



## **The Making of the Urban Management Programme: Memoirs of a Mendicant Bureaucrat**

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### **Introduction**

This paper seeks to explain the development of an international multi-donor supported programme of research and technical co-operation on urban local government with particular emphasis on the period 1990–93 when this author was working full time in the programme and the programme was moving from being a relatively small, low-key, research-orientated exercise managed from Washington DC by the World Bank to a larger, global, technical co-operation enterprise managed from Nairobi by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) (Habitat) with regional 'outreach' offices in Accra, Cairo, Kuala Lumpur and Quito.

The paper concentrates as much on internal bureaucracy and inter- and intra-bureaucracy relationships as on the substance of the programme, for, as will emerge from the unfolding drama, the two are inseparably intertwined. The paper also mixes personal reflections with an attempt at analysis; the author was a participant in the events discussed but, as an academic, could not avoid also acting as an observer. Four years after leaving the programme seems about the right time to look back and reflect on what lessons may be learned from the experience.

First, the scene must be set. What is the Urban Management Programme (UMP)? The latest published Annual Report—for 1995—provides a succinct statement of the nature of the programme:

The Urban Management Programme (UMP) is a long-term global technical co-operation programme designed to strengthen the contribution that towns and cities in developing countries make towards economic growth, social development, the reduction of poverty and the improvement of environmental quality.

To achieve this, the UMP works through regional offices and networks in developing countries in the following five areas:

- Urban land management
- Urban infrastructure management
- Municipal finance and administration
- Urban environmental management
- Urban poverty alleviation.

The programme is a partnership of the international community and involves a broad range of actors in developing countries at the regional, municipal and community levels. UNCHS (Habitat) is the executing agency, the World Bank is

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the associated agency, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides core funding and overall monitoring. Fifteen bilateral and multilateral support agencies belong to the UMP partnership ...

UMP's first phase of activities (1986–1992) focused on the development of generic policy frameworks, discussion papers and tools with global validity and application ...

UMP's Phase II (1992–1996) is directed towards translating the results of this synthesis of experiences into operational programmes and policy action plans at national, provincial and city levels.

Three operating principles characterise the current phase of the programme:

- It is demand driven
- It is operationally decentralised, relying upon regional networks of expertise
- It brings together the creative efforts and experiences of the international assistance community in urban management.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the programme are the citizens of cities and towns in developing countries, particularly the urban poor, who will hopefully benefit from a more participatory, transparent and accountable system of urban management (World Bank, 1996, p. 2).

This statement draws on and follows closely the aims and objectives of the UMP as set out in the Project Document (Prodoc) (to be discussed below) for Phase II of the programme, agreed to and signed in June 1992 by UNCHS and UNDP (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992). There is one significant alteration. Whereas the Prodoc had confidently stated that the ultimate beneficiaries 'will enjoy better managed services and resources and more accountable participatory and transparent systems', the 1995 Annual Report drops any reference to better managed services and resources and adds the qualificatory word 'hopefully' before the reference to benefiting from more participation,

transparency and accountability in urban management. Clearly, with the issue of the renewal of the programme's mandate looming, it was better to indicate that one is still travelling hopefully than that one has arrived.

### The Formative Years, 1986–90

As the quotation indicates, the UMP started in 1986. Why did it start and, more important, why was it set up in the way it was as a partnership between the Urban Development Division (UDD) of the World Bank—a research division—and the Technical Co-operation Division (TCD) of UNCHS? The impetus to establish the programme arose from informal discussions at a meeting of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD in 1986 between representatives at that meeting of the World Bank and UNCHS, concerned that there was too little understanding within the DAC—and hence within the development aid community—of the importance of cities for economic development and growth and the need to ensure their efficient and effective management. They felt that there was a need to develop greater awareness amongst that community of the case for aid to be directed to cities in specific focused ways. So the birth of the UMP was in a sense donor-driven; the drive being to get the donors on board. As is so often the case, too, personal positive alchemy between colleagues sparked off beneficial institutional developments.

However, the officials concerned might not have got together if certain negative features within their own agencies had not been present as well. Within both agencies, there were tensions between the research and the operational divisions and personnel. Within the World Bank, vastly more resources were poured into agricultural and infrastructural development than into urban development and where urban development was funded, it tended to be engineer-led infrastructure—'hard' and measurable in terms of returns on the investment and non-political, rather than the 'softer' investment in management which involved small sums of money, might come

close to politics and would be difficult to measure. The Urban Development Division wanted to have more impact on operations and prove that it was capable of turning theory into practice.

Within UNCHS, the position was more complex. The agency had been established after the Vancouver Conference on Human Settlements in 1976. It was a small agency, it was located in Nairobi, well off the beaten track for most UN and other international aid officials, and it suffered by comparison with its sister UN agency in Nairobi, UNEP, which had a higher profile and which some officials felt should have been given the human settlement brief after Vancouver rather than establish another agency. So co-operation with the World Bank offered an excellent opportunity to raise the profile of the agency.

There was a further important internal agency reason. UNCHS was set up with two principal divisions; Research and Development and Technical Co-operation. The thinking behind this arrangement was that R&DD would develop the innovative ideas and approaches to urban development and management and TCD would use them in its work in cities, feeding back into the R&DD what worked, what did not, and details of issues of concern to urban practitioners which needed further research and development. A senior official in UNCHS reporting direct to the Director, would co-ordinate the work of the two divisions.

Practice has been different from theory. For most of UNCHS's existence, the two divisions have acted as if the other did not exist. Personal animosity played a part in this. R&DD never consulted with TCD; it worked out its research programmes without regard to the kind of issues that TCD staff were involved in developing into technical co-operation packages; TCD staff in turn rarely if ever considered that what R&DD was producing was relevant to their work. When this author joined TCD as the Land Management Adviser in the UMP Habitat in 1990 and started talking to R&DD staff—like me, some of them had come from Uni-

versity posts—this was regarded as somewhat odd behaviour by colleagues in TCD. Colleagues in R&DD in turn considered me to be in a sense misplaced in UNCHS; as an intellectual, I ought really to have been in R&DD.<sup>1</sup> So, internal bureaucratic reasons joined with broader agency reasons to make co-operation between TCD and the Urban Development Division of the World Bank seem particularly attractive; it would demonstrate to R&DD how the relationship between research and operations ought to function and effectively prevent R&DD from complaining about TCD's lack of interest in the products of research.

The third partner in the formation of the UMP was the UNDP or rather the Directorate of Global and Interregional Programmes (DGIP) of UNDP. The DGIP provided some basic funding for posts at both UNCHS and the World Bank but, in the early stages of the UMP, was content to act as monitor of the programme. The World Bank was made the executing agency of the programme with UNCHS the junior partner as associated agency. This meant that UNDP funds went to the Bank, with the Bank answerable to the UNDP for their implementation of the programme and expenditure of funds. UNDP funds for UNCHS came from the Bank and UNCHS was answerable to the Bank for its part in implementation and expenditure of UNDP funds. The Bank organised the annual meeting of the UMP which in the early years took place in the Bank's Paris office.

The intra-agency concerns of the two principal partners to the programme was reflected in the division of work. Both wanted to prove to their own agencies that they were capable of doing work which their own agencies did not allocate to them; the UDD wanted to be able to undertake some operational activity; TCD wanted to undertake some research. The initial three topics of the UMP were divided up accordingly; UDD took primary responsibility for land tenure, and municipal finance, both matters which were already part of the remit of INURD of which UDD was a part; TCD took primary responsibility for land-use planning and in-

frastructure, both part of UNCHS's remit and in fact specifically allocated to sections within R&DD. Initially, the urban environment and urban poverty were not part of the agenda and infrastructure was seen more in terms of its provision than its management; what to do rather than how to do it. The concept of 'primary responsibility' was to give rise to tensions in the future.

The Prodoc for the first phase was signed in May 1987 and the programme officially got under way in June although the Prodoc indicated that the starting date for the programme was February 1986 and that year has always been officially regarded as the first year of the programme. Donor countries from the DAC countries were invited to join in the programme. Several did so and committed funds either directly to the UMP through cost-sharing arrangements—i.e. bilateral funding to the *partners* via UNDP or direct to the partners, or via parallel funding which involved bilateral agencies funding *activities* directly which were part of or could plausibly be offered as part of the UMP's programme. Over the 10 years of the UMP, the governments of the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark have made substantial cost-sharing contributions to the programme; the governments of Germany in a substantial way and France, Italy and the UK in less substantial ways have made parallel funding contributions to the programme.

