, the poorest from all over the country have been moving to Dili, leading to a concentration of widespread poverty and overcrowding in its unplanned, poorly-served settlements. By 2004, Dili's population had grown by an estimated 30 percent to 150,000.

In the same year, under a grant from the Cities Alliance, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and UN-HABITAT began developing a City Upgrading Strategy (CUS) to improve all informal settlements in the city of Dili. The task of the Dili CUS team was to determine the number of settlements and the cost of extending at least minimum levels of basic services to all of them. After undergoing intensive CAP training, the Dili CUS team did a thorough survey of settlements in the city, identifying 98 that together accounted for some 45 percent of the city's total population.

Using the CAP approach, the team started pilot upgrading activities in four settlements. Initially, this proved difficult, because traditionally in Timor-Leste, particularly in urban areas, people do not usually work with their neighbours, unless they are blood relatives, which was not the case in Dili. However, the four CAP pilot experiences demonstrated that community-based initiatives with only small capital inputs could achieve a significant and rapid impact on services and environmental conditions. The pilot projects benefited over 3,000 people and provided the basis for costing upgrading on a citywide scale.

Besides improving the physical infrastructure, there is also an urgent need to create a sense of community in the urban areas of a country where the social fabric has been unravelled by occupation and brutal conflict. When the CUS is fully funded and implemented, the CAP approach holds the promise of contributing to this critically important social healing process, which is vital to building local communities that share a common purpose and are, thus, capable of meeting the challenges they face.



*Timor-Leste: Community participation in City Upgrading Strategy.*