

Urban Community Infrastructure

The urban poor population is growing at an alarming rate in many developing countries in the region. Urban municipalities are facing an ever-growing challenge related to providing adequate basic infrastructure to a growing number of unplanned settlements. Experience shows that the use of local resource based methods is a highly efficient approach to improving local community infrastructure in low-income urban settlements.

Urban growth.....

People used to live in villages, growing food, looking after their animals and trading products. This is all changing. In 2008, the proportion of the world population living in cities will pass the 50% mark. People are drawn together for practical reasons in today's world. The result is urbanization. Cities continue to grow in number and size. Within ten years the world will have nearly 500 cities of more than 1 million inhabitants. Whatever the particular causes of urbanization may be, the rapid growth of the urban population poses some real challenges for the people who will have to deal with it. In the less developed countries, a large part of the urban population lives in slums. Slum buildings vary from simple shacks to permanent and well-maintained structures. Most slums lack clean water, electricity, sanitation and other basic services and have poor access.

ILO's involvement.....

The ILO's involvement in developing sustainable mechanisms for the provision of rural infrastructure services contain a number of key features which are also highly relevant to improvement of infrastructure facilities in low-income urban settlements.

The use of local resources in urban settlements such as local labour, artisans and contractors, local available skills and building materials and carrying out the planning process and management of works with a high degree of community involvement can foster increased understanding of ownership and responsibility for future maintenance of created assets.

Ongoing work.....

The ILO is continuing recent initiatives to develop and disseminate appropriate guidelines and tools related to the implementation of community infrastructure in low-income settlements in urban areas. This includes the design and implementation of demonstration projects thereby collecting wider experience. Demonstration projects will be implemented in Nepal, Timor Leste and the Philippines to fine-tune the tools and will cover issues such as:

- Appropriate planning procedures for slum upgrading;
- Development of design guidelines and work specifications for local community infrastructure;
- Guidelines on how community infrastructure can be maintained and operated on a sustainable basis;
- Mainstreaming the approaches in city development and slum upgrading strategies.

Urban Works in Cambodia and the Philippines

As a response to the growing demand for livelihood improvements and job creation in urban areas, ASIST-AP initiated demonstration works in Cambodia and the Philippines in which local resource based approaches were applied when improving community infrastructure such as drainage facilities, flood management measures, access roads and streets, sanitation, water supply and street lighting. The works were carried out through the involvement of the communities, local authorities and the local construction industry, providing quality infrastructure at competitive costs.

Key resources.....

- [Community Infrastructure in Urban Areas](#) : Chapter 1 – 5, creating jobs while improving low-income settlements (ILO 2008).
- [Community Infrastructure in Urban Areas](#) : Chapter 6 – 7 and Annexes
- Urban Infrastructure, Poverty Reduction and Jobs (EIIP tools, PowerPoint Presentation – ILO 2007).
- [Project Concept note](#) for further development of a generic guide on integrated local development strategies for urban poor and pilot action programmes (ILO 2008).
- [Community Infrastructure in Urban Areas, Battambang 2007](#)