To take as an example of parallel funding, the UK government's contribution via ODA to the first phase of the programme consisted of, *inter alia*, funding a major study by the Development Assistance Group of the Institute of Local Government Studies of Birmingham University of municipal finance and administration in five countries in the developing world and a study by the University of East London of urban land management in Pakistan, Swaziland and Lesotho.

### The First Phase, 1986–91

Inevitably, the first phase of the programme took some time to be anything other than a good idea. Initially, neither principal partner

had staff in post who were wholly UMP funded or therefore tasked. Contracts were made with various organisations and persons for reports and papers to be written for the programme, but these inevitably took time to produce results. I first became aware of the UMP when I was invited to a Land Management Review Workshop at the World Bank in June 1988 to consider the focus of the land components being studied in the UMP—at that time officially called the UNDP Urban Development Project—and to define strategies for future research. At that point, the land component was, thanks to vigorous practical and intellectual inputs by a World Bank official and an UNCHS official, making the running in the programme. In order to boost output, both officials also claimed as UMP activities, technical assistance work which had nothing to do with the UMP at all. Thus, my work as a TCD consultant in drafting a new Town and Country Planning Act for Trinidad and Tobago, which started in April 1986 and continued until August 1988, was 'appropriated' for the UMP with the draft Bill being published in 1989 as a UMP report.<sup>2</sup>

The World Bank team leader of the land component of the programme convened another workshop in December 1989, this time at the Governor Calvert House, Annapolis. Its theme was the improvement of land delivery systems in developing countries and the operation of the land market. Better urban land management was a key factor and this consisted of

several parts being land policy and strategy formulation, usage of appropriate instruments to achieve those policies and associated land administration actions to operate those instruments .... This broad framework or definition of urban land management ... is being addressed in the ... [UMP] [as the programme was now being called], (Holstein, 1989).

A wide range of work was discussed at the workshop, culled from both practical work and more academic studies. It was assumed rather than explicitly stated that these studies

would be the building blocks of a broad policy paper on land which would represent the principal output of the land component of phase I of the UMP. At this stage, the particular emphasis in the World Bank's contribution to the land component was, however, land registration and information with little work being commissioned from, as opposed to about, developing countries. This was a characteristic of the World Bank's approach to the UMP: developing countries were to be recipients of policy advice, not co-contributors to it.

Meanwhile, the land policy adviser in UNCHS was commissioning a wide range of studies on land management from scholars and consultants in developing countries<sup>3</sup> as well as writing a series of innovative papers on new approaches to land-use planning and planned land development. Thus, when I joined the programme in August 1990 on a one-year contract as a land management adviser, replacing the land policy adviser—I had hitherto been involved in the programme as a consultant on legal/institutional issues of land management, advising on whom to commission to prepare case studies on same and writing a discussion paper on the subject (McAuslan, 1992)<sup>4</sup>—I found a major programme of studies under way, but not too much co-ordination between the two approaches of the World Bank and UNCHS. As will be seen, this lack of co-ordination between the partners was a feature of the programme.

My brief as the land management adviser both to the UMP and UNCHS was to pursue the UNCHS agenda in the UMP; to write a more detailed background paper on institutional/legal issues on land management as an input into the overview policy paper (McAuslan, 1991); and to be a general resource to the agency and the programme on land management issues. My own personal agenda was to use the year as an opportunity to begin work on a general comparative text on land policy and law, basing it on the detailed paper I was to write for the UMP. Shortly after commencing work, I began putting together an outline

of a possible text. In September 1990, I went on my first mission on the programme to Washington to meet my colleagues in the UMP at the Bank. I was also to become involved in pursuing discussions on how to reconcile the UMP's activities in Africa with a rival Bank programme just getting under way.

In discussions at the Bank on the land management component, it became clear that not all was well in the Bank team. There was a feeling that insufficient progress was being made in developing the overview policy paper and the running in the component was being made by UNCHS, with the commissioning and production of many papers on land-use planning. This was not welcomed by the Bank since at this point, the whole notion of land-use planning was close to anathema to the Bank UMP team leader who did not want a pro-planning message to be the principal one coming out of the programme. As a newcomer to the programme, and not being seen as a planning fanatic by the Bank, I was asked to make suggestions as to the possible contents of the overview policy paper. This I was able to do overnight, basing it on my outline for a text on land issues, which I had been thinking about for some time. Impressed by what appeared to be such rapid intellectual agility, the programme managers agreed that together with a colleague in the land management component of the programme from the Bank, I should prepare the overview policy paper (Farvacque and McAuslan, 1992).<sup>5</sup>

I have gone into this saga at some length as it illustrates several facets of the UMP and indeed of bureaucracy generally. First, the chance nature of the evolution of the policy paper on land issues and the land management component of the UMP. I happened to be in the right place at the right time, offering more or less the right message on land management. There was no plan, let alone a conspiracy, to 'take over' the management of the land component from the Bank. Secondly, it illustrates the lack of co-ordination between the two principal partners. Again, this was not deliberate—more a combination



of different approaches to the task, different perspectives on the component, and different time-zones of the partners. At the outset of the UMP, e-mail was not in use and the Byzantine regulatory arrangements for sending faxes from UNCHS inhibited quick and frank communications between the partners.<sup>6</sup>

The evolution of the components of the programme with reference to the issue of co-ordination and co-operation between the partners in relation to those components may be further elaborated. It has to be said that the land component was, compared to some of the other components, a model of co-operation and productivity. Apart from the production of the main policy paper, three further papers, one jointly authored between the UNCHS land policy adviser and a Bank-funded consultant to the programme were published in the first eight UMP papers (Dowall, 1991; Dowall and Clarke, 1992; Lasserve, 1992). Even with this component, however, the antipathy of the Bank (though not of the co-author of the principal land management policy paper) towards land-use planning acted as a *de facto* veto on any publication within the UMP of any of the UNCHS-produced background papers on the subject.

There were few problems with the finance component since until 1992, UNCHS had no input into the component and the Bank had only a semi-detached input. The arrival of an urban finance advisor at UNCHS in mid 1992 more or less coincided with the departure of the principal urban finance expert from the Bank's programme team. The Bank's expert had by then written two policy papers and much of the other work which resulted in publications was done by outside consultants (see, for example, Dillinger, 1992, 1993; and Davey, 1993). The UNCHS expert tended to concentrate on practical advice in the field.

The infrastructure component was something of a weak link in the programme; neither partner in practice had a full-time official or consultant in the component—UNCHS's full-time UMP infrastructure ex-

pert was used almost exclusively as an administrator in the programme and generally in TCD—and there were several differences of opinion between the partners as to who was responsible for or had agreed to what. Several UMP papers, derived from contracts with UNCHS were however published as was, eventually, the overview policy paper (Fox, 1994).

#### *The Added-on Environment and Poverty Components*

Urban environmental management became a component of the programme in 1990. Responsibility for the preparation of policy and other papers was allocated to an environmental team at the Bank. The Bank team began work on a new approach to environmental assessment known as Rapid Urban Environmental Assessment (Leitmann, 1994; see also, Leitmann *et al.*, 1992), and an overview policy paper. At the same time, UNCHS took on an environmental expert from UNEP to develop a programme, known as the Sustainable Cities Programme which was to utilise Environmental and Planning Management guidelines drawn up in a joint UNCHS and UNEP project, to develop innovative and participative approaches to city environmental management. UNCHS was also to have an input into the policy paper. There were, however, clear philosophical differences between the two approaches to environmental management, clear temperamental differences to publicising what was being done, and that—compounded by communication difficulties of the kind already referred to—made the production of the policy paper very difficult. It finally came out in 1994 (Bartone *et al.*, 1994), but thereafter the partners in this component have more or less gone their own way, with the SCP becoming one of the most successful of UNCHS's programmes but never drawing on UMP expertise in the Bank.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the Bank's UMP team has not utilised UNCHS SCP expertise in its programmes of rapid urban environmental assessment.

