



ESCWA
UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC & SOCIAL
COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/SDD/
25 November 2010
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

EGM on Bridging the Urban Divide in the ESCWA Region:
Towards Inclusive Cities
Beirut, 25-26 November 2010

CONCEPT NOTE

**Bridging the Urban Divide in the ESCWA Region:
Towards Inclusive Cities**

With the aim of sharing lessons from experience and providing policy recommendations to concerned central and local governments, the Social Development Division (SDD) of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is launching a new study entitled “Bridging the Urban Divide in the ESCWA Region: Towards Inclusive Cities”. This concept note presents an overview of critical urban development issues in the region and identifies key themes that ESCWA will examine in more depth with the assistance of external experts in the field.

I. THE URBAN DIVIDE: CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

The urban divide is one of the major paradoxes if not scandals of our times.¹ Indeed, as the number of people living in urban areas has crossed the 50 percent threshold and is projected to reach 70 percent in 2050, cities worldwide are becoming hubs of complexities and contradictions. On the one hand, they are the centres of wealth and the engines of economic opportunities and growth. On the other hand, they are often stricken with poverty and deprivation. The “urban advantage” that most people seek in cities is often available only to those who are able to get access to adequate housing, social services and job opportunities. However, for a large number of urban dwellers the advantage of a city location is never realized due to gaping urban inequalities and steep invisible barriers.

The division that characterizes many cities in the developing world today is multi-dimensional: spatial, social, economic, political and cultural. In fact, there are many urban divides: income divide, educational divide, gender divide, quality of life divide, level of attainment divide, just to name a few. Moreover, spatial and social inequalities exist both within cities and between cities of the same country, and are often more pronounced with rapid economic growth, which tends to be geographically concentrated in certain areas. Globalization forces and the increased competition between cities have also in many cases deepened urban inequities and inter-city gaps.

By and large, social inequalities and unequal access to urban opportunities, particularly in cities of the developing world, are not only widening the socio-economic gap between the rich and the poor, but also excluding the great majority of vulnerable urban dwellers (including migrant workers and refugees) from their ‘right to the city’. This is manifested in the proliferation of informal economic activities, the spread of informal settlements and slums, and the tremendous costs and impacts of urban poverty on human health and on the natural and built environment.

The unprecedented pace and scale of urban population growth has outstripped the fiscal and technical capacity of many governments to build and expand urban infrastructure, deliver basic urban services, and ensure adequate shelter and services for all. This problem tends to be exacerbated by the failure of central governments to decentralize revenue-raising to the municipal level. Such fiscal, institutional and managerial gaps are partly responsible for the inability of municipal authorities to tackle key urban challenges effectively. At the same time, the urban divide and high level of urban inequalities can be attributed to weak urban governance, systemic institutional dysfunction and inadequate urban social policies that do not fully address the needs of the urban poor.

The concentration of services and opportunities in urban areas certainly gives cities an advantage over rural areas in terms of addressing poverty issues, provided that pro-poor policies and institutional mechanisms are in place. But unless serious action is taken to address the growing economic, social, political and cultural inequalities, the disparity between those who ‘have’ and those who ‘have not’ will broaden in many cities across the world.

Bridging the urban divide and promoting inclusive cities requires that central and local governments address several interrelated challenges, notably: (i) *demographic challenges* associated with rapid urbanization; (ii) *economic and financial challenges*, including the above-mentioned ‘fiscal gap’ faced by municipalities; (iii)

¹ Ms. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-HABITAT (*Urban World*, Vol.1, Issue 5, December 2009-January 2010):

social challenges partly associated with lack of access to basic urban services, housing and employment opportunities; (iv) *urban environmental challenges*; (v) *spatial challenges* related to urban fragmentation and segregation and (vi) *political or institutional challenges* linked to good governance, participation and basic rights to the city.

There are numerous reports and studies that effectively address these challenges and identify mechanisms for bridging urban inequality and promoting more inclusive cities. The critical components to building inclusive cities are often cited to include: political commitment to pro-poor development; good urban governance; effective urban planning and management; equitable distribution of public services and resources; and promotion of greater participatory democracy and cultural diversity in cities.²

Recent development studies and policy research also stress the need to approach urban challenges as part of broader and inclusive development agenda that integrates: (i) lagging and leading provinces within the country; (ii) urban and rural areas; and (iii) slums and informal settlements with other parts of the city. In addition, recent scholarship on the topic recognize that a successful approach to spatial and socio-economic integration needs to strike a balance between: (a) spatially-blind (or universal) social and economic policies to improve the living standards for all; (b) spatially connective policies based upon infrastructural investments to facilitate the movement of services, goods and people; and (c) spatially targeted programmes, including slum upgrading programmes.³

There are numerous examples and experiences that show that it is indeed possible to bridge the urban divide. The need to address existing urban crises has led many national and local governments to develop and successfully implement innovative urban planning and management approaches and institutional reforms aimed at creating more inclusive cities. This study will focus on the challenges faced by the countries of Western Asia and the policy responses of the governments in the region to the growing urban inequalities and social divisions.

II. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF ESCWA'S STUDY

Where do the countries of the ESCWA region stand in regard to the debate on the right to inclusive cities? What urban development and planning approaches are they adopting and implementing to respond to existing urban inequalities? What courses of action have they fostered to attain equitable urban development? What lessons can they learn from regional and international best practices?

This study will answer these questions by focusing on the following key areas:

- Overview of the urban divide and the main challenges facing the cities of the ESCWA region;
- Key urban development and planning policies and strategies currently adopted by governments (central, provincial and local) in the region to respond to economic, spatial and social inequalities and address the problems of the urban poor and vulnerable groups;
- Institutional challenges for the effective implementation of promising initiatives to bridge existing urban divides (within cities and/or between the cities of the same country) and promote pro-poor development; and
- Lessons from experience and recommendations to support the governments of the ESCWA region in developing urban visions, policies, strategies and actions that ensure sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban development premised on the principles of sustainability, subsidiarity, equitable access to urban resources, efficient delivery of public services, transparency, accountability and participation.

This concept note identifies key themes that ESCWA can investigate in more depth with the assistance of external experts in the field. It is envisioned that contracted experts will undertake a desk research, the output of which will be an analytical report targeting a policy audience. The consultants are also expected to present their research key findings in an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) that ESCWA is planning to host at the end of

² Most recently these issues were discussed in World Urban Forum V, which under the broad framework of "Right to the Inclusive City" brought together government officials, mayors, civil society, and the private sector.

³ World Bank, World Development Report 2009.

2010. The EGM will bring together the three consultants, along with other partners, experts and central and local government officials. ESCWA will work to consolidate the three reports and policy recommendations and other issues discussed in the EGM in an edited report to be published in 2011.

III. AN OVERVIEW OF URBANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCWA REGION

A. OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

The countries of the ESCWA region exhibit diverse income levels, socio-economic characteristics and levels of human development. At the top end, there are the oil-rich Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In the middle range there are countries with more or less diversified economies: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and the Syrian Arab Republic. And at the lower end of the range there are the least developed countries, mostly dependent on agrarian economies: Sudan and Yemen.

According to the data presented in the Human Development Index for 2009, among 182 countries, three of the GCC countries show high levels of human development: Kuwait (ranked 31), Qatar (33), and UAE (35). Countries with medium to high human development include the other three GCC countries and Lebanon, ranked as follows: Bahrain (39), Oman (56), Saudi Arabia (59), and Lebanon (83). Countries considered to have medium to low human development include: Jordan (96), Syria (107), Palestine (110), Egypt (123), Yemen (140) and Sudan (150).⁴ Iraq is not ranked but available data on education and life expectancy are amongst the lowest in the region (slightly higher than Sudan).⁵

B. URBANIZATION TRENDS

The countries of the ESCWA region are also very diverse in term of their urbanization trends, urban development patterns and urban population growth rates. However, population growth rates (both urban and total) for the region as a whole are particularly high in comparison with other world regions. For example, between 2000-2005 the total population growth rate for Western Asia was estimated to be almost double of that of the world (2.4% for the ESCWA region compared to 1.2 % for the world), and the urban population growth rates were also significantly higher (2.9% for the ESCWA region compared to 2.2% for the world). Population projections also show that despite the anticipated decrease in the region's total and urban population growth rates, these will still be growing at a higher pace than the average world total (See Annex, Table 1).

Currently the region is estimated to be 53% urban and is projected to reach 62% by 2030 and 72% by 2050 (See Annex, Table 2). Estimates for 2010 show that the share of the urban population in the region is remarkably high in several countries with small total population, and lowest in poorer countries with relatively high total population. The urban population share for the 14 ESCWA countries is as follows: Kuwait (98.4% of total population), Qatar (95.8%), Bahrain (88.6%), Lebanon (87.2%), UAE (84.1%), Saudi Arabia, (82.1%), Jordan (78.5%), Palestine (74.1%), Oman (73%), Iraq (66.2%), Syria (55.7%), Egypt (43.4%), Sudan (40.1%) and Yemen (31.8%). With the exception of Yemen, whose urban population is projected to reach 45.3% in 2030, all countries in Western Asia will be more than 50% urbanized by 2030.

Population analysts believe that the dynamism of the rural-to-urban migratory process will decelerate between 2000 and 2020 in most urban agglomerations of the region, with the exception of a few cities, like Damascus, Cairo, Alexandria, and some Jordanian towns.⁶ This implies that the future urban population growth rates in the region will be mainly due to natural growth.

