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Repositioning cities and citizenship
in the climate change debate

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Adapting Cities to Climate Change

By Adriana Allen, Camillo Boano and Cassidy Johnson

Cities and the Mitigation and Adaptation Agendas: An Inconvenient Truth

Analysis of the relationship between cities and climate change has overwhelmingly focused on their contribution to greenhouse emissions and the need to reduce carbon-based fuel dependency, thereby delaying the debate on the impacts of climate variability on citizens (particularly the urban poor) in the Global South. This has resulted in the emergence of a mitigation agenda which is often dissociated from the essential question of how to support cities and citizens to adapt to climate change.

While it is not helpful to discuss mitigation and adaptation as competing agendas, from the perspective of cities in the Global South the latter does appear to be subordinated to the former in two ways. First, the prevailing attention given to mitigation responses at the expense of adaptation obscures the asymmetry between the actual greenhouse gas contributions produced by most urban centres in the

South, and the risks they experience from the negative effects of climate change. Second, both mitigation and adaptation challenges are closely linked to development challenges in these cities. In contexts where inadequate water, sanitation and drainage infrastructure, poor quality housing and insecure land tenure are the norm rather than the exception, and where sizeable percentages of the urban population live in settlements that are labelled 'illegal', there is little scope for local governments and planning systems to address increased vulnerability to climate change unless the right of the urban poor to the city is reclaimed.

In this context, mitigation responses appear to fit more comfortably with the modernising vision of urban elites and governments in the South and the North alike than the 'inconvenient truth' that high vulnerability to climate change is in fact a predictable condition linked to the structural uneven geography of development, rather than to nature's unpredictability.

The Impacts of Climate Change on Cities and Urban Residents

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment outlines that climate change will result in more severe weather patterns worldwide. For urban areas, with their dense populations and precarious settlement situations, this translates into increased risk of weather-related disasters. Urban areas are expected to have increased exposure to tropical storm surges, increased rainfall leading to flooding and landslides, and increased periods of drought leading to decreasing agriculture production, less water availability, and settlement fires and wildfires. Cities that are located in low elevation coastal zones are the most exposed to climate change impacts. Regionally, cities in Asia are going to be most affected by climate change, as a result of increased exposed population from urbanization, and exposure to extreme climate-related events.

While some cities as a whole may be affected by climate change, if we look deeper, we see that not all urban residents are impacted equally. It is the poor that bear the brunt of the problems and who are the most vulnerable to extreme weather events. Even if large portions of a city are flooded, middle-class and wealthy settlements are less affected due to their safe location within the city. The urban poor are more likely to live on precarious sites, on un-developable parcels of land such as those highly exposed to flooding and landslides. The urban poor are also more likely to live in settlements that are lacking infrastructure, such as basic sanitation, flood barriers, storm-water drains or good roads for accessibility during emergencies. When food prices rise, the well off are still able to purchase basic foods, while the poor may not be able to, without foregoing other necessities. The urban poor are also the least likely to be able to recover when assets are lost in a disaster, since they may lose everything and usually have little or no insurance cover.

Everyday Urbanism in a Changing Climate

As urban planners engage with the climate change challenge, global branded ecological mega-projects, low carbon transition plans and recipes for new utopian sustainable designs are promoted as new ways of championing the sustainability agenda,



Left: Rental rooms in Mohammadpur, Dhaka are built-up over the water and the central walkways are made of bamboo (Huraera Jabeen, 2009)



Above: Informal houses for tenants in Mohammadpur, Dhaka, are built on precarious sites and flood several times every year posing extreme hardships on people (Huraera Jabeen, 2009)



Far left: Adriana Allen speaks at the workshop ‘Supporting Local Coping Strategies through Adaptation Planning’ on August 25, 2009, in Dhaka put on by BRAC University and DPU.

Left to right: Camillo Boano and Cassidy Johnson

accommodating climate change within the existing matrices of power, knowledge and governance. Acceptance of global warming, and the ecological rationality to which it gives rise, generate micro-strategies of power relations that constitute subjects in new ways, perhaps unwittingly increasing the risk of reproducing vulnerabilities and eroding social resilience.