The urban poverty alleviation component

was added to the UMP in 1991. It was given a prominent position and ambitious targets in the 1992 Prodoc:

The theme of urban poverty alleviation ... highlights and illustrates the cross-cutting nature of the programme components and of the overall emphasis on poverty alleviation which is set to become a central feature of the Programme ... The UMP recognises the need for intervention at three levels. First, it is necessary to help the poor survive the immediate realities of poverty, such as inadequate income to purchase food or to provide themselves with shelter. These interventions will include defining appropriate and well-targeted subsidies and social and infrastructure services that improve current conditions and open up future possibilities for the urban poor. Second, the UMP will define appropriate social policy in the urban context. And, third, the UMP will seek to develop policies and mechanisms for empowering the informal sector and assisting the urban poor to gain access to urban resources—land, credit and materials—and to participate in the management of those resources through NGOs and CBOs (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992, p. 5).

These ambitions have not, alas, been realised. A vast quantity of research has been undertaken, a good deal of it funded by Ford Foundation grants to UNCHS to foster more relevant urban poverty research and the urban poverty research community in east and southern Africa and to develop closer links between the research and the policy-making communities. This led in 1996 to a UMP paper on poverty issues by the UNCHS urban poverty team, the first such paper published by the programme (Wekwete *et al.*, 1996). The UNCHS team has also developed a research programme on access to justice for the urban poor. A major study of household responses to urban poverty has been undertaken by the Bank urban poverty team during Phase II of the programme but by the end of Phase II—end July 1996—no UMP publication had yet appeared on the work, though

several were in the pipeline (see World Bank, 1996, p. 60). It is difficult not to feel some disappointment that the component which was billed to drive Phase II of the UMP has given the appearance of driving it in the style of the Duke of Plaza-Toro.<sup>8</sup>

### *Procedural Dilemmas*

It is time now to turn from the substance to the procedure; from an overview of the evolution of the components of the programme to a discussion of the evolution of the programme as a bureaucratic phenomenon. I will concentrate on the period when I was involved in the programme, in retrospect probably the most interesting from this particular perspective.

As noted earlier, the first phase of the UMP was a research-orientated phase. The World Bank was the executing agency for this phase and, within the Bank, the UMP team had both a team leader and the head of the UDD who jointly managed the programme. Within UNCHS, at the time I joined the programme, there was no team leader and the divisional chief of TCD (in which the UMP team of four professionals was located) managed the programme, alongside his principal task of overseeing all the technical co-operation activities of UNCHS. Within UNDP, the Deputy Director of the Division of Global and Interregional Programmes (DD of DGIP) and the head of the Bureau of Programme Planning and Evaluation (BPPE) oversaw the programme.

Within the two executing agencies, the UMP had to make its case for its existence. Within UNCHS, there was always a tendency to see it as the 'fifth wheel on the coach'. Insofar as it was engaged in research, it was doing R&DD's job and, almost by definition, it was not—in the eyes of R&DD—doing it as well.<sup>9</sup> Insofar as it was a programme offering technical advice and assistance, this was the job of the units in TCD and while co-existence was possible when the programme was wholly located within UNCHS, tensions became manifest when the programme was decentralised to regional offices.

Within the Bank, the programme had no more and no less problems than the UDD generally in 'selling' itself to the operational divisions. There was, however, a more specific problem in relation to Bank activities in Africa where the Bank was in mid 1990—via its training wing, the Economic Development Institute (EDI)—setting up a Municipal Development Programme (MDP) as part of its African Capacity Building Initiative (ACBI). The MDP appeared to have very similar aims to the UMP, although the management structure proposed by EDI for achieving those aims—a rather old-style colonial partnership of horse and rider between African agencies and personnel and the Bank and donors—was rather different from the approach favoured by the UMP. There were some fairly fraught negotiations between the UNCHS UMP team and EDI personnel in Nairobi and Washington in 1990 to try and resolve potential programme overlaps, differences and managerial philosophies, but this proved difficult to accomplish. Agency competition took precedence over programme collaboration and it was not until both programmes had established regional offices in Africa headed by African personnel in late 1992 that collaboration in the interests of furthering local government in Africa began to occur.

### The Second Phase, 1991–95

The principal managerial issue within the UMP as the first phase came to an end and negotiations began for the second phase was the relationship between UNDP and the implementing partners, in particular the executing agency which was responsible to the UNDP for the expenditure of funds coming from that source. I became a major actor involved in this relationship and must briefly explain how this arose.

Around mid 1991, I was invited to stay on in UNCHS for another year and become the team leader of the UNCHS UMP team. The broad division of responsibilities between myself and the divisional chief of TCD was to be that I would be concerned with advanc-

ing the messages of the UMP to the potential recipient countries and liaising with officials there in setting up UMP activities in their countries, while the divisional chief would continue to liaise with the donor community, including UNDP. I would also be the principal point of contact with the World Bank UMP team via its team leader who was also the *de facto* co-ordinator of the programme and so the link between the programme and the UNDP, its principal funder. I attended the 1991 annual programme review meeting of the UMP in November as the UNCHS UMP team leader, summing up on behalf of both UMP teams in the implementing agencies, at the request of the organising committee, the lessons of the review meeting and how we would address these in the second phase. After that meeting whatever the formal division of responsibilities between myself and the TCD divisional chief, in practice I became a part of the tripartite negotiating group from the Bank, UNCHS and UNDP putting together the Prodoc for the second phase of the programme.

The negotiations lasted from December 1991 to the signing of the Prodoc in June 1992. The Prodoc is both the constitution and the budget of the programme. It follows a standard format which, while at the time seemed overly bureaucratic, in retrospect acted as a very effective discipline in clarifying for all the partners who was to do what; with what aims and objectives; and subject to what controls and constraints. To understand the operation of the UMP from mid 1992 onwards, it is necessary to discuss the Prodoc and its development. It must also be stressed that the actual writing of the Prodoc was very largely the work of three members of the tripartite negotiating group: the World Bank team leader and *de facto* co-ordinator of the Programme; the senior official from BPPE, DGIP in UNDP; and myself. Drafts, both unaccompanied and accompanied (usually by myself going to New York and Washington, DC) flew back and forth over a period of six months, growing steadily larger and more ambitious with each iteration.

The Prodoc started off by setting out a



Programme Justification: What is the present situation in the cities of the developing world? What has the UMP done in its first phase to assist in addressing the problems of those cities? And, what lessons have been learned? It then went on to set out the 'Expected end of Programme Situation'. This was couched in very definite terms:

By the end of Phase 2 of the Programme, it is expected that the following will have been achieved ... (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992, p. 14).

These were very ambitious. In countries where the UMP had engaged in policy dialogue and assisted in programme development and implementation to address issues arising out of UMP components, there *would be* improvements in the management of those components and consequent improvements in the living conditions of the urban poor. Effective mechanisms *would be* put in place to achieve this. There *would be* enhanced capacity to analyse problems, develop appropriate policies and formulate implementation strategies amongst all actors at the urban level—central and local government, the private sector, NGOs and CBOs and individuals—and greater understanding of the roles of the various actors. There *would be* wide dissemination of a body of knowledge on appropriate policies and best practices. Finally, there *would be* improved technical co-operation both between developing countries and from the donor community to developing countries. The target beneficiaries of all this were the citizens of towns and cities in the developing countries with intermediate beneficiaries being officials in central and local governments who would, via a veritable cornucopia of workshops, seminars, staff training and exchanges and opportunities to acquire the published outputs of the programme, acquire new skills, knowledge and experience. Research institutes and NGOs and CBOs were also to benefit.

