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Building Better Cities with Children and Youth

Sheridan Bartlett

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BUILDING BETTER CITIES WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Sheridan Bartlett

I. INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH MANY PAPERS in *Environment&Urbanization* have focused on children, the last issue that dealt exclusively with children's concerns came out in 1990. This focused primarily on urban children's vulnerabilities to disease, accidents and early death as a result of their poor living environments. There has been depressingly little progress on this front over the intervening 12 years – despite ambitious targets set by the international community for 2000.[1] There are many more urban children now, and hundreds of millions of them live in the kind of deep poverty that is a challenge to life, health and future prospects. The critical environmental health problems that are part of urban poverty, and that affect children in particular and disproportionate ways, have not gone away. Although cities, with their economies of scale and more prosperous economic bases, have long been considered better off than rural areas in terms of provision for child health and survival, this urban advantage has declined in some areas and is increasingly being called into question.[2] In the absence of effective, responsive local governance, poor urban areas are some of the world's most life- and health-threatening environments for children.

In other words, 12 years on, it would be more than reasonable to devote another issue of the journal to the on-going crisis in environmental health for urban children. The fact that we have not done so in no way implies a lack of urgency in this area. Some of the papers do describe effective responses to this concern – specifically the descriptions of UNICEF initiatives in the Philippines and Brazil. But our primary emphasis is different this time.

II. A NEW EMPHASIS

MOST OF THE papers in this collection still look at children's living environments, but primarily from two other perspectives: they consider children's experience of insecurity, marginalization and exclusion within their neighbourhoods, and children's capacities as active agents to identify the problems in their surroundings, to suggest improvements and, in many cases, to act on them. Some papers deal with one of these topics; many deal with both.

Much has happened in the past 12 years that contributes to this new emphasis. Most important, probably, is the framework provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and has since been almost universally ratified.[3] The Convention emphasizes not only survival and healthy development, not only protection and provision, but also the rights of children to inclusion and acceptance, and to a voice in defining and responding to the issues that concern them.[4] Children are presented in the Convention as fellow citizens.

There have been efforts all over the world to take this new vision of childhood on board and to work with its implications. Two of the more far-reaching initiatives in this regard have been the Child Friendly Cities movement, a loose network of cities with governments committed to making them better places for children and to involving children in this process; and the Growing Up in Cities project, an international research programme that has supported children in low-income urban neighbourhoods all over the world to assess their local environments and to work with local officials to improve them. We are fortunate to have a number of papers from people involved in both these initiatives.

The Child Friendly Cities movement is currently coordinated and supported by a Secretariat based in Florence, at UNICEF's Innocenti Research Centre. The paper by Eliana Riggio, director of this Secretariat, reports here on its work and on the progress made worldwide in identifying and promoting the factors that make a city "child friendly". This definition is evolving with

experience, but is clearly anchored in political will on the part of local government and an explicit commitment to the kinds of changes that make it possible to address children as a priority. The paper provides an overview of the institutional, legal and budgetary measures that, based on experience around the world, have been most effective in making cities work for children, and it offers a number of examples. Papers from the Philippines, Italy and Brazil provide further detail on a range of specific child friendly city experiences and on the involvement of both local governments and local community members, including children.

The Growing Up in Cities (GUIC) contributors do not report here on the research and achievements of that project as such – that has been well documented elsewhere.[5] Instead, they give us a sense of some of the thinking that underlies the project and that has grown out of it. Louise Chawla, the initiator and coordinator of this international project, provides a lucid account of the rationale for children's involvement, and some basic principles for making it work. Karen Malone, director of the Australian research, considers the human tendency for intolerance and moral censure that she sees as underlying much of young people's sense of being marginalized within their communities. Jill Kruger, who led the South African team, describes participatory research with children in Johannesburg, commissioned by the local government in response to the success of the Growing up in Cities research there, and as a component of its Child Friendly Cities initiative.

III. ACCESS, SAFETY AND INCLUSION

MOST OF THE papers in this issue draw attention in one way or another to children's powerful desire for inclusion in the life of their communities. This appears to be an overriding concern for children and adolescents all over the world – in both low- and high-income communities and countries. Many urban children feel isolated and excluded. Traffic, hazardous surroundings, social fears, violence, inadequate transportation, an absence of public space and facilities, and a general lack of interest and concern about their priorities all conspire to make cities unfriendly places for children and young people.