As most urbanisation in the next few decades will take place in the Global South and outside official plans, rules and regulations, the challenge ahead for urban planners is understanding and supporting the ‘everyday urbanism’ (Chase et al, 2008) of the urban poor. This challenge questions the possibility (and value) of simply focusing on designing resilient built environments, calling instead for planning inputs that build on informal daily practices of bottom up urbanism. This requires reconceptualising planning solutions and citizenship rights so that they recognize the vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities of the various actors. Valuing and reconsidering informal everyday urbanism would require grounded, locally-based efforts to strengthen individual and collective adaptive capacities.

This reconceptualisation could benefit from Lefebvre’s concept of the ‘right to the city’ as a claim for the recognition of the urban as the (re)producer of social relations of power, and the right of all citizens to participate in the process of production in the city they desire, aspire and imagine. As Harvey (2003:939) notes: “the right to the city is not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it as our heart’s desire, and remake ourselves by creating a qualitatively different kind of urban sociality.” Thus the production of urban space in a changing climate is not only about planning the climate resilient city at the technological level, but rather integrating all aspects of urban life, including the right of appropriation and adaptation.

Though the ‘right-to-the-city’ concept has recently been co-opted by neoliberal and populist slogans, rethinking this notion for adapting cities to climate change could help to stress the transformative social ends of this enterprise. What strategies, then, are most effective to claim true bottom-up rights to the city? As Roy (2009:176) asks: “will demanding rights through ‘rebellious citizenship’ ensure the right

to the production of space for the urban poor, or will it leave them without access to the infrastructure of populist mediation and its regulated entitlements?” It is clear that socially and politically sensitive tactics are needed to address the tensions of spatial adaptation and urban activism in the move towards greater equity and justice for the urban poor, which in turn, leads us to consider the relationship between citizenship, resilience and resistance.

Citizenship, Resilience and Resistance

As disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation perspectives become more integrated, it becomes clear that reducing socio-economic vulnerabilities to hazards and effects from climate change encompass many common elements. In this context, a resilience perspective is increasingly used as an approach for understanding the dynamics of social-ecological systems in a way which is more appropriate for a reconfiguration of critical urban alternatives.

Resilience can be described as “the persistence of relationships within a



Above: Young boy is responsible for rationing water to nearby households (Korail, Dhaka, Huraera Jabeen, 2008)

system and is a measure of the ability of these systems to absorb changes of state variables and driving variables and still persist” (Holling, 1973:12). What appears to be gaining ground in the current debate is the perception of resilience as the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize, while undergoing change, so as to still retain essentially the same functions, structure, identity and feedbacks. Therefore, in a resilient system, change has the potential to create opportunity for development, novelty and innovation. In this sense, resilience provides adaptive capacity that allows for continuous development, triggering a dynamic interplay between sustaining and developing with change and - as Davis and Izadkhah (2006:19) argue - requires strategies that include “robustness, redundancy, resourcefulness and rapidity”.

Surprisingly, the many coping strategies adopted by the urban poor and their daily practices in building resilient cities continue to be at best ignored and at worst obstructed. While significant attention has been given to exploring and unpacking grassroots coping strategies for climate change in the rural context – with a focus on agricultural responses and livelihoods diversification - far less work has gone to deepening our understanding of the ways urban poor are affected by and responding to the ‘double vulnerability’ of climate change and poverty. There are exceptions

however. For example, the Built-in-Resilience project, conducted by BRAC University Bangladesh and DPU looks at how people in informal settlements in Dhaka are coping with extreme events such as flooding and heat. Findings from this research showed that people use physical strategies, such as adaptation of housing, and non-physical coping strategies, such as savings groups, income diversification and accumulation of assets, to get through tough times.

As obvious as it might sound, adapting cities to climate change involves, above all, learning from and actively supporting these grassroots coping strategies and the agency of the urban poor. Local adaptation plans are likely to be meaningless unless community organisations of the poor are systematically engaged, and their short and long term responses to climate change are understood, valued and supported. Thus, the most overarching change required for effective pro-poor adaptation to climate change in urban areas concerns the promotion of democratic and accountable governance structures that actively challenge anti-poor attitudes among government bodies and engage in building up their citizenship.