These anticipated achievements may seem rather far-fetched. During the negotiations, there was a clear division between the implementing agencies and the UNDP. The World

Bank team leader and programme co-ordinator, who was from a developing country, was concerned that the Prodoc should not be too specific in what was to be achieved; the realities of politics and bureaucracy in developing countries had to be taken account of even if that could not be explicitly stated. It might take 10 or more years before the ideas of the UMP filtered into urban policies, particularly where one was relying only on the power of the ideas themselves and was not backing them up with, for example, continuous programmes of technical assistance or conditional aid. These were eminently sensible points and I supported them but, from the perspective of DGIP, they would be fatal to the programme's future if reflected in the Prodoc. What the UNDP's funding approval committee wanted was clear and positive statements of identifiable benefits that would flow from the programme. It was this perspective that was reflected in the Prodoc.<sup>10</sup>

How were these ambitious ends to be achieved? Cutting through the verbiage of the Prodoc, the key innovative development of Phase 2 was the decision to decentralise the programme to regional offices and place those offices under the management of Regional Co-ordinators.<sup>11</sup> The regional offices would in turn establish regional panels of experts in all the five component areas. The Prodoc explained the regionalisation of the programme as follows:

To assist with country consultations<sup>12</sup> and to ensure more effective programmes of technical co-operation, interchange of experiences and ideas between cities and countries, exchange of information between the country, regional and global levels, and the development of region-specific programmes of research and production of tools, the UMP will establish regional panels of expertise anchored in developing countries' institutions ... Each of the four regions will have a Regional Co-ordinator. Developing countries will be able to draw upon this expertise for technical advice and co-operation on a sustained basis ... They [the panels] will develop region-

specific approaches to the five component areas ... The regional panels, together with regional co-ordinators will increasingly take the lead in research and technical co-operation activities.

Regional Co-ordinators will be based in a UNDP field office or regional institution in each region. They will manage the UMP at the regional and country level ...

At the global level, the UMP nucleus team will support the regional panels and regional and national institutions ... The nucleus team will have an active monitoring and technical support role in respect of the regional networks and UMP country activities ... (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992, p. 23).

This represented a fundamental shift—not just of the locus of management, but also of the philosophy of the programme. The ‘ownership’ of the programme would move to the developing countries and away from the Bank. What happened in the programme would increasingly be determined at the regional level and the scope for new initiatives at the nucleus team level either at the Bank or in UNCHS would correspondingly be reduced. The Prodoc assumed too that there would be much greater emphasis on technical co-operation than on research in Phase 2.

The new approach led to a further major change. The negotiations on the Prodoc had fuelled existing tensions between the Bank and UNDP. These had been caused in part by differing styles of management; the UNDP in its role of monitoring the programme, appeared to want more involvement in the substantive evolution of the programme than the Bank considered appropriate. The Bank in turn did not perhaps accord the UNDP the deference which the UNDP, as the principal funder of the programme to which the Bank had to report, considered appropriate.<sup>13</sup> These tensions came to a head during the negotiations when it became clear that there would be a good deal less funding from UNDP than had earlier been indicated—tension being exacerbated by differences as to whether a particular level of funding had merely been

indicated or promised—and that the Bank would suffer the biggest cutbacks from earlier indicated (or promised) levels of funding. There were two reasons for this. First, there was an element of concern within the higher levels of the UNDP at providing funding for the Bank, UNDP funding being for development assistance to developing countries. Secondly, there was concern to ensure that the regional dimension got off the ground as it had been made plain by potential bilateral donors to the programme that this would be the key to their willingness to put funds in. A reduction of funding from UNDP would inevitably be passed on to the central rather than the regional components of the Programme.

The tensions of the negotiations were, then, a contributory factor in the decision by the UNDP to shift the management of Phase 2 of the UMP from the Bank to UNCHS and such a decision in turn contributed to further tensions. At one point, indeed, the Bank seriously contemplated pulling out of the programme altogether as it felt it was not being given a fair share of the resources or responsibilities in the programme. Fortunately, it was prevailed upon to stay on board. There was in fact a perfectly sound rationale for the shift in management responsibilities: Phase 1 had been a research phase managed by a research-orientated entity; Phase 2 was to focus on technical co-operation on a demand-driven basis from developing countries so it made good sense to locate the management of the programme in an entity whose function was technical co-operation and which was located in a developing country, namely TCD in UNCHS in Nairobi.

The Prodoc set out the new management arrangements and the responsibilities of the three partners:

Policy making for and review of the Programme will be undertaken by the three primary partners, the UNCHS, World Bank and UNDP in consultation with an Advisory Committee ...<sup>14</sup>

UNCHS will provide overall programme co-ordination and will assume primary re-

sponsibility for activities related to the implementation of the regional capacity building strategies ...

Through a sub-contract with UNCHS, the World Bank will assume responsibility for supporting and broadening the scope of urban research and tool development and disseminating their results via formal publications ... Within the UNCHS the nucleus team will work closely with the Research and Development Division to facilitate complementarity of research agendas.<sup>15</sup>

Responsibilities for activities related to the strengthening of in-country expertise will be shared between UNCHS and the World Bank ... The partner agencies will work closely in establishing appropriate mechanisms for feedback and impact assessment.

UNDP will provide substantive inputs to the Programme ... Programme core funding, the focal point for bilateral resource mobilisation and co-ordination of Programme evaluation activities ...

The primary responsibility for programme management will rest with the nucleus team based in Nairobi and Washington, D.C. and with the four Regional Co-ordinators. The nucleus team will include a full-time Programme Co-ordinator based in Nairobi and a World Bank team leader based in Washington, D.C.... A Programme Review Committee consisting of representatives of UNDP, UNCHS, and the World Bank and bilateral ESAs who are major contributors<sup>16</sup> to the Programme will meet quarterly to review the programming and progress of UMP activities ... (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992, pp. 14–15).

The Prodoc then went on to spell out the reasons for assistance from UNDP, UNCHS and the Bank. Further fustian claims were put forward on behalf of the Programme: it would assist in enhancing the capacity of the public and private sectors in developing countries to analyse and address issues of urban management; it advances the six UNDP themes mandated by the Governing

Council of UNDP; it was a multi-agency exercise which was influencing and would continue to influence the policies and internal operations of the three partners; it was spearheading the need 'to increase the quality, broaden the scope and focus the relevance of applied research in the urban sector'; and it was furthering the process of re-orientating government's role in urban management to that of facilitating and enabling.

The heart of the Prodoc is the statement of aims, objectives, outputs and activities—what will in fact take place over the period of the Programme, and to what end. It is by reference to these that the Programme is judged. An *objective* is set out; it is to be achieved by the production of certain *outputs*; and these in turn are to be achieved by the undertaking of certain *activities*. The drafting of these was crucial. They had to be both realistic and achievable, on the one hand—set the sights too high and one would be storing up trouble in the future when the Programme was assessed—yet, on the other hand, to be sufficiently ambitious and original to attract financial support from UNDP where the Programme would be competing against many other proposals.

Three immediate objectives were set out for the programme;

- (1) capacity-building in institutions and personnel in towns and cities in developing countries;
- (2) developing new policy frameworks to support country level initiatives; and
- (3) facilitating information exchange and management.

The first objective focused on the application of lessons learned in the first phase and was closely tied up with the regionalisation of the Programme. It was also made clear that this objective would be achieved by demand-led activities. The lead agency for this objective was UNCHS; it would set up the regional offices with Regional Co-ordinators who would report to the Programme Co-ordinator. The second objective focused on more of the same from the first phase of the Programme; more research but with the development of

policy frameworks and tools being 'progressively transferred to the region and country level'. There were then two objectives here; more research and the *transference* of research activities to the regions. The lead agency for this objective was the Bank. The third objective concerned the 'dissemination of lessons learned' through 'feedback mechanisms to evaluate and test the results of research to ensure its timeliness, applicability and usefulness'. Basically, this meant publishing papers and a newsletter—*The Urban Age*. This too was allocated to the Bank.

An important part of any Prodoc is the section on Risks; the risks that the objectives will not be accomplished. The risks which are of concern here are the risks that the recipients of the Programme might not respond as the Programme assumes that they will or alternatively might respond too enthusiastically. Consensus might not be achieved 'among the many national actors in carrying out the various strategic and operational recommendations developed' through the Programme. Governments might not act on specific recommendations which emerge from country consultations and national action plans. The UMP might not be able to respond to all the requests coming in from countries wanting to participate in the Programme. The programme might lose its coherence if ESAs involved in the Programme went off on frolics of their own: 'some ESAs [might] develop and implement programmes of technical co-operation that may diverge from the UMP'. Not surprisingly, the Prodoc concluded that all these risks had been taken care of by the management structures put in place and the demand-orientated philosophy of the Programme. The one risk that was not addressed—indeed, could not be addressed—was the possibility of strains in the relationship between the partners. Given the very different agendas, locations, status and self-perception of the three partner-agencies, it would have been surprising if there were not strains. As already noted, some had surfaced during the process of the negotiation and writing of the Prodoc, when the Bank lost the role of lead agency and suffered greater cut-backs in reduced UNPD core funding than

did UNCHS which assumed the role of lead agency. In the last part of this paper which discusses the evolution of Phase 2 with particular reference to the regionalisation of the Programme, some of these tensions will be noted.