While in some countries, namely Kuwait and Lebanon, the population will be mostly concentrated in one urban agglomeration or a single city (typically referred to as primate city) in this case the capital city, urban

⁴ Statistics of the Human Development Report: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

⁵ UNDP, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries*, Annex 1, Table 1, p.229.

⁶ ESCWA (2005) "Population and Development: The Demographic Profile of Arab Countries". Downloadable from: www.escwa.org.lb/information/publications/edit/upload/ssd-03-booklet.2.pdf (accessed 18, 6, 2010).

primacy is not a characteristic of the countries of the region (See Annex, Table 3). By and large, the increase in urban population will be absorbed not only by capital cities but also by secondary cities and small and medium-sized towns. Even in the case of Lebanon, Beirut's level of primacy and urban domination has significantly dropped down in the last 40 years. The primacy of the city reached a peak of 81.8% in 1975 and a lowest level of 42.8% in 1995 – as a result of the country's conflict and important internal migration flows – and then increased again to 50.3% in 2005. As for Kuwait City, primacy reached a peak of 86.7% in 1970 and a lowest level of 66.3% in 1990 – during the Iraqi invasion period – after which it began to increase and is estimated to reach 76.8% in 2010.⁷

C. URBAN POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

Data on poverty in the region is severely limited but generally speaking poverty is more of an issue in the middle income and least developed countries of the region, although oil-rich countries also have significant numbers of urban poor. Available income poverty estimates, based on lower national poverty lines, are as follows: Lebanon 7.8% (0.3 million in 2005), Egypt 19.6% (13.7 million in 2005), Jordan 14.2% (0.7 million in 2002), Syria 11.4% (2.1 million in 2004) and Yemen 34.8% (6.8 million in 2006). These figures increase significantly when based on upper national poverty lines.⁸ The estimates in this case are as follows: Lebanon 28.6% (1.1 million in 2004/5), Egypt 40.4% (29.4 million in 2004/5), Jordan 11.3% (0.6 million in 2006), Syria 30.1% (5.5 million in 2003/4), Yemen 59.9% (12.6 million in 2005). The two countries with the highest Human Poverty Index (HPI) in the region are Sudan (34.3%) and Yemen (36.6%), where illiteracy rates are high and access to safe water and nutrition is low.⁹

Data about “income inequality” in the region is largely unavailable, but countries for which data is available have a moderate Gini coefficient (that is, relatively low levels of inequality): Egypt (0.320 in 2004/5), Jordan (0.359 in 2002), Lebanon (0.360 in 2005), Syria (0.375 in 2004) and Yemen (0.366 in 2005). In particular, data limitation makes it difficult to analyze changes in income inequality, but analysts believe that the gap in income levels has increased in most countries of the ESCWA region over the past two decades, especially in Syria and Yemen but fell down in Egypt and Jordan.¹⁰

As for the geographic distribution of poverty, some analysts believe that rural poverty rates in the wider Arab region are higher than urban poverty rates.¹¹ It is however difficult to generalize in the absence of accurate statistics and comparisons. Specifically, there is evidence of income poverty prevalence in the rural areas of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Yemen.¹² At the same time, there is increasing scientific evidence that poverty is becoming more and more urbanized with the unprecedented growth of the urban population.¹³

While there are few, if any, systematic studies on urban poverty in the ESCWA region, it is evident that urban disparities and poverty rates vary significantly among the different countries of the region and within cities and between cities of the same country. Such urban inequalities can be observed in the form of: (i) considerable immigration to major cities (national and transnational) where job opportunities are concentrated; (ii) the spatial stratification of urban areas on the basis of income, ethnicity or place of origin; and (iii) the polarization of the urban population in terms of income level, and ability to access basic urban services and enjoy decent living conditions.

⁷ Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2009 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/wup2009/unup/> (accessed on June 18, 2010).

⁸ The poverty line varies from one country to another. The figures quoted above were based on a Purchase Power Parity (PPP) line of USD 2.4 to 2.7 per day.

⁹ Based on data presented in UNDP, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries*, p.114.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 115-116.

¹¹ For example see Iqbal, F. (2006) “Sustaining Gains in Poverty Reduction and Human Development in the Middle East and North Africa”, The World Bank, Washington D.C. Downloadable from: http://pgpblog.worldbank.org/poverty_reduction_in_the_middle_east_and_north_africa

¹² UNDP, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries*, p.113.

¹³ For example see Satterthwaite, D. (2003) “The Millennium Development Goals and Urban Poverty Reduction: Great Expectations and Nonsense Statistics”, *Environment and Urbanization*, Vol. 15. Downloadable from: eau.sagepub.com/content/vol15/issue2/

D. SOCIAL EXCLUSION

According to UNDP's *Arab Human Development Report* (2009), social exclusion and income inequalities have significantly increased in most Arab countries over the past two decades. This is especially true for some countries in Western Asia, where the disparity in the ability of the various groups of the urban population to access urban services and assets is aggravating social exclusion. For example, land and assets concentration is a key issue in many cities. Although property prices have come down in some countries following the recent global financial crisis, in many other cities in the region, the trend towards ever more expensive land and property continued unabated. In cities such as Amman, Damascus and Beirut, for example, the cost of housing has risen drastically in the past years, pushing larger numbers of low-income families out of areas better equipped with urban services and into distant lower income areas. In Cairo, well-known for its density and crowding, the cost of formal housing is beyond the means of a significant share of the population. Thus, the alternative option for many lower income groups is to look for housing in the informal market.