An area where local planning can play a crucial role in adaptation is by ensuring that land-use planning and the development of buildings and infrastructure take account of climate change risks. This poses several challenges as it requires planning and regulatory frameworks that not only prevent further developments in high-risk areas and support mitigation efforts, but also reduce the vulnerability of the urban poor and of collective infrastructure without imposing additional costs on the poor or obstructing their right to the city. Furthermore, infrastructure adaptation in the context of the developing world is compounded by the very large deficits suffered in urban areas and the poor quality and lack of maintenance of existing infrastructure. This implies that local adaptation to climate change cannot be divorced from a wider development perspective which focuses on tackling risk through lifeline infrastructure in areas where such risk has historically accumulated, whilst also planning to reduce disaster risk in future urban development.

Last but not least, a fundamental problem persists in the architecture of aid, rarely set up to understand and support local adaptation plans. There is a clear mismatch between the areas where increased local capacity and competence in climate adaptation is urgently needed and the flow of development cooperation resources supporting adaptation. Consideration of climate change related risks should play a central role in financing both general development goals and local adaptation responses, and this reinforces the need to mainstream climate risk in the overall flows of development aid as a cross-cutting concern, rather than as a ‘new’ sector. Unless this message is seriously taken on board by the international community, climate change is likely to become another agenda that subordinates cities and development to global managerialism claims, deepening the environmental injustice that denies the poor the right to the city.

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The Copenhagen Catastrophe: Looking Forward to Mexico



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of the Malaysian Climate Change Group, a coalition of NGOs working on climate change, and is well versed with the United Nations climate change negotiations, having attended this annual conference from 2000 through to 2009. He is Editor of ECO, the hard-hitting newsletter published daily by Climate Action Network, since 2001. His special interest area is in the ethics of climate change.

An estimated 30,000 participants, including more than 100 heads of state and government, attended the UN climate summit in Copenhagen from December 7 to 18 last year. It was the fifteenth annual Conference of Parties (COP15) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Participation was three times higher than the previous peak of 10,000 at COP13 in Bali. Mainly comprising representatives of civil society organisations, they were symbols of the hopes and aspirations of millions across the globe. They were there to pressure global leaders and technocrats to make the right decisions to mitigate the catastrophic effects on climate change.

The first step was for industrialised countries (known as Annex I Parties) to commit to deeper cuts in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions under the Kyoto Protocol from 2013. Work had been ongoing for this purpose. An AWG-KP (Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol) was established at COP11 in Montreal in 2005 with a deadline of end-2009. Such commitments were also required to provide seamless continuity to the goal of the Kyoto Protocol – Annex I countries are to reduce their overall GHG emissions by at least 5% below 1990 levels in the (first) commitment period 2008 to 2012.

Annex I countries were expected to reduce their emissions, from 2013, on the higher side of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) targets to keep temperature rise below 2°C. Its recommended ranges were 25-40% reduction in emissions by 2020, 50% by 2030 and 80% by 2050, against a baseline year of 1990.

This would also show leadership in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, agreed to

by all Parties to the UNFCCC (including the United States). In effect, developed countries should take the lead in combating climate change and its adverse effects.

Annex I countries were also expected to commit to financial resources and technology transfer to support and encourage developing countries to deviate from 'business as usual' carbon emission trajectories. By doing so, they would have created an environment of trust for developing countries to commit to such actions, and eased ongoing negotiations under the AWG-LCA (Ad-Hoc Working Group for Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention), adopted at COP13 in Bali in 2007, for developing countries to take actions on climate change that are measurable, reportable and verifiable. As the United States is not a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, the AWG-LCA was its platform to specify an agreed national target, similar to commitments of other developed countries.

Progress at Copenhagen was painstakingly slow and tedious. Annex I countries did not make commitments anywhere close to the targets required by the IPCC. The European Union, regarded as the front runner at these negotiations, only offered a safe 20% emission target cut by 2020. While there was little progress on transfer of technology, Annex I countries committed to a global climate fund of US\$100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries. With few details provided, it remains to be seen how much of this fund constitutes new money, additional to overseas development assistance.

In spite of the slow pace and acrimony between Annex I and developing countries on who should do more, negotiations were ongoing on both the AWG-KP and AWG-LCA tracks in Copenhagen. However, before they could come to their respective conclusions, the COP15 President, Danish Prime Minister Lars Rasmussen, organised a closed door meeting with 26 countries including the major developed and developing country emitters. This group then adopted a text known as the Copenhagen Accord and presented it to the conference which "took note" of it. The Accord was then heralded as the successful outcome of Copenhagen.