The saga of the Prodoc may first be brought to a conclusion. The aim was to get the Prodoc to the relevant UNDP committee for its April meeting. This proved impossible so the May meeting became the new deadline. Unfortunately, the Prodoc failed to get through the approval process at its first attempt. This was something of a setback; properly prepared projects did not fail at this final hurdle which (if the bureaucratic groundwork within the UNDP had been properly prepared)—pre-committee meeting contacts with committee members to ensure that their concerns would be met—was little more than a formality. This informal aspect of the approval process had been neglected and as a consequence some last-minute changes and additions had to be put into the Prodoc to ensure its successful passage at the next committee meeting. These were done by the UNDP members of the drafting team and the first the other members of the team knew of the additions was when they received the signed copies of the Prodoc in July after the revised version was approved at the June meeting of the committee.<sup>17</sup> Relief that the Prodoc had finally been approved overcame any feelings of concern at the additions made to the document and the manner in which they had been made.

Phase 2 of the UMP officially began on 1 July 1992. Two new officials in the executing agencies took over the reins of managing the Programme. I had been invited to become the full-time Co-ordinator of the Programme and the World Bank had appointed a new team leader of the World Bank team.<sup>18</sup> The most significant initiative of the Programme in the first year of the second phase was the establishment of the regional offices and the development of the regional dimension to the Programme. For the remainder of this article, I will discuss the early stages of the regionalisation of the Programme.

### *Regionalisation of UMP*

As noted earlier, three of the four regional co-ordinators had been identified by the time of the Phase 2 Prodoc was signed in July 1992 and the fourth was on board by the September Annual Review Meeting of the Programme. That meeting provided the opportunity for the Regional Co-ordinators to meet together for the first time; to meet with the principal bilateral donors to the Programme and to lay out for the meeting their visions of how they saw the UMP developing in their regions. It also provided an opportunity for the new principal officials of the Programme and for the bilateral donors to lay out their visions for the Programme. It was an important meeting. I will concentrate on the regional dimension since the shape and style of the Programme from the outset of Phase 2 was to be determined by the way the regional dimension developed.

The African Regional Co-ordinator was a former senior local government official from francophone Africa who came to the Programme from working as a Chief Technical Adviser in charge of a project for UNCHS in Haiti. He adopted a pragmatic approach to his role. He stressed the rapid rate of urbanisation in Africa and the need for the UMP to try and take a lead in furthering decentralisation as an approach to governance in Africa. The African regional UMP would need to be marketed and the keys to this would be for the officials of the Programme to attend regional gatherings to sell the Programme; to get key countries on board; and to disseminate the products of the Programme via the media. The point was made that dissemination was needed to generate demand; demand could not be generated from the top—i.e. from the centre by the core teams. Africans were being given the chance via the regional dimension to the UMP to work out their own programme and take the lead in advising their own governments. He also considered that there were complementarities between the UMP and the World Bank's MDP and that it would be possible to develop satisfactory working rela-

tionships with that programme on the ground.

The Arab States Regional Co-ordinator headed up a firm of environmental consultants and came into the programme on the same basis as myself; his firm hired his services to the UMP, but on the terms that he would use the firm's facilities and staff in the UMP at no extra cost to the Programme. He offered a visionary approach to his role and the regional programme. He stressed the opportunity created by the regional UMP to assist in the cultural renaissance of the region and its social and economic development. The Arab region had always had interactions with other regions and the UMP would facilitate this. There was a need to involve the people of the region in bringing about a policy transformation on urban matters within the region. The Programme had to be proactive; it could not just be reactive and respond to demands. Poverty and environment were important themes, but so was enterprise and the mobilisation of local resources. There was finally a need for all the Regional Co-ordinators to keep in touch with each other to facilitate the cross-fertilisation of ideas.

The Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Regional Co-ordinator was an academic with many contacts and working experience with urban NGOs in his own country. He took a more guarded approach to his task. Many of the issues to be addressed by the UMP were highly sensitive politically in the region and would have to be approached with great circumspection; urban poverty and property taxation were two such. Without strong support from within a country, these issues could not be tackled. The best strategy for the Programme would be to go strongly into a specific country and develop a high profile in that way. The function of the Programme was to address the urban aspect of development and adopt a multi-disciplinary perspective. The Programme could not solve specific sector problems. He doubted the relevance of a high-profile launch of the Programme in the region.

The Asia and the Pacific Regional Co-ordinator was a former senior local government



official from a country in the region who had been working in the UNCHS core team in the UMP from 1990. He had then a better appreciation of the UMP, its strengths and weaknesses and the regional dimension of the Programme than his colleagues. He stated that the Asia and Pacific regional programme would have three aspects; first, it would adopt a particular approach to urban management in any country activity—i.e., it would gear its approach to the needs of the country concerned. Secondly, it would use the comparative advantage of existing institutions in developing the programme; and, thirdly, it would adopt a demand-driven, capacity-building approach. The private sector was actively engaged in many urban activities in the region and he would endeavour to make use of private-sector inputs into the Programme. He further pointed out that the regional UMP would not be starting at a position of zero. There were many regional programmes focusing on urban issues already operating within the region and the UMP would work with these programmes.

He drew attention to two aspects of the UMP which he considered might work against its effectiveness. The first was the Initiating Brief (IB)—the management tool to be used to access Programme funds for specific activities. As proposed, it might work to delay a rapid response to requests for action.<sup>19</sup> Secondly, he expressed concern about the country consultation, the flagship procedure of the UMP used to bring about national consensus on policy change on the components of the UMP. His concern was that without a firm backup of technical and financial assistance, a country consultation would raise expectations that could not be fulfilled and this would not be helpful to the Programme.

These views gave rise to a vigorous debate at the Review Meeting which cannot however be considered here. The purpose of rehearsing these views is to indicate the very diverse approaches to the UMP taken by the Regional Co-ordinators. From these presentations, what seemed to be emerging was the possibility that over time, in effect, four UMPs—or, at the least, four very different

styles of UMP with different priorities—would develop, with each region going its own way. The issue which needs to be addressed here was the relationship with the centre—the nucleus teams—and this in turn depended on the underlying philosophy of the UMP, the flexibility of the Prodoc and its interpretation, the rules of the UN bureaucracy, and the perception by the Regional Co-ordinators of the extent of and constraints on their powers. On these matters, the first year of Phase 2 threw up tensions between the partners, within UNCHS and within the UMP nucleus team at UNCHS.

At all levels, the issue was basically the same and, ironically, aped the very issue which the UMP—as a programme of substantive messages to offer the world about local government—was aware that it would come up against time after time: namely, the conflict between centralists and devolutionists. In national governments, the conflict is between central government and local government and mixes concern about administrative competence, financial management and probity and straight politics. In the UMP, the conflict was between those at the centre who wanted to keep a tight rein on the regional offices and those whose instincts were to give the Regional Co-ordinators their head and let them get on with it in their own way. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that the same mix of administration, finance and politics underlay the conflict.

To understand some of the concerns of the centralists, it is necessary to be aware of some of the UNCHS administrative and UN financial procedures. The standard TCD operation in UNCHS involves staff from TCD or a consultant developing a project in a particular country in association with a national agency—usually a Ministry—in that country. The project's external funds will usually come from the UNDP's indicative programme funds (IPF) for that country (the funds allocated by the UNDP's Governing Council to a country). The country will have drawn up, with UNDP's help, a programme for the spending of the IPF and different UN agencies will then prepare projects, via a

Prodoc, in order to access those funds. A project will include overheads which provide, in the case of TCD in UNCHS, the funding to keep TCD going. If the project is a significant one, extending over a year or more and involving a range of activities, a Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) is appointed to manage the project. The CTA will be a person with the relevant professional skills for the project and is a TCD appointment; he reports to the head of the Unit in TCD responsible for the region in which the project is located. Although a CTA has some initiative, his job is to implement the project and there will be close and constant monitoring of the project both by TCD and by the country office of the UNDP which is supplying the funds.

