

Case Study

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Author(s): Fayyaz Baqir</p> <p>Practice(s): Democratic Governance</p> <p>Consolidated Reply: <i>MDGs at the sub-national Level (07-May-04)</i></p> | <p>Country: Pakistan</p> <p>Region: Asia</p> <p>Theme: Policy Making & Dialogue: Local development planning</p> |
|--|--|

Title of Initiative: **Upgradation and rehabilitation of Katchi Abadis (squatter settlements) in Islamabad with the assistance of Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE)**

Timeframe: 1999 to date

Objectives: To promote local dialogue and partnerships between CBOs, NGOs, local authorities, private sector and other actors to address environmental problems of the urban poor and influence policies for participatory local governance.

Approach: LIFE global programme was launched at the Earth Summit in 1992 as a UNDP response to the environmental problems of the urban poor. Since its inception, LIFE has demonstrated ways of directly engaging the sub-national, local and community level stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and local authorities by using urban environmental problems — water and sanitation, solid and liquid waste management, air and water pollution, occupation of hazard-prone zones, environmental health and education and urban planning — as an entry point.

Using an "upstreaming-downstreaming-upstreaming" approach, LIFE provided small grants to initiate community-based projects and promote policy dialogues. LIFE's approach to local level planning and implementation in Pakistan placed a strong emphasis on community-government collaboration. This approach was applied to strengthening local governance through improvements in sanitation and solid waste management as an entry point.

Information system as a tool for community participation: LIFE employs the Geographic Information System (GIS) as a tool to collect baseline data, mobilize community members, promote dialogue between government and community and develop [government's planning, implementation, monitoring and resource mobilization capacity](#). GIS is an information system that is a database system with specific capabilities for spatially-referenced data, as well as a way for working with and analysing data. The expanded use of this system is used to identify specific MDG needs at the local level. The project used GIS in squatter settlements in Islamabad to develop the capacity of government departments in dealing with the demands of residents for services.

Steering committees: Other important features of the programme include multi-stakeholder National Steering Committees (NSCs) and National Coordinators (NCs) who are integrally involved in the communities that LIFE seeks to serve. In Islamabad, for example, the Steering Committee included the Director General of Katchi Abadis (squatter settlements), the National Coordinator of LIFE/UNDP, the Director of the Katchi Abadi Cell of Capital Development Authority (CDA) and community representatives. This committee reviewed progress and provided guidelines for dispute resolution.

The following example demonstrates how LIFE engages settlement dwellers:

- [Updating maps](#) - Maps were prepared by a local NGO PIEDAR and the CDA. All maps of squatter settlements were digitized and existing settlement positions were marked. Houses constructed before a certain date were allocated numbers and all others

identified as irregular. A socio-economic survey gathered information about the head of the household, number of families living there, size of each family, their family income, NIC numbers, date of arrival in the settlement, place of origin before arrival and number of rooms within each enclosure.

- Community consultation – The settlement dwellers were involved in up-grading services through local resident committees that were consulted in all matters relating to their dwellings. Based on physical and socio-economic surveys, draft lists of dwellers eligible to stay in the colony were compiled and prominently displayed in each colony. The dwellers gave feedback and the local committees finalized the lists. The final list of dwellers eligible to stay in the colony was again displayed in the colony.
- Infrastructure improvements - The CDA Maintenance Directorate then made plans to upgrade water and sewer lines. As a result, streets were widened to a minimum width of 8 feet and a clearance corridor of 10 feet wide was prepared for sewage trunk line maintenance. The dwellers willingly and actively participated in this development work even if they had to readjust their built up area or to surrender open areas without compensation. After the adjustment of the dwelling units caused by the upgrades, the area of each dwelling was updated.
- Granting ownership and institutionalizing services – The Steering Committee then recommended rates for determining the cost of plots located in the settlement which were finalized by CDA. Dwellers applied to the CDA for ownership property rights for their plot. Costing and designing sewer and water supply systems and street pavement was completed. Funds for these facilities have been approved with a cost-recovery plan to finance them through the dwellers' service charges.