This was extremely misleading. This Accord, the result of an undemocratic process, was not a COP15 decision and nothing more than a disruption and distraction. While stating a 2°C target and mentioning the US\$100 billion fund, little in the way of strategies and targets was

offered. With such a fluffy document and no strong commitments on emission reduction targets post-2012, it was no surprise that the participants and media subsequently referred to Copenhagen as Flopenhagen.

Both the AWG-KP and AWG-LCA are the means towards reaching a consensus-driven post-2012 framework for the Kyoto Protocol. While their work should have been completed in Copenhagen, their deadlines have been extended to COP16 in Mexico in December. Such unfortunate delays add to the burden of the most vulnerable communities and the planet, and add pressure to properly starting a second commitment period in 2013.

Reflecting on Copenhagen, it is unrealistic to place all our hope in a group of politicians and bureaucrats to decide what is best for the planet. This invariably leads to disappointment. Civil society organisations and communities should pressure their political elites to do what is best by creating the political will for positive action on climate change.

Action can be taken by implementing initiatives such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, public transport via bus rapid transport, and reducing deforestation. The most successful initiatives will be those which directly involve the community and where they can directly measure the benefits. Most of these are best effected at the level of regional and local governments.

This may be the reason why 33 of the 50 states in the United States – over half the American economy – and more than 1,000 city mayors, have voluntarily entered into compacts to reduce emissions, and have agreed to reduce their emissions below 1990 levels, respectively. In contrast, its federal government struggles to act on climate change.

Similarly, a greater number of developing countries – ranging from China to Costa Rica and South Korea to South Africa – are pledging serious actions on climate change, even though not legally obligated to do so. Further, an analysis by Project Catalyst estimates that developing countries are within their proposed emissions reductions range, and towards the upper end of it. However Project Catalyst's analysis of key developed countries puts only the EU's high-end pledge into the 25-40% range. Is this a sign of the new thrust forward for action on climate change?

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New Module – How Cities Can Adapt to Climate Change

Climate change will be increasingly on the agenda of city planners. Elected representatives, city officials and NGO organizers will all have to deal with threats (and opportunities) resulting from rising temperatures, shifting patterns of precipitation, sea-level rise, and more frequent and severe extreme weather events. A new optional module on ‘Adapting Cities to Climate Change’ (linked to the MSc in Environment and Sustainable Development but open to other DPU MSc students) has been launched in the 2009-2010 academic year. The module, coordinated by **Dr David Dodman** and **Dr David Satterthwaite** from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) will equip current and future leaders to understand and to address these challenges.

The module has a specific focus on towns and cities in low- and middle-income countries. These urban areas, and their residents, have contributed little to global greenhouse gas emissions, yet are likely to face the most severe consequences of rising emissions. In addition, the social

implications of climate change are such that low-income residents, especially those living on marginal urban land, are particularly vulnerable. This module identifies and assesses the social dimensions of climate change, incorporating critical perspectives on poverty, gender, and age as key factors shaping vulnerability. At the same time, it recognizes that individuals and households are active agents shaping responses to a range of shocks and stresses.

In addition to the direct impacts of climate change, policy responses to the issue will also affect urban residents and city managers. The wide range of interventions, and the likely substantial funding associated with climate change mitigation and adaptation, means that it is particularly important for policy-makers to explore possible unintended consequences of their actions. For example, how will the implementation of Clean Development Mechanism landfill gas capture projects affect the livelihoods of low-income waste pickers? How will the identification of low-lying land as ‘vulnerable’ shape city policies towards households living in these areas?

Our understanding of climate change,

Above: Households in low-lying coastal areas – such as Tudor Settlement in Mombasa, Kenya – face particular risks from rising sea-levels.

and the types of responses that are required in urban areas, are developing rapidly. The module benefits greatly from the involvement of experienced researchers and practitioners in the subject area, including several who have served on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and who are able to provide up-to-date insights on the latest developments. Participants in the module are encouraged to develop strategies for urban managers that will bring together the priorities of local development, climate change mitigation, and climate change adaptation – all directly related to the real-world challenges facing cities today.