It was this model of relationship between centre—UNCHS UMP nucleus team—and Regional Co-ordinators that the centralists within UNCHS favoured and assumed would be the norm. The regional programme of the UMP was just another technical co-operation project and the Regional Co-ordinator just a rather glorified CTA. They should be kept on a tight rein, particularly because, if they were not, they might begin to take independent initiatives which would conflict with and even undermine relationships built up between TCD Units and countries in the region concerned. Regional Co-ordinators should in practice, according to this model, have a dual responsibility: to the UMP Co-ordinator, but also to the relevant Unit Co-ordinator within TCD. The most extreme version of this model which was put to me by one Unit Co-ordinator was that the Regional Co-ordinators should be given orders as to what they were to do and not do and if they did not obey those orders, they should be sacked.

This administrative approach could draw on standard UN financial procedures and practices for support. These procedures made it extremely difficult to devolve financial management of UMP resources allocated to regional activities to the regional offices of the UMP. Apart from minor expenditures, all expenditures of UMP funds by the regional offices had to be cleared through the centre at

UNCHS. A good deal of my time in the first year of Phase 2 was spent, in co-operation with colleagues in UNCHS, in trying to devise ways to overcome this problem and devolve some spending initiatives to the regional offices.

In practice, regional offices found ways round the problem. The African and LAC regional offices which were supported by GTZ, the German technical co-operation arm of the German aid Ministry could access GTZ funds as an alternative source. The Arab States regional office had extremely good contacts with aid agencies in the region and began to generate support from them. The Asian regional programme during its first year received more UNDP funds from the Asia regional office of UNDP and became part of UMPAP—the Urban Management Programme for Asia and the Pacific—which brought together four different UN-funded programmes in the region and so had an alternative source of funds (but also alternative lines of responsibility and overview). In addition, it received support from the Swiss Development Co-operation. Central financial controls might have been irksome but, thanks to valiant efforts on the part of staff in TCD Units in UNCHS, they did not operate to prevent regional action or extensive travel by Regional Co-ordinators throughout their regions.

The 'political' dimension of the centralist argument must be mentioned. There were two strands; the paternalist strand and the 'power-leaking' strand. The paternalist strand argued that it was too soon to allow the regions to develop in their own way. They should take the lead from the nucleus teams which had a wealth of experience in developing the UMP and knowing what was needed by way of new policies and practices in the towns and cities of the developing world. It has to be said that the four senior professionals in the nucleus team at UNCHS (and similarly in the World Bank's nucleus team where the score was three out of four) were from donor countries (though one had lived for many years in Latin America) and had no practical experience of managing cities in the developing world or even of work-

ing there in national agencies or NGOs. This line of thinking saw the regional offices as post-boxes where the regional 'experts' could come and pick up the latest thinking and ideas on urban management, but would not for some time be making any effective contribution to thinking or policies. This paternalist thinking existed in both the UNCHS and the World Bank UMP nucleus teams.

The power-leaking strand existed in UNCHS. The regionalisation of the UMP represented a potential threat to the whole of TCD. If the UMP could be run on a regional basis and the regional offices given real authority to make decisions and take initiatives, why not apply this approach to TCD as a whole? Why not devolve the development of UNCHS technical co-operation activities to regional offices staffed by persons from the regions, rather than try to run everything from Nairobi? Worse still, if the regional offices of the UMP developed into effective centres of regional expertise and excellence, they might be seen as the most obvious institutional base for any devolved TCD Regional Unit; a kind of reverse take-over. It was not surprising then that there was from time to time tension between the Regional Co-ordinators and TCD Unit co-ordinators which seemed to go beyond concern about administrative status in the regional offices.

What were the arguments of the devolutionists? First, the Prodoc. In the section of Programme Strategy, it stated that:

The regional panels, together with the regional co-ordinators, will increasingly take the lead in research and technical co-operation activities ...

At the global level, the UMP nucleus team will support the regional panels ... (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992, p. 24).

In the section on Institutional Framework, it stated that 'the Programme will be implemented in a decentralised manner' and after setting out the function of the Regional Co-ordinators it went on:

In all these [functions] they will work closely with the nucleus team *but will be*

*expected to use their knowledge of their regions to ensure the regional relevance of the Programme. Regional Co-ordinators will work closely with lead institutions [in the regions] for each component. These institutions will be responsible for convening meetings of the members of regional panels with expertise in the component and for assisting the Regional Co-ordinator in developing and organizing the substantive work of the component....*

The primary responsibility for programme *management* will rest with the nucleus team ... and with the four Regional Co-ordinators ... More specifically, the functions of the nucleus team will include: ...

- to provide substantive support to the panels ...
- to promote, encourage and support research and tool development with regard to urban management issues to be undertaken by the regional panels and their institutions ... (UNCHS/UNDP, 1992, pp. 24–25; italics added).

Devolutionists did not attempt to argue that the nucleus teams had no responsibilities for substantive developments in the UMP in Phase 2 but stressed that the Prodoc made it abundantly clear that the initiative for development of the Programme at the regional level had passed to the regions with the nucleus teams playing a subordinate role.

The difference between the two positions may be illustrated by their different approaches to the regional launch workshops—high-profile events mandated by the Prodoc bringing together nucleus team personnel and potential regional panellists at the city where the regional office was located to launch the regional programme.<sup>20</sup> These were seen by the devolutionists as something of a *rite de passage* where there was a conferring of programme initiative by the centre on the region—this is what we have done so far and now you take it over and adapt it to your ends—while for the centralists the launch workshops were opportunities to inform the

regions of the centrally derived messages of the Programme—this is what we have done so far and this is how you are to carry it forward. The hidden agenda of the workshops was the struggle of the centralists from the nucleus teams attempting to rein in the ambitions of the workshop participants who wished to assert their ‘right’ to set their own agenda for the regional programme.

The second strand of the devolutionist approach was a mixture of the pragmatic and the realistic. The core teams were small; the administrative facilities available to the Programme Co-ordinator were spartan; communications with the regions were difficult; the Regional Co-ordinators had been picked precisely because they had expertise in urban management and development issues in their regions and were known and respected as such in the regions. It was both impractical and almost impertinent to attempt to exercise the kind of detailed control over the way the Regional Co-ordinators wished to develop the regional programmes as was exercised over CTAs by the Units in TCD in UNCHS.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the Programme Review meeting at which the different approaches had been unveiled had not taken exception to them. ESAs indeed regarded them as exciting evidence that the regional approach was the right way forward and had stressed the importance that they attached to deepening the regionalisation of the Programme; their financial support for the Programme would increasingly be directed at the regional offices and initiatives.

This was then the third strand to the devolutionist argument. At the outset of the development of the Prodoc for Phase 2 in early 1992, the UNDP indicated that it would be putting \$12.5 million as core funding into the Programme which was to last for five years. During the course of the development of the Prodoc, the UNDP was forced by its own financial position to reduce its core funding to \$7.5 million and rely on cost-sharing contributions from ESAs to make up it up to \$10 million. The Programme’s duration was scaled down to four years. Less than a year after the signing of the Prodoc, the UNDP

was forced to cut back its core funding already committed to the Programme which in turn meant cutbacks in Programme activities, and further appeals to ESAs to make up shortfalls. Some ESAs rallied round with commendable generosity, but the effect of this shift in the balance of where funding was coming from made centralised control of resource allocation and use less achievable. Regions could call on different sources of funds to get their activities under way.

Inevitably, the two approaches are presented here more sharply than they operated in practice. Individuals within the Programme did not always take a consistent position; nor did arguments rage on any sort of ideological level. The Regional Co-ordinators were naturally devolutionists and I tended to support them, but I could understand the frustrations of my colleagues in TCD when what, from their point of view, were amateur blunderings or administrative incompetence in the regional offices increased their workloads with no discernable benefit to the agency. I regarded that as the price that had to be paid for the beneficial devolution of the Programme; they regarded it as further evidence that the Programme, though well-intentioned, was of limited practical use in terms of delivering technical co-operation to the constituencies of UNCHS.