The crowding of the urban poor in slums and informal settlements aggravates their social exclusion. The high unemployment rates amongst slum and informal settlements dwellers further exacerbate the exclusion of vulnerable groups from formal city life and economy. Available 2001 data estimates that several countries in the ESCWA region have alarming rates of slum population relative to total urban population: 86% in Sudan (or approximately 10.1 million), 61% in Oman (1.2 million), 60% in Palestine (1.3 million), 57% in Iraq (9.0 million), 50% in Lebanon (1.6 million), 40% in Egypt (11.7 million), 20% in Saudi Arabia (3.6 million), 16% in Jordan (0.6 million), and 10% in Syria (0.9 million). Comparative 2005 data shows that with the exception of Egypt, whose slum population relative to total population is decreasing, the slum population of the countries of the region – for which data is available – is increasing at variable rates (See Annex, Tables 4 and 5).¹⁴

Paradoxically, within the confines of many cities, informal settlements and slum areas are often adjacent to rich neighbourhoods. Differences in the availability and quality of services, amenities and opportunities between different communities are vast, and the negative impact on the health and lives of the residents is also significant. This is due in large part to a skewed allocation of resources which is placing poor and vulnerable groups at an even greater disadvantage. Access to adequate housing and basic infrastructure and social services is one of the major problems facing millions of the region's urban dwellers and a major challenge for most countries in the region.

In addition, cities and towns of the ESCWA region are home to millions of foreign migrant workers and refugees (including Palestinian, Iraqi and Somali refugees) (See Annex, Table 6). By and large this group suffers from the highest degree of exclusion and inequality and is often denied their 'right to the city'. Many vulnerable urban dwellers, notably refugee groups, live in enclaves separated both physically and socially from the city and its potential opportunities, including employment opportunities.

Women and youth are often also excluded from urban opportunities in the region, notably access to employment. While unemployment is one of the main socio-economic challenges facing the region as a whole, youth unemployment and female unemployment rates are remarkably higher than similar rates in other regions. Estimates for 2005/2006 made by the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) show that the unemployment rates among the youth of the Arab region is nearly double that in the world at large (30% compared to 14%).¹⁵ The same ALO study also shows that youth unemployment rates vary tremendously between the various countries of the ESCWA region, these being: Iraq (46%), Sudan (41%), Jordan (39%), Palestine (34%), Yemen (29%), Egypt (26%), Saudi Arabia (26%), Kuwait (23%), Lebanon (21%), Bahrain (21%), Qatar (21%), Oman (20%), Syria (20%), and UAE (6%).

¹⁴ These figures are based on MDGs database/ United Nations Statistics Division estimates, which were calculated on the basis of three components: 1) access to drinking water, 2) adequate sanitation, and 3) sufficient living area. Estimates relied on data presented by UNICEF/WHO (for the first two components) and UNSD (for the third component).

¹⁵ UNDP, *Arab Human Development Report 2009: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab Countries*, p.109.

E. URBAN CHALLENGES

Based on the above, it is evident that urban divisions in the ESCWA region exist, like in many parts of the world, at three different scales:

- The regional scale (between the cities of the various countries);
- The national scale (between the cities of the one country and between urban/ rural areas);
- The local scale (between the different quarters and social groups of the same cities, but mainly between formal and informal economies and formal and informal areas).

More specifically, the countries of the ESCWA region are confronted with numerous urban challenges, including the labour force migration and the unprecedented urban growth of many cities and urban agglomerations. This implies a need to respond to increased demands for: (i) affordable housing; (ii) basic services and infrastructure (water, sanitation, electricity, solid waste management, roads, etc.), (iii) education and health services, and (iv) decent and fair employment. There are also different sets of (i) socio-political problems (such as participation, governance and the right to the city), and (ii) socio-spatial problems (such as segregation and polarized residential areas with unequal access to services) that the region's governments need to address in order to promote more inclusive cities. The urban problems and challenges facing the cities of the region are, however, very diverse and differ from country to country and city to city. Hence, the policies and interventions required to promote inclusive cities in the ESCWA region will also be context and problem specific.

IV- PROPOSED THEMES

Looking at the above snapshot of the ESCWA region, the following three thematic areas can be identified at different levels or scales of inclusive urbanization.