New Module – Disaster Risk Reduction in Cities

As the recent earthquake in Haiti all too clearly shows, cities are the locus of large-scale disasters. Yet, urban areas are also frequently affected by smaller disasters, which may not make newspaper headlines,

but wipe out the assets of millions of people worldwide every year. Disasters are occurring more frequently, affecting more people, and causing higher economic damages than ever before, and the impacts of climate change are expected to increase disaster events, as heavy rains, storms and droughts become more commonplace. This module, taught by **Camillo Boano** and **Cassidy Johnson**, is paired with the new module on adapting cities to climate change, and draws on a background of disaster risk reduction to prepare professionals to face the complex development challenges that disasters bring to urban areas, and especially cities in low and middle-income nations.

The module looks at the ways in which hazards are spatially and socially distributed in cities, and how these are translated into risks for vulnerable groups. It also looks at the ways in which urban residents, citizen's groups, businesses and governments have begun to develop responses for reducing disaster risk and building resilience. In this respect, the module examines how what was once thought of as managing disasters has now has evolved into a framework for disaster risk reduction.

MSc Dissertations on Climate Change
The case for an individual or local, consumption-based approach to address the international mitigation of climate change.

Abigail Burrridge (MSc in Environment and Sustainable Development 2008 – 2009)

This dissertation was written pre-Copenhagen, with anticipation of an agreement being reached at Copenhagen, although the likelihood being, as the paper sets out, an inherently flawed one.

International negotiations to address climate change have been focused on nation-states, and the greenhouse gases produced within the territorial boundaries of those nation-states. However, this paper argued that to adequately and equitably reduce global greenhouse gas emissions, the right to emit to the safe absorption capacity of the atmosphere and other sinks should be allocated on an equal per capita basis, based on the emissions resulting from consumption, and therefore the responsibility to reduce emissions should be at the level of the individual.

This might lead to the assumption that “personal carbon trading” is the most effective mechanism to change individual behaviour, but it is complex, costly, and individuals who have taken part in pilots want to feel part of “something bigger” . They want to be part of a community of people taking action to reduce their

emissions. As such, the paper recommends that “local carbon budgets”, negotiated at the local government level through an appropriate partnership arrangement, and with community participation, could be a fairer and more effective intervention to discuss at international negotiations.

Abigail is now on the executive group piloting local carbon budgets (now called local carbon frameworks) in England.
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Constructing International Development within the Climate Change Debate: A Comparative US-UK Media Discourse Analysis

Jenny Perry (MSc in Environment and Sustainable Development 2008 – 2009)

This dissertation explored how the US and UK media framing of the climate change debate has largely excluded issues of international development in favour of scientific and economic debate on market and regulatory solutions. By analysing the claims made, and framing of articles on climate change and development across six major newspapers over a period of eight years, the study's findings point to some key differences in coverage across the two countries. In particular, the UK media discourse was considerably more alarmist when presenting the possible risks and impacts of climate change, and aid to developing countries for mitigation and adaptation was framed as a moral obligation. By contrast, US coverage

balanced impact claims with sceptics' viewpoints and conceptualised aid as an instrument for promoting national security. However, because both countries displayed a trend of event driven reporting, which framed climate change as a global problem to be solved by intergovernmental negotiation, local and developing country agency to address climate change was largely ignored.

Over the eight years, increasing frequency of discussions of market driven and top-down regulatory solutions were also associated with a decrease in discussions of aid, inter- and intra- generational equity and well-being. Therefore, while there are key differences across the US and UK discourses, the main obstacles to further inclusion of development and equity in the US and UK contexts are quite similar: the de-linking of local activities from the wider international context and the judgment of success through bottom line, cost-benefit type analyses.

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Below: Flooding is a regular occurrence in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photo Huraera Jabeen



MSc Fieldwork

Engagement with Public Policy and Planning in East London and the 2012 Olympic Legacy

The MSc in Urban Development Planning has continued its engagement with spatial fieldwork and policy in East London for the fifth year, focusing, for the last two years on the expected impacts of the 2012 Olympic Legacy. Working with **Eleni Kyrou** and **Rosalina Babourkova**, twenty-six UDP students were asked to explore the potential of the 2012 Legacy in enhancing social inclusion and environmental justice in the experience, use and appropriation of public space by young people 13-19 years old in Hackney Wick. Involvement from practitioners across the spectrum (London Development Agency, Olympic Park Legacy Company, Hackney Council, Fundamental Architecture, Well London) proved invaluable. In their final outputs, participants produced four detailed research proposals highlighting the main issues identified and suggesting future courses of action and directions for additional investigation required. A compiled executive version of these is available from the MSc programme on request (contact e.kyrou@ucl.ac.uk for details).