This does not have to be the case. Karen Malone refers to the work of fellow GUIC researchers who note that children in Boca Barracas, Argentina,

despite rundown surroundings, feel welcome and safe on the sidewalks and in the plazas and cafes of their neighbourhoods. This is in sharp contrast to her experience in Australia, where she finds that young people are contained, regulated and treated as intruders in public space. She suggests that in Australia, as in many countries, young people have some of the qualities of a minority sub-culture, and can be viewed by the adult world with suspicion and even hostility. When the implications of these problems for young people are addressed at all, the most common solutions involve either segregated "special places" or a process of negotiation about the use of common space that can have positive outcomes, but that implicitly suggests a lesser right to the public domain.

Roger Hart describes a similar phenomenon for somewhat younger children in New York – a long-standing trend to "contain" children within playgrounds, essentially segregating them from the social life of their communities, with the rationale that this will keep them safe from physical dangers and bad influences. Children have always resisted this trend, expressing in various ways their preference for self-determination and spontaneous play close to home and to the everyday life of family and neighbours. Playgrounds can be integral parts of the urban fabric, responsive to children's needs – but too often they undermine the potential for free play by substituting a narrow range of physical activity for the diversity and flexibility that children more naturally crave. There is a danger, too, that formal provision of this kind can be regarded as an acceptable substitute for the kind of integration in neighbourhood life that is fundamental to the development of a democratic civil society.

The papers by both Roger Hart and Karen Malone note the irony in the fact that opportunities for play (or for young people's socializing) do not generally improve as cities become more "developed". Malone cites, for example, a passage that describes the rich and inclusive street life in a self-built settlement in India – a powerful contrast to the malls and parking lots of Australian suburbs. But this is more than just a matter of per capita GNP. Jill Kruger, for instance, writes from Johannesburg about the constraints experienced there by children in four low-income neighbourhoods. They are not contained in substitute spaces or regulated through curfews, but they feel seriously restricted by their threatening surroundings. They are harassed on public transport, frightened

by drunks on the street, abused by neighbours when they play outside; they take their chances on busy streets without working traffic signals or proper sidewalks and in parks filled with drug users. This paper makes the critical point that even when there is apparently adequate provision of the kind of green open space children enjoy, this does not necessarily mean they will feel safe enough to use it. Open space in the neighbourhoods described here is commonly taken over by adults engaged in illicit activities. All the children speak of their anxiety about using public space, and the girls stress their fear of rape.

Roger Hart's point, that children prefer the spaces they find for themselves, is reinforced by these Johannesburg children when they are asked for their opinions. It is generally the informally "found" places in their local neighbourhoods that they most cherish, rather than the purpose-built settings provided by adults. Jill Kruger describes a stretch of green lawn by a garage near a busy intersection where children from the Pimville area of Soweto love to gather and play. When children in this neighbourhood and others were asked for their recommendations, they talked about improving and protecting existing areas where they played, removing litter, slowing traffic with speed bumps, policing public areas and installing street lights – rather than creating special separate facilities for play and recreation.

Gillian Mann explores another cause for insecurity and lack of access – the situation of refugee children, specifically that of Congolese refugees living in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Her interviews with children reveal lives fraught with anxiety. In order to avoid being placed in refugee camps, there is a constant need to conceal their identity – a worrying burden for children who are trying, at the same time, to maintain a sense of pride in their roots. Even when they are legally resident, they may face discrimination and harassment from Tanzanians, whose tolerance for foreigners has diminished in recent years in response to growing numbers of newcomers. Children say they never feel completely at ease. They are burdened at home by the worries of their parents, mocked and insulted at school and in public by those who guess they are Congolese, and isolated from any kind of community life. "Home" is a distant place that many of them have never seen, yet there is little prospect of real integration in their current setting. For those children who are separated from family, there may be the added burdens of survival on the street or through prostitution. Their exclusion and

anxiety, says Mann, results in a "...*circumscribed sense of personal and political identity.*"

The paper by Margaret Shaw and Lullu Tschiwula, reporting on a conference on urban youth and violence in Africa, points out that if young people are at high risk of victimization in some urban environments, they are also those most frequently involved in delinquent behaviour. There is agreement in both the North and the South that certain factors put children at risk of offending, among them, poverty, a poor environment and a lack of facilities, along with a range of social factors. Children who have been victimized themselves are more likely to victimize others, and children denied a sense of belonging and opportunity within their communities are more likely to seek these within the smaller social world of the youth gang.