Theme 1: Unbalanced Growth and the Challenge of Inclusive Development

This thematic area will focus on the inequalities between the different countries of Western Asia and between the regions and/or cities of the same country in terms of economic development, job opportunities and access to basic services. Given that urban wealth and economic growth tend to be geographically concentrated, it will investigate and critically reflect on the array of spatial development policies adopted by the governments of ESCWA countries to promote inclusive development that integrates urban and rural areas, and lagging and leading provinces. More specifically, it will look at central governments' spatial investments in connective inter-urban road infrastructure, transportation systems and social services; and the incentives they are setting to promote investments by the private sector.

This thematic area will also present contemporary debates that focus on the socio-economic interdependence between different human settlements and the need to build institutional linkages and alliances between the various tiers of government (for example, through sharing human, technical and financial resources) in order to be able to provide more cost-effective infrastructure and public services to a wider range of the population. To this end, it will present successful regional experiences and elaborate lessons and recommendations to guide spatial policy formulation and implementation.

Theme 2: Urban Dualities and the Role of Urban Planning and Management

This theme will focus on the spatial divide and social, economic and political inequalities that exist within many cities in Western Asia. With reference to some selected cases, it will elaborate on the fact that spatial development can go either hand in hand with or against socio-economic development, depending on what kind of urban development visions, policies, planning regulations and management strategies are put in place.

More specifically, it will examine the role of urban planning and management in promoting exclusionary or inclusive urbanization. To this end, it will (i) discuss and critically reflect on the inability of prevalent conventional urban planning and development approaches to address the challenges of rapid urbanization; and (ii) investigate and present novel urban planning systems that some governments in the region have

adopted to knit the different parts of the city together; including city development strategies, investments in connective infrastructure and targeted interventions.

This thematic area will also elaborate on the institutional challenges to the effective implementation of promising urban development and planning strategies. Finally, it will present lessons from international and regional experience and specific recommendations aimed at promoting good urban governance and inclusive urban development.

Theme 3: Urban Poverty and Targeted Development Initiatives

This thematic area will focus on the vast socio-economic urban inequalities that exist within selected cities as manifested not only in the quality of life but also in the ability of the different groups of the urban population to access adequate shelter, basic infrastructure and social services, formal sector employment and formal financial institutions. Consequently, it will elaborate on the “urban advantage” and “the Right to Inclusive Cities” arguments and discuss the potential of urbanization in combating poverty and socio-spatial exclusion. To this end, it will look at urbanization and urban development dynamics in the ESCWA region, and the associated phenomenon of slum and/or informal settlements formation in and around major cities. It will also present an overview of what municipal governments and other stakeholders are doing to promote the socio-economic integration of slum and informal dwellers within urban areas. For instance, it will focus on slum and informal settlement upgrading initiatives initiated by national and municipal institutions or international organizations. With reference to selected case studies, it will highlight successful initiatives and discuss their replicability potential and the required institutional set-up and reforms needed to move from project-based approaches towards inclusive urban development policy approaches.

V. DRAFT OUTLINE (to be developed by external consultants)

A. UNBALANCED GROWTH AND THE CHALLENGE OF INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT (THEME 1)

1. Urbanization trends and development dynamics: A regional overview

With reference to available statistical data, this section will present an overview of the region’s urbanization trends (total and urban population growth rates, geographic concentration of economic opportunities and services, economic growth and poverty rates, patterns of urban inequality, etc.) while focusing on the disparities between the different regions and/or cities of the same country in terms of economic development and the provision of basic urban services. Specifically, it will address the linkage between economic growth, rapid urbanization, trans-national work force migration, and the proliferation of informal settlements and pockets of poverty in and around the main cities of the region.

2. National policies and strategies to promote inclusive spatial development

This section will present the array of spatial development policies adopted by the governments of the ESCWA region to promote more inclusive development at a national scale. For example, it will examine the spatial development policies and “area approaches”¹⁶ of: (i) countries that expect further waves of rural-to-urban migration (such as Egypt, Jordan and Syria), (ii) small and highly urbanized countries with a primate city (like Kuwait and Lebanon), and (iii) highly urbanized countries with more than one urban agglomeration (for example, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE). It will also look at the spatial interventions – mainly investments in connective inter-urban road infrastructure, transportation systems and social services – of the countries in the region to redirect economic growth into new urban areas, including secondary cities. Examples to look at include interventions such as Riyadh’s industrial zone (Saudi Arabia) and Aqaba Special

¹⁶ The World Bank, *World Development Report* (2009) develops an interesting argument about “area approaches” (i.e. sub-national units) to national urbanization strategies, p.51.

Economic Zone (Jordan).¹⁷ The anticipated or actual impact of envisioned spatial development strategies on job creation and poverty reduction will also be addressed in this section.