Justice in the Green

'Justice in the Green' is a learning action project, undertaken over the last years by students of the MSc in Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) with support from the EPSRC funded Bridging the Gaps Programme at UCL. Organised by **Adriana Allen**, **Alex Apsan Frediani**, **Pascale Hofmann** and **Rita Valencia**, the project examines the access, use and appropriation of Hackney Marsh and connected green spaces by the surrounding communities. A variety of partners were involved in the project, including Dr Muki Haklay from the Civil, Environmental and Geomatics Engineering Department from UCL, Louise Francis from London 21, Ian Freshwater from the 2012 Legacy Team, Hackney Olympic and Paralympics Games Unit of Hackney Council, the Hackney based NGO Social Action for Health led by Elizabeth Bayliss and several local grass-roots organizations. Basma Gaber, Ailbhe Gerrard, and Jennifer Perry (ESD alumni 2008-09) and Katarina Soltesova (UDP 2008-10) provided valuable inputs in guiding the fieldwork of the students on six community areas in Hackney between October and December 2009 and also assisting the ESD team in the dissemination process.

Right: Students on field work as part of the 'Justice In the Green' project



In addition to being a learning opportunity for the students, this initiative also generated outputs that hope to contribute to the use and appropriation of green spaces by local residents and organisations. This action learning project aims at supporting the engagement of local residents and organisations in the planning process affecting these areas and to strengthen their participation on the changes brought about by the 2012 Olympics Games. For more information, access the website at www.justiceinthegreen.org.uk

Ove Arup Foundation, Teaching Fellowships at University of Cape Town

For the fourth year, two DPU staff members (**Caren Levy** and **Eleni Kyrou**) were appointed as the Ove Arup Fellows with the post-graduate programme in Urban Infrastructure Design and Management at the University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa. Their taught module was attended by nineteen mid-career urban practitioners from different parts of South Africa and one Tanzanian. It proved an extremely stimulating and fruitful experience, promoting dialogue between theory in class and the professional reality experienced by the participants.

As part of the Fellowship, Caren delivered public lectures on "The Struggle for the Just City" at the University of Cape Town and the Wits School of Architecture and Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, helping to highlight DPU's work in this direction. Eleni delivered a seminar titled "Collaborative City Poverty Analysis: issues, components, potentials" to staff from the City of Cape Town. This was timely, given that the executive leadership of the City recently put poverty, urbanisation, informal settlements and participation at the top of their urban development agenda.

Dialogues in Development

This DPU forum to discuss cutting edge development issues continued in 2009 and 2010 with a range of lectures and discussions on issues related to human settlements development and good governance. Ernesto López-Morales (Faculty of Architecture & Planning, University of Chile) discussed "Real estate market, urban policy and entrepreneurial ideology in Santiago de Chile's urban renewal", based on his recently completed PhD thesis. Paul Jenkins (Professor of Architecture & Human Settlement School of the Built Environment, Herriot-Watt University, Edinburgh) gave a lecture on "Investigating the role of culture in the development of the urban built environment". Aromar Revi (Director, Indian Institute of Human Settlements, IHS) gave a lecture "India's Urban Transformation: from challenge to opportunity" followed by a panel discussion with Prof Edgar Pieterse (African Centre for Cities), Prof Bish Sanyal (MIT), and **Professor Yves Cabannes**, chaired by **Caren Levy**. Arif Hassan (Chair, Orangi Pilot Project, Pakistan) gave a personal view on "The Fading Away of the Modernist Paradigm and its Repercussions on Planning Theory and Practice in the Asia Pacific Region". Nithi Nesadurai (Coordinator of the Malaysian Climate Change Group) gave lecture on "The Copenhagen Ultimatum: It's Now or Never" (see page 5 of this issue of DPU News for more on Nithi's point of view on Copenhagen). Jake Dan-Azumi (PhD Student at the DPU) held a session on "Popular Knowledge Systems and Agriculture in West Africa". The most recent presentation, by Dr Katherine Gough (Department of Geography University of Copenhagen Denmark) was on "Linking house and home: Reflections from the global South".