- Results:**
1. LIFE has directly benefited the urban poor living in slums and informal settlements by: improving living conditions; regularizing and up-grading squatter settlements; improving access and infrastructure for water, sanitation and waste management; and addressing issues of land tenure and resettlement. [The pilot project in Islamabad benefited 7000 households in 11 squatter settlements. The project approach was mainstreamed through UNDP's National Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme \(2003-2008\) for improving the livelihood of urban poor living in 7 Districts in 3 Provinces of Pakistan with the help of Planning and Development, Local Government and Rural Development departments in these provinces. The scope of the Project is flexible and other cities / districts can be added upon the availability of funds.](#)
 2. [A National Shelter Policy drawing upon the lessons learned from LIFE experience was announced by President of Pakistan in 2001.](#)
 3. LIFE also created a demand for community-led solutions for service delivery among urban administrators and elected representatives, and demonstrated cost effective approaches for improved sanitation and solid waste management. Capital Development Authority and provincial governments in Punjab, Sindh and North West Frontier Provinces have designed programmes based on LIFE methodology to continue Upgradation and rehabilitation of squatter settlements with their own funding.

Analysis: LIFE's methodology and tools have demonstrated ways in which large-scale results can be influenced and achieved in a cost-effective manner, not just in the areas of urban environment (e.g., water and sanitation, solid waste management, human settlements and urban greening), but also in areas of human development (e.g., social capital, capacity development, women's empowerment, income generation, and public health). This is accomplished primarily by strengthening participatory local governance.

While LIFE has achieved much success, it faces some critical strategic challenges stemming from the need to transition to a more sustainable and institutionalized modality. It simultaneously faces critical global development challenges such as: (i) urbanization, which poses an immense and growing crisis in some of LIFE's focus areas such as slums; (ii) the need for reality-tested knowledge in decentralization and local governance; and (iii) the imperative of the MDGs which must be localized to be achieved.

LIFE has the potential to assist with MDG achievement through its ability to localize effort and contribute directly to Goal 1 on poverty and Goal 7 on environmental sustainability. It specifically addresses Targets 10 (sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation) and 11 (improving the lives of slum dwellers). It is able to contribute indirectly to Goal 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment and Goal 4 on child mortality.

**Lessons
Learned:**

1. Local development as the entry point for community empowerment - Local communities must be at the centre of processes for achieving sustainable environmental improvements for the urban poor. Poor communities are closest to the problems of urban deprivation and degradation; not only are they potential beneficiaries of external assistance from donors or governments, but also, their proximity to the problems and their understanding of the local context make them creative resources, active participants, discerning investors and willing initiators in the process of change.
2. Link to local governance - For community-based solutions to achieve sustainable and large-scale impact, they must be linked to local governance processes. The effectiveness of these efforts depends upon multi-sectoral partnerships. No one sector – civil society, government (local or national), private sector or the international development community – holds all the answers. It is in the partnerships formed among these sectors that sustainable solutions can be found.
3. Strengthen capacity - The best investments in assisting the poor often include strengthening the capacity of local government to undertake participatory processes; the capacity of communities to organize and form inclusive associations; and the capacity of all sectors to engage as partners rather than as adversaries. These capacity investments go well beyond the problems originally targeted.
4. Mobilize resources - Small-scale projects that successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of community-based efforts can help reprioritize resource allocation, mobilize untapped resources, both financial and in-kind, of the community and of local government, and attract the attention and services of NGOs and the private sector.
5. Knowledge transfer - Development programmes such as LIFE have an important role to play in facilitating the transfer of this knowledge (particularly in locally-accessible languages), replicating small-scale innovations, enhancing capacity, and influencing policy. Effective mechanisms for achieving knowledge transfer include learning-by-doing and peer-to-peer learning.
6. Localizing MDGs - Programmes such as LIFE also have an important role to play in increasing information and accountability, two major pillars of good governance. While the signatories to these commitments are national governments, it is recognized that the MDGs must be localized in order to be achieved. LIFE's on-the-ground credibility, social capital and extensive local networks must be used as assets to inform local people and local governments about these commitments so that they can hold their national authorities (and donor partners) accountable for making the policy decisions, resource allocations and fiscal arrangements needed to achieve the goals.

Resources: ➤ Baqir, Fayyaz. A module on participatory development. NRSP, 2002.

- Siddiqui, Tasneem Ahmed (ed.). Development Issues-Innovations and Successes. City Press-UNDP, 2004.
- Accelerating the pace of Development: A Case Study of Lodhran Pilot Project. UNDP-LIFE, 2002.
- Climbing out of Poverty: Viable Alternatives to Katchi Abadis in Islamabad. UNDP-LIFE, 2003.
- [Pro-Poor Urban Governance: Lessons from LIFE 1992-2005](#). UNDP, 2005.