This is confirmed by research from Cali, reported by four youth groups. Young people interviewed in four low-income neighbourhoods claim that, in the absence of parks and recreational spaces, the street becomes the most important locality for interacting and hanging out. They draw a distinction between non-threatening local *parches*, crews of young people who use the street as their territory, and more violent gangs from outside their neighbourhoods who engage in criminal activity to purchase drugs and to gain acceptance and respect by other gang members. It is not clear whether the distinction between these different kinds of gangs is primarily a matter of perception and territory, or whether in fact there is a clear difference in behaviours. The paper reports on the paradoxical co-existence of high levels of social solidarity within neighbourhoods along with violence and insecurity. This finding, say the authors, "...*challenges the assumption that communities with high 'social capital' or strong community structures will necessarily be low in violence; the relationship between these variables appears to be rather more complex.*"

IV. PARTICIPATION

URBAN CHILDREN LIVE in a wide range of circumstances but, as Jill Kruger points out, a reality that most of them share is the fact that they are seldom asked how they feel about their living environments or how their surroundings might be improved. There is growing recognition, however, of the importance of involving children in this way. Not only do they have a right to a voice in

matters that concern them, clearly expressed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, they are also experts on their own environments, well placed to identify the problems that concern them and the solutions that best address their concerns. "Having a voice" can take many forms. The papers in this issue represent various levels of involvement on the part of children, from the chance simply to describe the realities of their own lives to actually being involved in practical decision making and planning for their cities and neighbourhoods.

Louise Chawla provides an overview of children's right to participation, especially as it pertains to community development and the planning of the local environment. She reviews the relevant articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child but also considers what Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda have to say in this regard. All three documents reflect an agreement that "...*children and youth are not only a population with special needs but also one with special energies and insights that they can bring to the process of human settlements development*." But, as Jill Kruger also points out, even when children are consulted and given the chance to identify problems, they can seldom make changes on their own, since adults hold the reins of power. There have to be processes and mechanisms that institutionalize children's inclusion as part of routine practice. In this way, their participation becomes not only an objective in its own right but also a practical instrument for creating better cities.

In many situations, even when lip service is paid to the value of participation, the attention given to children's involvement can be superficial at best. Mary Racelis and Angela Desirée M Aguirre describe programmes in five "child friendly" cities in the Philippines, which focused explicitly on provision and protection but also on participation on the part of both children and their families (see below). Although these programmes have stimulated local governments to become more active partners on behalf of children, the authors find that community views and voices – those of both children and adults – are generally missing in these processes and could use much greater attention. They point, for instance, to the critical shortage of solid data on children in poor settlements and to the very real potential for children themselves to identify those in their communities most in need of assistance. "*Most officials...,*" say the authors, "...*pay only token attention to their young constituents and shrug off advocacy for children*

as not requiring their special attention."

Other papers demonstrate how very effectively children can respond when there are real channels to include them in planning and decision making. Marco Corsi describes initiatives in Italy that have addressed the deterioration of the urban environment over recent decades, along with the implications for children's safe mobility and independence. "Child friendly" projects in numerous Italian cities have focused on the management of green areas, the establishment of cycle routes, the creation of pedestrian streets and the rehabilitation of public space. A vital component has been the active involvement of children in planning and decision making, sometimes through their schools, sometimes through design workshops, sometimes through formally established channels within local government.

Marco Corsi's paper includes a very useful critique by children of their participatory experiences. Assessments were very positive on the whole, but many children also expressed disappointment and scepticism. They pointed to the unreliability of city administrators in implementing their promises and the tendency of adults to retain control of processes where children had expected more autonomy. Some children acknowledged that their own ideas and expectations had been unrealistic, but many felt their contribution was not taken seriously by adults. The paper suggests that in these processes, there should be routine and on-going negotiation among groups of children, their facilitators and city personnel, to maintain a shared understanding at all steps along the way.

The most detailed description of a project that has genuinely integrated children into local governance processes is Eliana Guerra's account of the participatory budgeting programme in Barra Mansa, Brazil, where a representative council of 36 children between the ages of 9 and 15, elected at the neighbourhood level, manages an annual budget of US$ 125,000. This council meets regularly, weighs child priorities for improvements in various parts of the city, allocates funds for those they consider most important and then follows the chosen projects through the implementation phase, dealing with the often frustrating realities of local bureaucracy. Projects the children have undertaken include repairs to schools and school equipment, tree planting, repairs to drains and sewers, and better security in low-income areas. At one school, a new all-weather sports surface was installed; in another neighbourhood, lighting

was put into a tunnel where children often play in the evenings. These investments improve neighbourhood quality in response to children's priorities, but also provide children – both those elected and those who meet to discuss their concerns – with a genuine chance to apprentice in the skills of active citizenship.