3. *Policy implementation: Challenges and opportunities*

This section will discuss the institutional barriers that prevent many countries in the region from the effective implementation of inclusive spatial development strategies (for example, centralization of decision making, institutional and managerial gaps, limited fiscal and technical capacity of local administrations, and patchy coordination between the various tiers of government). Moreover, and with reference to specific examples, this section will examine how the different tiers of government are working together and the kind of institutional alliances they are building to implement spatial development programmes and provide improved infrastructure and public services to a wider segment of the population at a lower cost.

4. *Lessons and recommendations*

This section will outline specific lessons and recommendations to support governments in setting inclusive spatial development policies and strategies. In addition, it will elaborate a scope for intergovernmental cooperation.

B. URBAN DUALITIES AND THE ROLE OF CITY PLANNING (THEME 2)

1. *Urban dualities: The case of selected cities in the ESCWA region*

This section will address the striking physical contrast and socio-economic inequalities that exist within many cities in the region, their *de facto* segregation into rich and poor areas, or formal and informal settlements areas, and the increased homogenization of urban areas in their economic, social and sometimes ethnic make-up. It will also address urban development experiences of global or regional dimensions. For instance, it will look at the ambitious urban transformation and development projects of cities like Abu Dhabi, Doha and Dubai, and how these projects are shaping their social and spatial structures. It could also address the severe competition for urban land in cities like Amman, Beirut, Cairo and Damascus and discuss how urban renovation projects and private investments can, in the lack of regulatory frameworks, drive real estate prices beyond the reach of the majority of the population, thus subdivide the city on the basis of income.

2. *Urban planning and management approaches to promote inclusive cities*

This section will investigate the urban planning and management approaches embraced by local governments to deal with urban challenges and socio-spatial fragmentation. It will look into the formulation and implementation of master and sectoral plans, city development strategies, targeted investments in infrastructure and public transportation systems, among other issues. It will highlight promising and innovative policies, programmes and interventions to knit the city together. Particular attention will be paid to initiatives embracing comprehensive, participatory and strategic city development approaches, such as the city development strategy of Aleppo.

3. *Institutional Challenges*

This section will address the contradictions that often exist between governments' vision statements on the need to promote inclusive cities and actual exclusionary urban planning and management practices taking place in the region. In discussing this issue, it will address the institutional challenges facing city governments in implementing and enforcing urban development visions and plans, such as: fiscal gaps faced by municipal authorities, centralization of decision making, lack of technical capacity and/or administrative power and confusion of roles and responsibilities of the various city administrations.

¹⁷ Riyadh's industrial zone is expected to create 70,000 jobs and attract \$40 billion when fully developed (Arab News).

4. Lessons and recommendations

This section will present lessons and recommendations on how to reform urban planning systems and promote good urban governance and the kind of support and institutional setups required to enable the effective implementation and enforcement of inclusive policies and regulations.

C. URBAN POVERTY AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (THEME 3)

1. Urban poverty and access to urban services and resources: A regional overview

This section will address socio-economic urban inequalities that exist within selected cities in the region. These inequalities are manifested not only in the quality of life but also in the right and ability of the different urban groups to access adequate shelter, basic infrastructure and social services, formal sector employment and formal financial institutions. With reference to available data, it will shed light on how poverty and inequality in the distribution of public resources are leading to the exclusion of considerable segments of the urban population and the proliferation of informal settlements, which contribute to widen the urban divide.

2. Local scale urban development interventions

This section will present the array of policy approaches adopted by the countries (or cities) of the ESCWA region to cope with urban informality. In addition, it will present an overview of slum and informal area upgrading and development programmes taking place in the region. The section will also focus on initiatives that integrate such concerns as (i) productive employment creation for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (including women and youth), (ii) upgrading and maintaining urban infrastructure and transport systems, (iii) provision of basic social services, (iv) improved access of lower income groups to affordable credit for housing and business improvement, and (v) building the technical and organizational capacity of local institutions and enhancing their urban management skills.

3. Mainstreaming good initiatives: Limitations and challenges

This section will discuss the challenge of moving from successful pilot project-based approaches to reformative urban policy approaches. In particular, it will elaborate on the challenges within the existing institutions and institutional structures, such as insufficient technical capacity, limited resources and conflict or lack of coordination between the various city administrations. In addition, it will focus on the role of the different tiers of the government in promoting and mainstreaming positive urban changes and on the constructive role that civil society, including informal and slum area dwellers, can play in enhancing the urban environment and minimizing existing socio-economic inequalities.

4. Lessons and conclusions

This section will present lessons on upgrading poor urban areas and outline the key components that contributed to their success, such as good local governance and active local participation. In addition, it will set some recommendations related to the required institutional and policy changes and the re-distribution of certain tasks between local and central government agencies.

