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I. THEMES FOR FUTURE ISSUES

October 2002: **Building cities with and for children and youth.** This is being prepared with the International Child Friendly Cities Secretariat (UNICEF) in Florence, UNICEF and the Children's Environments Research Group in New York. We encourage the submission of papers that are relevant to the quality of life of urban children and that discuss policy, regulation, planning and programming that address their rights and needs. Among the topics of particular interest are:

- *The challenges for parents or other caregivers of providing adequate care and safe, healthy, stimulating environments for young children in the context of urban poverty.* Which municipal, NGO or community initiatives have addressed caregivers' concerns and what supports have caregivers found most useful? Case studies from particular settlements are welcome.
- *The services and facilities and the policies and supports that make the most difference to children and adolescents living in poor quality, overcrowded housing and in neighbourhoods lacking basic infrastructure and services.* Of particular interest here is support for children's play and recreation, recognizing that this requires a range of responses to meet the needs of different age groups. A Child Friendly City should be one where children can walk around, meet friends and play safely within their neighbourhoods and, as they get older, travel around and make use of opportunities in the wider city. Yet most urban areas are far from meeting this ideal; children contend not only with a lack of space and provision but also with levels of traffic and social insecurity that present a constant threat to their safety. The importance of play for physical, mental and social development is widely recognized, yet we have found very little written about this for urban areas in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Are there case studies of interventions by municipal governments or other groups (including local NGOs and international agencies) to make neighbourhoods and cities better meet the needs and priorities of children of different ages?
- *Responses that have allowed children and youth to participate in the planning and management of the spaces and services that they use – including schools, health services, recreational space and various activities and facilities.* We welcome accounts of any processes or interventions, formal or informal, that have made it possible for children and adolescents to be involved in assessing their own needs, designing and implementing responses, and setting and monitoring measurable goals. This issue of the journal will include a case study of the Brazilian city of Barra Mansa, which has an ambitious and innovative programme to involve children and youth in discussing and debating their priorities with an elected children's council working with municipal authorities to address these.
- *The local responses that are needed to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child within each neighbourhood, municipality and city.* The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by almost all governments but the focus has been on developing national frameworks. There is an urgent need to develop local mechanisms to ensure that children's rights are addressed within each city, municipality and neighbourhood. What measures have been taken to establish the priorities, structures and processes that make this possible?
- *Child protection: what measures are needed to protect children and youth from disease, injury and abuse within the home, neighbourhood, city and, where needed, the workplace?* Meeting children's needs often focuses on services and forgets the legal and institutional structures necessary to protect children and prosecute offenders.

April 2003: **Rural-urban linkages and the peri-urban interface.** Themes for following issues will be decided after we get returns from the readers' questionnaires sent out with this issue.

II. HABITAT INTERNATIONAL COALITION

HIC (Habitat International Coalition), which has been in existence since the first UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat) in Vancouver in 1976, is a network of more than 300 non-governmental organizations from over 80 nations. In its early years, it acted as a non governmental interface with UNCHS (Habitat), offering technical assistance to countries in the South but, since 1987, it has been primarily involved in the coordination of grassroots organizations and the popular struggle for the right to adequate housing in a healthy environment. In 1996, HIC coordinated the presence of NGOs at the Habitat II Summit in Istanbul and since then, it has been supervising the implementation of the Habitat Agenda follow-up. The general assembly elects HIC's President and the Secretariat, and Board members are elected in each of the five continents. HIC's six focal points are Anglophone and Francophone Africa, North and Latin America with the Caribbean, Asia and Europe. It has thematic committees on environment, housing and land rights, and women and habitat.

HIC's objectives are described in Article 2 of its statute:

- Operate towards the recognition and exercise of the right of every individual, living either in industrialized or underdeveloped countries, to have a home and a place where to live in a peaceful and dignified manner.
- Act as a lobby for the defence of the rights of homeless, poor and ill-housed people.
- Promote the development of a collective awareness regarding habitat problems. To this end, exchanges of information and experiences are favoured.
- Improving quality of life for the poor, addressing both the inextricable settlement and poverty issues by supporting people's processes and advocating institutional change.
- Contributing to and becoming part of global efforts towards people-centred and sustainable development.

Membership is open to all non-governmental and grassroots organizations, to volunteer associations, and to non-profit research and scientific educational institutes whose activities are related to one or more aspects of human rights. Individuals who wish to support the HIC activities can also join by becoming "friends of HIC" and can participate in HIC assemblies, but without the right to vote. Membership fees vary from US\$ 25-100 a year.