The debate on the scope and style of the regional dimension was not confined to the executing agencies. The donors joined in. In the 1993 Annual Report of the UMP, two donors were invited to offer an ‘informal interim assessment’ on the Programme. In their assessment, The Netherlands opined that:

... greater clarity should be developed concerning the distinct roles of the core team and the regional co-ordinators. Now that these teams have moved into the position of supporting the regional co-ordinators, how can they best perform that role? The responsibility to select projects from amongst those proposed by people within the regions and countries has been shifted

to the regional co-ordinators. It falls to them, therefore, to evaluate and prioritise projects ... The core team can provide critical support to the regional co-ordinators in ensuring they have the means to carry out this important responsibility (World Bank, 1994, p. 36).

The Swiss, on the other hand, suggested that:

... while SDC [Swiss Development Co-operation] very much supports decentralisation, we feel that the core team and external support agencies may be delegating responsibilities too quickly to regional co-ordinators and networks. UMP co-ordinators risk becoming stuck at the international/regional levels, thus neglecting the city and national level where it is much more difficult to elaborate a common vision among major stakeholders and the various development agencies behind them (World Bank, 1994, p. 37).

In retrospect, it can be seen that there was no right answer to the pace of regionalisation. The centralists underestimated the institutional logic of regionalisation; once conferred by Prodoc, it could not be held back by the core teams or their parent agencies. The devolutionists for their part underestimated the complexity of developing the regional dimension to the Programme and overestimated the capacity of the regional offices to slot neatly into the management structures of both UNCHS and the UMP.

### Perspective and Conclusions

It is difficult to draw firm conclusions from this survey of the making of Phase 2 of the UMP. I can only take the story up to September 1993 when the issues discussed here were still far from resolved. Nor should it be thought that these were the only issues affecting the development and image of the Programme. The consequences of sharply reduced core funding from UNDP occupied

much of the time of the core teams during the latter part of 1993 as well as preparing for numerous meetings to review the Programme. More fundamental issues focusing on how the Programme could turn the generalities of the Prodoc into specific activities targeted on specific national and municipal problems and work more effectively with existing agencies and programmes tended to be neglected.<sup>22</sup>

The one conclusion I would offer is that in assessing the effectiveness of the UMP, the stated aims and published documentation are only part of the story. There was no monolithic strategy pushing the UMP forward. The way the Programme was put together, the relationships between and within the agencies involved in the Programme and between the substance of the Programme and the procedures for implementing that substance must all be considered both by outside commentators and any official assessment of the Programme. The effect of all these factors was that the essential messages of the UMP were rather blurred and what came out owed far more to the need for institutional compromises than to any single institutional vision from the World Bank, UNDP or UNCHS. It is in fact highly significant that in the 10-year history of the UMP, the Programme has not produced any publication which sets out a coherent vision of what urban management as such is all about.<sup>23</sup> It has been deliberately kept as a fluid concept.

There is no doubt in my mind that during the three years that I worked in the UMP, I was privileged to work with colleagues all of whom were committed to furthering the aims of the Programme, but all of whom had different notions of what precisely those aims were and how best to achieve them. What there was a common view on was that bureaucratic procedures and institutional structures made it unnecessarily difficult to turn commitment into practical action. That perhaps is the single most important lesson to be learned from the development of the UMP and one that should therefore be carried forward into the post-Habitat II UMP Phase 3.



## Notes

1. Non-co-operation between the two divisions went to lengths which undoubtedly affected efficiency. R&D mounted technical co-operation activities to test out their theories in the field. TCD were not informed of these activities. I went on one mission to Ghana and, in the same office of a Habitat Chief Technical Adviser who was managing a housing project for TCD (which involved a fair amount of research into housing needs in Ghana), I met up with a colleague from R&D who was developing a community development project in the field of housing. Neither of us knew of the other's mission. The CTA was not very impressed. This was at least in-house.

Another example of non-co-operation involved outside donors. The Danish government gave \$16 million to Habitat for R&D with an instruction (unknown to TCD) that 25 per cent of the money should be for the UMP. R&DD attempted to keep all the money for itself on the pretext that the UMP was not in a position to make effective use of it. It required a very severe ticking-off by a senior Danish official at a meeting of R&DD and TCD officials at which I was present to unlock the Danish funds for the UMP.

2. It would not have made too much sense to most people since neither the report on the need for a new law nor the commentary on the Bill was published with the Bill.
3. Studies were commissioned from authors and consultants in Mexico, Kenya, Pakistan, India, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Honduras. When I took over the post as land management adviser, I commissioned further studies from Nigeria and India. The World Bank had Bank staff or Bank consultants write papers on Thailand, Rwanda, Madagascar and Indonesia.
4. The first draft of the paper was written in 1989, and the published version was presented at an UNCRD International Workshop on Land Policies: Towards Better Management of Asian Metropolises held at Penang in February 1991.
5. Catherine Farvacque and Patrick McAuslan, *Reforming Urban Land Policies and Institutions in Developing Countries*, UMP 5, World Bank, Washington DC, 1992. pp. 114. The paper was published also in French and Spanish. A revised French version was also published (Farvacque, 1993). It was a matter of regret to both of us that the Bank dispensed with the services of the Bank's land management team leader in late 1990 and that we were never able to get his major

paper on land registration and land information published in the UMP series. Not surprisingly, he regarded me as being instrumental in his being got rid of by the Bank.

6. The UNCHS fax arrangements which existed up until 1993 deserve an extended footnote. Byzantine is probably the wrong word; a more accurate description would be an Indian version of Fawty Towers. There was one fax machine for the whole agency. Every fax had to be signed by the original drafter of the fax, the head of the Unit from which it emanated, the Division Chief, and, finally, an even more senior official in the Executive Director's office. Each person might want changes in the text; some more than others, so a draft fax might take two or more days to be readied. It might take a further day to go from the most senior official's office to the fax machine operative and a further day to be sent. A fax which began to be prepared on a Thursday might not be sent out until the following Tuesday.

Fridays were the most fraught day. Office hours ended at 2.00 pm, two hours early and, for obvious reasons, every effort would be made to get faxes through the system before the end of the day. The global problems of shelter would pale into insignificance besides the problems of how to get a fax out of UNCHS before 2.00 pm on a Friday. If a key official was not in his office at the right time, a search would be launched for some other official to sign off on a fax. The order had to be right; the highest official had to sign last, yet had the propensity to leave the office on Friday first. To get to him too soon would invite a scrutiny of the fax; too late and the office would be shut. The art was to arrive a few minutes before 2.00 p.m. so that the fax would be signed without being read. Senior staff, men and women of commitment, ability and flair were reduced to helplessness in the face of such a system.

As I began to become more familiar with UNCHS bureaucracy and was given increased responsibilities, I found ways to circumvent the system, but was not always successful in so doing. One of my faxes to a would-be colleague in Zimbabwe was less than complimentary about the slowness of the hiring process in UNCHS; it was returned to my Division Chief with angry comments all over it from the chief of the administrative division.

In these circumstances, it was both easier and often quicker, at any rate to countries in Europe, to send a letter since these did not have to go through the same processes. Until around 1994, the mail in Kenya was fairly

efficient and one could get letters to and from the UK within three or four days. Once the e-mail was up and running in 1992, communication with the Bank became much easier. In 1993, the revolutionary step was taken of allowing each Division within UNCHS to have its own fax machine, thus dispensing with the need for a central approval of each fax. It is ironic that an agency which preached decentralisation should have been so reluctant to practise it.

7. It is a matter of some regret and I think a mistake that the SCP has been somewhat unwelcoming to researchers wishing to explore the development and effectiveness of the programme and has not been as adept as the Bank team and in particular as Jo Leitmann in writing about their activities in relevant journals.
8. The *UMP Annual Report* for 1995 puts the matter thus:

The evolving nature of thematic attention areas and the relatively immaturely developed nature of several areas (particularly urban poverty alleviation) in terms of global policy directions has indicated the continuing need for global synthesis work by the core team in support of in-country work.