ANNEX

Table 1: ESCWA region population growth rates

Country	Total annual growth rate (%)					Urban annual growth rate (%)				
	1990-1995	2000-2005	2010-2015	2020-2025	2025-2030	1990-1995	2000-2005	2010-2015	2020-2025	2025-2030
Bahrain	3.17	2.25	1.77	1.37	1.23	3.23	2.26	1.85	1.50	1.37
Egypt	2.00	1.90	1.66	1.24	1.10	1.69	2.00	2.09	2.18	2.23
Iraq	2.97	2.72	2.63	2.10	1.80	2.70	2.44	2.59	2.44	2.30
Jordan	5.59	2.74	1.44	1.46	1.27	7.18	2.75	1.57	1.71	1.56
Kuwait	-4.34	3.84	2.04	1.55	1.38	-4.32	3.86	2.06	1.57	1.40
Lebanon	3.20	1.58	0.79	0.64	0.51	3.61	1.72	0.94	0.80	0.67
Occupied Palestinian Territory	3.89	3.55	2.87	2.42	2.21	4.63	3.86	3.19	2.77	2.58
Oman	3.28	1.72	1.92	1.58	1.36	4.90	1.80	2.27	1.96	1.75
Qatar	2.35	7.23	1.55	1.20	1.09	2.75	7.33	1.62	1.25	1.13
Saudi Arabia	2.32	2.53	1.95	1.56	1.34	2.85	2.81	2.21	1.81	1.57
Sudan	2.59	2.06	2.00	1.61	1.46	5.29	3.84	3.74	3.07	2.80
Syrian Arab Republic	2.77	2.94	1.69	1.54	1.33	3.24	3.63	2.45	2.35	2.15
United Arab Emirates	5.28	4.67	1.97	1.53	1.41	5.10	5.16	2.32	1.77	1.61
Yemen	4.63	2.90	2.74	2.31	2.05	7.17	4.84	4.59	4.06	3.74
Total ESCWA¹	2.64	2.39	1.98	1.61	1.43	3.02	2.89	2.55	2.37	2.24
<i>Total World</i>	<i>1.54</i>	<i>1.26</i>	<i>1.11</i>	<i>0.86</i>	<i>0.73</i>	<i>2.38</i>	<i>2.20</i>	<i>1.85</i>	<i>1.65</i>	<i>1.54</i>

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2009 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/wup2009/unup/>, Monday, June 14, 2010; 5:52:01 AM.

¹ Calculated based on estimates from the above mentioned source. Rate of growth (%) = (LN Pt/Pi)/5*100

Table 2: Urban population relative to total population

Country	Total population (thousands)				Urban population (thousands)				Percentage urban (%)			
	1990	2010	2030	2050	1990	2010	2030	2050	1990	2010	2030	2050
Bahrain	493	807	1085	1277	434	715	984	1185	88.1	88.6	90.6	92.8
Egypt	57785	84474	110907	129533	25124	36664	56477	81998	43.5	43.4	50.9	63.3
Iraq	18079	31467	48909	63995	12602	20822	33930	49193	69.7	66.2	69.4	76.9
Jordan	3254	6472	8616	10241	2350	5083	7063	8844	72.2	78.5	82	86.4
Kuwait	2143	3051	4273	5240	2100	3001	4218	5187	98	98.4	98.7	99
Lebanon	2974	4255	4858	5033	2472	3712	4374	4652	83.1	87.2	90	92.4
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2154	4409	7320	10265	1462	3269	5810	8692	67.9	74.1	79.4	84.7
Oman	1843	2905	4048	4878	1218	2122	3184	4108	66.1	73	78.7	84.2
Qatar	467	1508	1951	2316	431	1445	1891	2261	92.2	95.8	96.9	97.6
Saudi Arabia	16259	26246	36545	43658	12451	21541	31516	39161	76.6	82.1	86.2	89.7
Sudan	27091	43192	60995	75884	7211	17322	33267	51365	26.6	40.1	54.5	67.7
Syrian Arab Republic	12721	22505	30560	36911	6224	12545	19976	27696	48.9	55.7	65.4	75
United Arab Emirates	1867	4707	6555	8253	1476	3956	5821	7567	79.1	84.1	88.8	91.7
Yemen	12314	24256	39350	53689	2577	7714	17844	32303	20.9	31.8	45.3	60.2
ESCWA region	159444	260254	365972	451173	78132	139911	226355	324212	49.0	53.8	61.9	71.9

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2009 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/wup2009/unup/>, Monday, June 14, 2010; 6:50:10 AM.