MSc Project: Negotiating Local Adaptive Capacity – Learning from the Dynamics of Urban Institutional and Grassroots Built-In Resilience in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Katarina Soltesova, Urban Development Planning, 2008-10

This MSc project relates to DPU's wider research on "Adaptation to Climate Change in Cities", building our collaboration with BRAC University in Dhaka. For more information visit www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu/adaptation_to_climate_change_in_cities.

In the past year, this research focused on grass-roots coping strategies developed by residents of Korail, the biggest of Dhaka's slums, in response to climate variability. A wealth of information has been collected contributing to current understanding of the vulnerability suffered by and coping strategies employed by this community of urban slum dwellers. Complementary research was developed in areas pertaining to urban planning and governance, with the aim of assessing the potential for local bodies and municipal policy to support and accommodate existing and future grass-root coping strategies.



Above: Local businesses in Korail, Dhaka are important for diversification of income sources within the household and helps families cope with disaster events (Huraera Jabeen, 2008).

In the context of Dhaka's political ecology, this project examines institutional relationships underpinning municipal policy-making and planning, geared to support 'spontaneous' collective adaptation strategies of urban poor. This institutional perspective

is employed to qualify the preconditions and the nature of negotiations required to bridge grassroots initiatives and urban policy and planning.

Two areas of municipal planning and policy (basic service provision and disaster risk reduction) will be highlighted in relation to support to grassroots strategies. Fieldwork will be used to collect additional data on grassroots coping strategies and their institutional underpinning as well as on Dhaka's municipal planning structures relevant to adaptation planning and disaster risk reduction. Situated at the interface between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, the project builds on areas of expertise of the two supervisors Adriana Allen (DPU) and John Twigg (Department of Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering) and has received the Bridging the Gaps, MSc competition award.

Managing the Health Effects of Climate Change

In 2008/09, **Adriana Allen** and **Jose Puppim de Oliveira** joined The Lancet – UCL Commission on Managing the Health Effects of Climate Change, contributing a chapter on Climate Change, Health Effects and Human Settlements. Led by Professor Antony Costello, the study was produced by a team of UCL academics from many disciplines across the university – including health, anthropology, geography, engineering, economics, law and philosophy. To access the main outputs produced, read the report and watch a video, please visit:

www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/0905/09051501/

How People Face Evictions

Forced evictions have been dramatically increasing worldwide. However, some people-based initiatives are reducing the number of evictions, with some positive lessons. The Advisory Group on Forced Evictions to the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT has found that that people-led movements are a key ingredient for successful solutions to forced evictions. However, work documenting actual practices and strategies is limited, and usually carried out by NGOs and advisory groups, rarely giving a full voice to the people active on the ground. In addition, the existing people-led networks have few opportunities to exchange

experiences at the global level.

This research by the DPU was led by **Yves Cabannes**, with **Cassidy Johnson**, and was supported by the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) in the UK. It was carried out in collaboration with social movements and organisations struggling for their right to housing and to stay in the places they live, in eight cities around the world: Turkey (Istanbul), Egypt (Dakhaliyah and Buheira), China (Huangzhou), Argentina (Buenos Aires), Brazil (Porto Alegre), Dominican Republic (Santo Domingo), Pakistan (Karachi) and South Africa (Durban). The project, and an exchange seminar (hosted by the Coordination for Housing Rights (CHR) in Istanbul) sought to hear people's voices on how they face evictions, to exchange, and mutually learn from one other in our practices and experiences.

The research found that people's strategies to face eviction (such as direct confrontation, public protest for alerting on imminent evictions, physical resistance at the moment of evictions, legal battles, negotiations while resisting, internal and international solidarity and mobilization, and media mobilization) have resulted in an impressive scale of positive outcomes, including capacity to stay, new legal frameworks, jurisprudence in courts, new policy, policies of peoples initiatives, despite quite a high level of repression and organized state violence in most cases.

Community Land Trusts

Thanks to a small bursary from the Building and Social Housing foundation, **Yves Cabannes** undertook research in Burlington, Vermont on Community Land Trusts in September 2009. One of the most interesting aspects of the CLT has been the "locking up" of public subsidy in order to increase the affordability of decent housing for those below the median income. At the same time, this common regime solution, rooted in the early days of the garden city movement, has weathered the dramatic effects of the sub-prime crisis well, with a low rate of foreclosures.