Some people might think that the absence of 'global policy directions' on urban poverty alleviation after five years' work by the core team on the subject might suggest that resources could more usefully be directed elsewhere.

9. The then divisional chief of R&DD commissioned some work on urban management without reference to any of the UMP team members in Habitat or to the UMP's own programme of research. He himself also planned to write something on urban management, but retirement appeared to end this ambitious undertaking.
10. Interestingly, the Swiss Development Co-operation, writing an informal assessment of the UMP in the 1993 Annual Report (p. 37) and not knowing of the negotiations during the making of the Prodoc, came to the same conclusions as the World Bank team leader and *de facto* programme co-ordinator:

... attention should be paid to a more realistic planning horizon in which priorities for each phase of the programme could be established. Having invested in research and product development, commercial enterprises often anticipate a decade of effort to place a new product on the

market; by comparison it seems illusory to expect that the more complex UMP programme can have a significant impact at the local level within two years. UMP should substitute for its current ad hoc direction and two year planning horizon a medium-term planning process to develop a broad ten-year strategy.

11. The Prodoc did not so much introduce the idea of Regional Co-ordinators as give an idea which had evolved within the management of the UMP during its first phase a formal place in the management structure of the UMP. By the time the Prodoc was signed in June 1992, three of the four Regional Co-ordinators had been identified and sounded out for the posts. There was no formal advertisement for the posts, although the specific terms of reference for the posts were attached as an annex to the Prodoc and each 'candidate' was interviewed by the three partners in the programme before a formal offer of the post was made. The fourth post was filled before the 1992 annual review meeting of the programme, held in September.
12. A form of national policy workshop bringing together all stakeholders to discuss and formulate the outlines of policy on one of the components of the UMP and develop a programme for implementing the policy so formulated. The concept was first tried out with a country consultation on land in Ghana in mid 1991. The consultation was generally regarded as a success in the sense that a wide range of actors, representing many organisations some of which had not talked to each other for some time, met together over two days and agreed on what needed to be done to tackle urban land issues in Ghana. However, the key official on land management boycotted the consultation, seeing it as a threat to his position and powers, *de jure* and not so *de jure*, and nothing concrete came out of it. It did, however, provide the model for country consultations set out in the Prodoc.

The second country consultation was on land management in Tanzania in June 1992. This was more successful. It was part of a national process of examining land policy generally in mainland Tanzania. It contributed to the national debate and fed into the deliberations of the Presidential Commission on Land Matters that was sitting at the time. In the evolution of the National Land Policy, adopted by the National Assembly in June 1995, its role has been overshadowed by the World Bank-

sponsored workshop on the national land policy which took place in January 1995. It was not such a high-profile event as the Bank workshop but it nonetheless made a significant contribution to the evolution of policy.

13. It must be conceded that tensions were also caused by difficult personal relationships between some of the actors in the negotiations. This should not be overstressed, but nor can it be ignored.
14. 'An Advisory Committee will be established to provide an independent perspective and intellectual overview on the direction and strategy of the Programme. It will consist of noted urban scientists and senior policy advisers from developing countries, who will be appointed by the UNDP in consultation with UNCHS and the World Bank. The Committee will consider and provide advice on the work programme presented by the executing agencies ...' (*Prodoc.*, para. 4.2.4).
15. UNDP had noticed that there appeared to be a slight lack of empathy between R&DD and TCD so suggested that the opportunity be taken via the Prodoc to bring about greater 'complementarity'. The Oxford *Thesaurus* gives as a synonym for complementarity 'parallel'—i.e. not meeting. Complementarity in that sense continued at an institutional level.
16. The criterion for being regarded as a 'major contributor' was never very clear. It was not financial contributions to the Programme since there were two ESAs which contributed very little financially but quite a lot verbally. It would be entirely in keeping with the philosophy of the Programme for contributions of words to be regarded as highly as contributions of money since that is, *au fond*, the principal contribution of the Programme to better urban management.
17. The most far-reaching addition to the Prodoc was a commitment that 'Phase 2 of the UMP will have as one of its concerns the urban—rural linkage and interplay of goods, services, workers, income, capital and information ... Urban-rural linkages will be a special topic of the UMP...' and there then followed a list of research, policy development and practical steps to which the executing agencies of the UMP were, without their foreknowledge, committed.
18. Somewhat convoluted negotiations were necessary before I could accept the invitation. I did not want to become a full-time UN official for the rest of my working life. But to stay on at UNCHS meant resigning from the LSE as I had already had two years' leave of absence. I did not object to resigning, but I wanted to ensure that I had some academic post to go back to at the end of my UN stint. The DPU offered me a full-time post as Professor of Urban Management starting 1 September 1992 with immediate secondment back to UNCHS for a year with UNCHS paying DPU for my services. Birkbeck College which was just starting a new Law Department and University College London then agreed that as from 1 October 1993, I should be appointed to a joint post; 50 per cent at the DPU and 50 per cent at Birkbeck as a Professor of Law. This was all done quickly in early 1992 and it is right to highlight here the speed and goodwill shown by all concerned in the two Colleges to accommodate the UMP and myself. The upshot was that in strict legal terms, I was not employed by UNCHS as the UMP Co-ordinator; I was a consultant hired by UNCHS from DPU to run the UMP. This caused some initial misgivings but, in the event, it seemed to make no difference to the management of the UMP and my successor as Co-ordinator made the same arrangements from his institution in The Netherlands when he took over in September 1993.
19. The IB may best be described as a very mini and simplified project document. It set out the proposal; how it had got onto the agenda; why it should be undertaken; how it should be undertaken; what would it cost; what was its time-scale; and what were the anticipated outcomes. It was not expected to be more than two or three pages in length. That part could be done quite quickly. Once prepared by the proponent—i.e. Regional Co-ordinator or the core team—it then set off on a round of consultations. If it originated from a Regional Co-ordinator, it had to be considered by the core teams, by the relevant section of UNDP, and possibly by donors if it was hoped to attract ESA money. None of this was unreasonable; clearly there had to be some prior consideration given to the spending of Programme resources and the Programme Co-ordinator would have been unable to discharge his responsibilities of monitoring spending and ensuring that the Prodoc was being implemented without some such mechanism. But it did make rapid response to urgent demands difficult and it did impose a central control on regional initiatives which Regional Co-ordinators sometimes found irksome.
20. These took place in Kuala Lumpur for the Asia region in October 1992; Nairobi for the Africa region in January 1993; and Cairo for the Arab States region in June 1993. Nairobi

is not the location of the Africa regional office, but it was found to be more convenient to hold the launch workshop there than at the then regional office location in Lomé. The LAC region did not have a similar launch workshop but had lower-profile events to announce the existence of the regional programme.

21. The difference of approach was best summed up by the way in which one Regional Co-ordinator set up his regional panel of experts and the reaction of the relevant Unit Co-ordinator in UNCHS to the panel. The RC had rather few government officials on the panels; when I queried this, the RC invited me to reflect on the state of the urban problematic in his region and who was responsible for that. The UMP was there to pose a different approach to urban development, not repeat the same mistakes by using the same officials responsible for those mistakes. For the Unit Co-ordinator, not to use the officials with whom UNCHS was wont to work was evidence of irresponsibility on the part of the RC who should be instructed as to whom he should put on the panels.
22. Many of these issues were highlighted by my successor in an internal memorandum he drew up in November 1993. He kindly showed me a draft copy of the memo. The catalogue of concerns he outlined seemed a good example of 'the Empire striking back'. All the frustrations of both R&DD and TCD in UNCHS about the UMP were set out; it was still seen as an interloper getting in the way of the proper activities of those Divisions which, by implication, were doing a grand job. His proposed solutions to enable the UMP to focus its activities more effectively showed the good sense of my leaving when I did; a fresh perspective was needed which only an outsider could supply. He in turn left the Programme after three years.
23. Both the World Bank and UNDP produced policy papers on urban development in 1991. Both papers were produced by divisions in the respective agencies that were the principal agency inputs into the UMP, but neither paper gave much prominence to the UMP nor did the UMP give much prominence to the papers.

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