V. BROADER RESPONSES TO CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

NOT ALL THE papers in this issue focus on inclusion or participation; some look at broader responses to children's rights. The paper by Alberto Minujin, Jan Vandemoortele and Enrique Delamonica provides an important overview, making the connection between basic social service provision for children and the wider concerns of poverty reduction. The authors discuss the inadequacies in income-based poverty lines and make the case that economic growth does not necessarily reduce either monetary or non-monetary aspects of poverty. Investment in children, they argue, is the most effective route to eradicating poverty, representing as it does an investment in potential that can easily be lost.

Accounts of UNICEF projects in the Philippines and Brazil describe such broad-based responses to urban children's requirements. The paper by Mary Racelis and Angela Desiree M Aguirre, on child friendly projects in five Philippine cities, was mentioned above with reference to the participatory aspects of these projects. It is important also to mention the successes of these projects with regard to provision for children in a number of low-income neighbourhoods. Attention was focused on 24 specific goals related to reasonable levels of health, nutrition, education and protection. City authorities were stimulated to allocate resources for children's needs, to gear local institutions to serve children better, to work on convergent service delivery and to improve the capacities of families to support their children. An award system highlighted political will and the ability to deliver services. The authors discuss not only the undoubted successes of these projects but also their shortcomings, as seen through community eyes.

Another project, this one in Brazil, also used an award to stimulate cities to improve performance on a number of child-related indicators. UNICEF's Municipal Seal of Approval project in the district of Ceará is reported on by Patricio Fuentes and Reiko Niimi. This project demonstrates the potential of top-down social mobilization to produce dramatic change with minimal investment. Although no financial reward was involved, 98 per cent of the district's municipalities have become involved in this competition, and there have been some dramatic results – including a 35 per cent decrease in infant mortality over five years, a 50 per cent decline in child malnutrition and, over a one-year period, a 77 per cent increase in the number of school libraries. Major emphasis was placed on regularly communicating results to the public in accessible and involving ways. Increased public awareness, interest and expectations, in turn, contributed to greater accountability and higher performance at the municipal level. This project serves as a healthy reminder that there are many effective routes to constructive development, and no one recipe for best ensuring children's rights.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

IN THIS SPECIAL issue, urban children point to a concern that particularly troubles them – the extent to which they feel threatened by and excluded from their urban surroundings. A number of papers also indicate how much insight, energy and conviction they can bring to addressing this issue when given the opportunity to work with adults in making their cities better places.

The most pervasive violations of children's rights worldwide are related to their living conditions. But attention to the challenging environments of urban children has not, on the whole, been a priority on the agendas of either local governments, international agencies or organizations focused on children's welfare. This critical concern tends to fall between the cracks – organizations and agencies that focus on children respond more often with social services and interventions; those that deal with the material aspects of urban life generally have little awareness of the needs and priorities of children and young people.

The Child Friendly Cities initiative and the Growing Up in Cities project are welcome exceptions on this front, and have offered guidance both in addressing children's concerns and involving children in the process. Although the general trend has been to overlook these urban environment issues, there are certainly other efforts that have also addressed them: UNICEF's Urban Basic Services programme, which pre-dates the Child

Friendly Cities effort, made important contributions in a number of cities worldwide; the International Association for the Child's Right to Play has always been a strong advocate for children's right to a supportive environment; WHO's Safe Communities network encourages communities to eliminate the hazards that put children at risk of injury and limit their opportunities. Save the Children Sweden is undertaking a new focus on the environments of urban children, which it hopes to integrate into other work undertaken in its regional and country offices – the initiative will focus on influencing and building partnerships with local governments and organizations; and the World Bank is hosting an upcoming regional conference in Jordan, focusing on urban children and their environments and targeted at mayors and their staff from the region. One hopes that efforts such as these will inspire growing attention to the situation of children in cities worldwide.