For more information, contact HIC at: HIC General Secretary, PO Box 34519, Groote Schuur 7937-Cape Town, Republic of South Africa; tel: 2721 447 4704; fax: 2721 447 4741; e mail: hic@mweb.co.za; web site: <http://home/mweb.co.za/hi/hic/>; or HIC Coordinator, c/o Unione Inquilini, via Bettella, 2/ter, 35133, Padova, Italy; tel: 39-049691771; fax: 39-0270041 5592; e-mail: pad48@padovanet.it; web site: <http://www.habitants.org>

III. A NEW HABITAT

As of 1 January, 2002, The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and its governing body have been elevated to a fully fledged United Nations Human Settlements Programme, to be known as UN-Habitat. The move is designed to enhance cooperation with other agencies of the United Nations system, to improve the institution's operational capacity to help governments and other partners to implement the Habitat Agenda, and to meet the Millennium Declaration's goal of improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by the year 2020, as well as to help in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of cities, towns and villages in post-conflict situations. The Programme will continue to operate out of the United Nations Office in Nairobi, which also hosts the United Nations Environment Programme.

For further information, please contact Sharad Shankardass, Spokesperson, Press and Media Relations, Office of the Executive Director, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, PO Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: 254-2-623153; fax: 254-2-624060; web site: www.unchcs.org, www.un-habitat.org

IV. BRIEFINGS FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

IIED has a special web site for the World Summit on Sustainable Development which is to be held in Johannesburg, 26 August-4 September, 2002. The web site includes a series of briefing papers on topics such as "Core labour standards and human rights in the workplace", "Forests in sustainable development – a quick report on progress since Rio", "Designing a new architecture for global environmental governance", "Equity for a small planet", "Poverty and environment", "Environmental rights", "Food and agriculture – the impact of agribusiness" and "Climate change". For more details, see <http://www.iied.org/wssd/index.html>

V. ENVIRONMENT&URBANIZATION ON-LINE

A NEW PAGE has been added to the *Environment&Urbanization* web site which gives news about forthcoming issues and papers and feedback from readers; see http://www.iied.org/eandu/eandu_news.html. This also includes a facility to allow you to e-mail us with your comments and suggestions.

The complete texts of the last ten issues of *Environment&Urbanization* are now available on-line at <http://www.catchword.com/titles/09562478.htm>. All but the two most recent issues can be accessed by anyone free of charge and any paper printed from the web. The full text of the two most recent issues are only available free to those using libraries that subscribe to *Environment&Urbanization* and who have registered with www.catchword.com. The contents list for the two most recent issues and abstracts for each paper can be viewed free of charge but a US\$ 6 fee has to be paid to obtain access to individual papers, or a fee of US\$ 30 for access to the complete issue.

We would prefer to make all the on-line issues available free of charge – but the costs of putting the journal on-line have to be covered. In addition, if new issues of *Environment&Urbanization* were available free on-line, we would lose sales revenue that is needed to help cover the cost of sending each issue of the journal free of charge to 1,400 teaching and training institutions and NGOs in low- and middle-income nations. On an experimental basis, readers from low- and middle-income nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America may also request up to three papers from either of the two most recent issues, which will be sent to them as .pdf files; they should e-mail us at eandu@iied.org

VI. ENVIRONMENT&URBANIZATION BRIEFS

FIVE-PAGE SUMMARIES of each issue of *Environment&Urbanization* are now available at no charge, either in printed form or electronically (as .pdf files). These are aimed primarily at staff from government and international agencies who find *Environment&Urbanization* too long. Write, fax or e-mail us if you would like to receive copies. Staff from government or international agencies may request multiple copies if they wish to distribute the summaries within their own agency. The Briefs are a combination of the editorial for that particular issue (shortened) and the article summaries, therefore current subscribers will find nothing in them that they do not have in the full issue.

VII. DOWNLOADABLE PUBLICATIONS

A WEB SITE provides downloadable versions of many of the publications from IIED's Human Settlements Programme. These can be found at http://www.iied.org/rural_urban/downloads.html and include:

- Urban Poverty Reduction Working Paper Series
- Local Agenda 21s and Urban Environmental Action Plans Working Paper Series
- Rural-urban Working Paper Series
- *Environment&Urbanization* Briefs
- Rural-urban Briefing Papers
- *HiFi News* – recent issues of this newsletter on housing finance projects and programmes in the South