Table 3: Percentage of the urban population residing in each urban agglomeration with 750,000 inhabitants or more in 2007

Country	City	1980	1995	2010	2025
Bahrain	Manama	--	--	--	--
Egypt	Al-Iskandariyah (Alexandria)	13.1	12.6	13	12.2
Egypt	Al-Qahirah (Cairo)	38.4	37.4	36.7	33.5
Iraq	Al-Basrah (Basra)	4	4.2	4.5	4.3
Iraq	Al-Mawsil (Mosul)	5.3	6	7.1	7.1
Iraq	Baghdad	34.1	30.9	28.9	27.1
Iraq	Irbil (Erbil)	3	4.3	5	4.9
Jordan	Amman	47.7	28.9	21.8	21
Kuwait	Al Kuwayt (Kuwait City)	68.4	70.3	76.8	75.2
Lebanon	Bayrut (Beirut)	79.1	42.8	52.6	50.8
Oman	Muscat	--	--	--	--
Occupied Palestinian Territories		--	--	--	--
Qatar	Doha	--	--	--	--
Saudi Arabia	Ad-Dammam	3.1	3.7	4.2	4.1
Saudi Arabia	Al-Madinah (Medina)	4.5	4.7	5.1	5
Saudi Arabia	Ar-Riyadh (Riyadh)	16.7	21.1	22.4	21.2
Saudi Arabia	Jiddah	13.4	15.3	14.9	14.1
Saudi Arabia	Makkah (Mecca)	7.9	7.2	6.9	6.6
Sudan	Al-Khartum (Khartoum)	29.7	35.1	27.8	25.7
Syrian Arab Republic	Dimashq (Damascus)	32.8	25.3	22.8	21.3
Syrian Arab Republic	Halab (Aleppo)	25.5	25.6	25.3	23.6
Syrian Arab Republic	Hims (Homs)	9.2	9.3	9.3	8.9
United Arab Emirates	Dubayy (Dubai)	31	34.1	41	40.8
Yemen	Al-Hudaydah	8.3	8.4	12.2	12.2
Yemen	Sana'a'	17.2	28	30.1	28.7
Yemen	Ta'izz	8.8	8.9	11.6	11.4

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 2007 Revision, <http://esa.un.org/unup>

Table 4: Total slum population

Country	Urban slum population		
	1990	2001	2005
Bahrain	-	-	-
Egypt	14,086,925	11,761,704	5,405,326
Iraq	6,824,582	9,026,243	9,692,492
Jordan	387,750	623,494	718,812
Kuwait	-	-	-
Lebanon	1,142,000	1,601,500	1,756,720
Oman	671,134	1,213,971	
Qatar	-	-	
Saudi Arabia	2,385,108	3,609,342	4,070,289
Sudan	5,707,584	10,106,860	13,913,793
Syrian Arab Republic	628,609	891,523	981,945
UAE	-	-	
Occupied Palestinian Territory	-	1,333,289	
Yemen	1,787,400	3,109,569	3,802,848

Source: Millennium Development Goals Database/ United Nations Statistics Division

<http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=slum&d=MDG&f=seriesRowID%3a711%3bcountryID%3a275%2c368%2c400%2c422%2c512%2c682%2c736%2c760%2c818%2c887%3byear%3a1990%2c2001%2c2005&c=2,3,4&s=countryID:asc,countryEnglishName:desc&v=1>

Table 5: Slum population as a percentage of urban (proportion of households with access to secure tenure)

Country	Slum Population as a Percentage of Urban Population	
	1990	2001
Egypt	58	40
Iraq	57	57
Jordan	17	16
Lebanon	50	50
Oman	61	61
Occupied Palestinian Territory	----	60
Saudi Arabia	20	20
Sudan	86	86
Syrian Arab Republic	10	10
Yemen	68	65

Source: (Key Global Indicators | United Nations Statistics Division, UN-HABITAT/MDG,

http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=slum+population&d=CDB&f=srID:30018&c=2,3,4&s=_crEngNameOrderBy:asc,yr:desc&v=1)

Table 6: International migrants and refugees

Country	International migrants as a percentage of the population					Refugees as a percentage of international migrants				
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
Bahrain	35.1	35.7	36.8	38.2	39.1	0.6	0	0	0	0
Egypt	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	1.1	3.6	4	36.3	37.9
Iraq	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.5	88.3	87.4	37.6	52
Jordan	35.2	37.4	39.7	42.1	45.9	81.1	80.2	81.5	83	85
Kuwait	74	63.2	67.3	69.2	68.8	0	1.5	0.2	0.1	1.8
Lebanon	17.6	18.8	18.4	17.7	17.8	58.3	53	54.8	55.8	61
Occupied Palestinian Territory	42.3	45.9	44.7	44.1	43.6	100	100	100	100	100
Oman	23	26.8	26	25.5	28.4	0	0	0	0	0
Qatar	79.1	77.2	76.3	80.5	86.5	0	0	0	0	0
Saudi Arabia	29.2	25.3	24.7	26.8	27.8	0	0.3	0.1	3.8	3.3
Sudan	4.7	3.6	2.4	1.7	1.7	70.6	63.1	47.2	22.6	27.8
Syrian Arab Republic	5.4	5.6	5.6	6.9	9.8	41	46	42	56.4	71.7
United Arab Emirates	71.3	70.6	70.6	70	70	0	0	0	0	0
Yemen	2.8	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.1	12.1	13.5	14.6	16.3	20.6

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2009). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008).

DRAFT