There are numerous aspects of urban poverty for children that have not been addressed in this issue. The availability of good child care, for instance, is a serious concern in urban areas, where caregivers are, for the most part, engaged in wage labour or the informal economy. Critical issues of housing and tenure affect children acutely. Another factor is the relationship of household poverty and urban conditions to children's work; definitions of poverty seldom consider the extent to which poor households are required to draw on their children as assets rather than investing in their development and potential. Some of these concerns, along with others, have been addressed in various papers in *Environment&Urbanization* over the last 12 years – the relevant papers are listed in Box 1. We hope these topics, and others, will be addressed again in future issues – and that contributors and readers will find ways to follow up on the concerns raised by children and those who speak for them.

VII. THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

TWO PAPERS ARE included in this issue as reflections on the World Summit held in Johannesburg in late August and early September 2002. One documents how a city can address its environmental problems while also conforming to the current development mantra of "good governance"; the other highlights how much can be done to implement sustainable development

without global conventions or agreements. The paper by Rualdo Menegat describes urban environmental management in Porto Alegre. This is of particular interest for two reasons: first, because Porto Alegre is well known for its development of participatory budgeting (and its hosting of the alternative social summit); and second, because it is one of the best-managed cities in Latin America. It has won many awards for its high quality of life, and its inhabitants have a life expectancy similar to that in cities in high-income nations (and significantly higher than in Curitiba which is much better known than Porto Alegre for its environmental management). Porto Alegre is better known for its social achievements and political innovations than for its environmental management – but this paper shows that these cannot be considered separately as it describes how the environmental policies are rooted in the participatory budgeting process. The paper by Yvonne Rydin highlights the scope for making progress towards sustainable development through current practices and decision-making processes that do not need international agreements.

VIII. FEEDBACK

THE PAPER BY Pratima Joshi, Srinanda Sen and Jane Hobson describes how the NGO Shelter Associates and an organization of women and men slum dwellers worked together to collect information on each household in slum settlements in Pune and Sangli, and to map this on a geographical information system along with infrastructure and service provision and each slum's position within the city. This provides the means to ensure more attention by city authorities to improving infrastructure and services and to including "slums" in city plans.

The paper by Maria S Muller, Anjana Iyer, Modibo Keita, Bani Sacko and Dionkounda Traore uses case studies from Bamako and Bangalore to contrast two different approaches to community participation in developing more effective solid waste collection. The achievements and problems faced by both case studies are discussed, along with a general discussion of how community-based schemes can contribute to more effective municipal solid waste management systems.

The paper by Sébastien Wust, Jean-Claude Bolay and Thai Thi Ngoc Du describes two community-led upgrading programmes in precarious settlements in Ho Chi Minh City, and

Box 1:	Papers in *Environment&Urbanization* on children and youth

CHILD HEALTH

Omer, Mohamed I A (1990), "Child health in the spontaneous settlements around Khartoum", Vol 2, No 2, pages 65-70.

Jacobi, Pedro (1990), "Habitat and health in the municipality of Sao Paulo", Vol 2, No 2, pages 33-45.

Korten, David C (1990), "Observations and recommendations on the UNICEF Urban Child Programme", Vol 2, No 2, pages 46-57.

Surjadi, Charles (1993), "Respiratory diseases of mothers and children and environmental factors among households in Jakarta", Vol 5, No 2, pages 78-86.

CHILDREN AND ENVIRONMENT

Blitzer, Silvia (1990), "Children and the environment: guide to the literature", Vol 2, No 2, pages 83-94.

Lee-Smith, Diana and Taranum Chaudhry (1990), "Environmental information for and from children", Vol 2, No 2, pages 27-32.

Harpham, Trudy, Paul Garner and Charles Surjadi (1990), "Planning for child health in a poor urban environment: the case of Jakarta, Indonesia", Vol 2, No 2, pages 77-82.

Bartlett, Sheridan (1999), "Children's experience of the physical environment in poor urban settlements: implications for policy, planning and practice", Vol 11, No 2, pages 63-73.*

STREET AND WORKING CHILDREN

Patel, Sheela (1990), "Street children, hotels boys and children of pavement dwellers and construction workers in Bombay: how they meet their daily needs", Vol 2, No 2, pages 9-26.

Marcondes Cupertino, Maria Amelia (1990), "The employment of minors in Brazil", Vol 2, No 2, pages 71-76.

Bond, Lydia S (1992), "Street children and aids: is postponement of sexual involvement a realistic alternative to the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases?", Vol 4, No 1, pages 150-157.

Costa Leite, Ligia and Martha de Abreu Esteves (1991), "Street children in Brazil: an alternative view", Vol 3, No 1, pages 130-139.

Bibars, Imam (1998), "Street children in Egypt: from the home to the street to inappropriate corrective institutions", Vol 10, No 1, pages 201-216.*

Hunt, Caroline (1996), "Child waste pickers in India: the occupation and its health risks", Vol 8, No 2, pages 111-118.

PLAY

Hughes, Bob (1990), "Children's play – a forgotten right", Vol 2, No, 2, pages 58-64.

Munro, Bob (1992), "A new approach to youth activities and environmental clean-up: the Mathare Youth Sports Association in Kenya", Vol 4, No 2, pages 207-209.

EVICTIONS

Bartlett, Sheridan (1997), "The significance of relocation for chronically poor families in the USA", Vol 9, No 1, pages 121-131.*

Murphy, Denis and Ted Anana (1994), "Evictions and fear of evictions in the Philippines", Vol 6, No 1, pages 40-49.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Nieuwenhuys, Olga (1997), "Spaces for the children of the urban poor: experiences with Participatory Action Research", Vol 9, No 1, pages 233-249.*

CHILD CARE

Engle, Patrice L, Purnima Menon, James L Garrett and Alison Slack (1997), "Urbanization and care giving: a framework for analysis and examples from Southern and Eastern Africa, Vol 9, No 2, pages 253-270.*

Espinosa, Lair and Oscar A López Rivera (1994), "UNICEF's urban basic services programme in illegal settlements in Guatemala City", Vol 6, No 2, pages 9-29.

GROWING UP IN CITIES

Chawla, Louise (1997), "Growing up in cities: a report on research underway", Vol 9, No 2, pages 247-251.*

Driskell, David, Kanchan Bannerjee and Louise Chawla (2001), "Rhetoric, reality and resilience: overcoming obstacles to young people's participation in development", Vol 13 No 1, pages 77-89.*

* These can be read or printed free of charge from the web; go to:
http://www.catchword.com/titles/09562478.htm

discusses how and why these are more effective and appropriate than the city's "redevelopment" and relocation programmes.

A NEW WEB-BASED SEARCHABLE DATABASE ON URBAN PUBLICATIONS

What it contains: There is now a database on the web that has details and summaries of all papers ever published in *Environment&Urbanization*, as well as other IIED publications on urban issues and publications that have been reviewed in the Book Notes section of recent issues of the Journal. Each item has details of how to obtain the publication including, where relevant, how it can be accessed through the web. To access the database: http://eandu.poptel.org.uk

Searching: You can search this database by author, title, keyword, city, nation or region. The designer, Paul Farr, deliberately kept the design very simple so it can be viewed on all kinds of computer screens and to ensure it is as quick as possible – for those with slow modems and expensive telephone charges.

Future plans: We plan to develop this database to include many more urban publications – for instance, integrating into it the descriptions of new publications from the Book Notes section of previous issues of *Environment&Urbanization*.

Acknowledgements: Particular thanks are due to Paul Farr, who designed the web-based search engine and interface with our database and then refused to charge us for doing so, and to Danida, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs for supporting the development of the database.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In 1990, at the World Summit for Children, the international community pledged itself to achieve a number of targets for children, including dramatic reductions in early mortality and malnutrition, and universal access to safe water and adequate sanitation by the year 2000. Similar commitments had been made 15 years earlier, which were meant to have ensured universal access to safe water and adequate sanitation by 1990 – at the first Conference on Human Settlements in 1976 and the Water Conference in 1977.
2. Brockerhoff, M and E Brennan (1998), "The poverty of cities in developing regions", *Population and Development Review* Vol 24, No 1, pages 75-114; also Shi, A (2000), *How Access to Urban Potable Water and Sewerage Connections Affects Child Mortality*, World Bank, Development Research Group, Washington DC; and Hardoy, J E, D Mitlin, D Satterthwaite (2001), *Environmental Problems in an Urbanizing World*, Earthscan, London.
3. Only Somalia and the USA have failed to ratify the Convention, making it the most widely accepted international treaty in existence.
4. Arts. 12, 13, 14, 15 and 31.
5. See Chawla, Louise (editor) (2001), *Growing up in an Urbanizing World*, Earthscan, London and UNESCO, Paris; also Driskell, David (in collaboration with members of the Growing Up in Cities project), (2002), *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A Manual for Participation*, Earthscan (London) and UNESCO (Paris).

Acknowledgements