Children, Disabilities and Well-Being: A Preliminary Investigation in India

In autumn 2009, **Alexandre Apsan Frediani** and **Jean Francois Trani** (from Leonard

Cheshire Disability & Inclusive Development Centre at UCL) coordinated a workshop in New Delhi with the NGO 'Project WHY' (which provides after-school classes to children from low income neighbourhoods and support for children with disabilities). Inputs were also made by Mario Biggeri (Senior Lecturer) and Sara Bonfanti (MSc student in development economics), both from the University of Florence. The objective of the workshop was preliminary research on the well-being of children involved in Project WHY, to test a series of participatory research tools and identify areas for further research. Apart from the academic interest, we also hoped to contribute to the work of Project WHY. The participatory tools were effective in revealing impacts of Project WHY on the well-being of children and areas for further work were identified.

A follow-up workshop is being prepared, which will take place in 2010 in India to refine the methodology used and finalize the elaboration of a research proposal on 'Identities, Well-being and Disabilities' involving DPU and Leonard Cheshire Disability and Inclusive Development Centre. The workshops are funded by the UCL Bridging the Gaps programme. For further information on the workshop go to the website:

www.ucl.ac.uk/btg/BtGReportFrediani.html

Review of Planning Education Across the Commonwealth

In July 2009 the DPU was commissioned by the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) to prepare a preliminary report on the state of planning education in the Commonwealth for the Commonwealth Secretariat. A team, led by **Caren Levy** with **Patrick Wakely** and **Michael Mattingly** (DPU Associates), assisted by **Alexandre Apsan Frediani**, undertook the study, compiling a preliminary database of planning schools throughout the Commonwealth, overview of the education offered, and its relationship to urban trends and profession development in each country. The study drew on feedback from a wide range of DPU Alumni and a network of experienced planning professionals and educators in the Commonwealth.

This is the first phase of a Commonwealth Secretariat programme that recognises the need for well educated planners who are able to address the challenges and opportunities that result from rapid urbanization. While the Commonwealth may be less urbanised than other parts of the world, its annual urban growth rate is estimated at 2.6% compared to 2% for the world as a whole. In addition, inequality in Commonwealth cities is growing, with the last decade seeing the addition of some 10 million slum dwellers per year.

Networks and Meetings

DPU at the World Urban Forum

DPU will be involved in a number of sessions at the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro, March 2010. The DPU will lead a training session on "*Tools and Methods for Participatory Budgeting*", with a special emphasis on Paulo Freire's educational perspective and methods (25 March 2010, 9-12 am) and a networking Session on "*Participatory Budgeting: Current Challenges*" (25 March 2010, 4.30-6.30 pm). In addition the DPU and the BHSF (with the National Movement for Housing Struggles, Comunidade Utopia e Luta, Brazil, Coordination of Urban People's Movements, Dominican Republic ND Red Habitat and FEDEVI, Argentina) have co-organized a session on "*How People Face Evictions: Lessons from People-led Initiatives*" (Monday 22 March, 2 - 4pm). For more information on these session please contact **Yves Cabannes** at: y.cabannes@ucl.ac.uk

DPU will also be involved in the networking and exchange session between African and Latin American cities involved in Participatory Budgeting, organized by ENDA (Senegal) and the Brazilian network of PB. In addition **Yves Cabannes** will chair three sessions: "Cities, Agriculture and Food: Towards sustainable and equitable urban food systems" organized by RUA Foundation in close partnership with FAO and the Brazilian government (24 March 4.30-6.30pm); "*Forced evictions in Port Harcourt, Nigeria*" organized by the Nigerian National Union of Tenants, in close partnership with a large number of local and international organizations (24 March 2 - 4pm); and "*Finding solutions to forced evictions worldwide: a priority to implement the right to the city*", organized by AGFE, (the Advisory Group on Forced Evictions to the Executive Director of UN Habitat) (22 March 4.30-6.30pm). Yves will also speak at the networking event on "*Urban Conflicts. Mega-events and Evictions*" (March 25, 2-6pm).

Alexandre Apsan Frediani will be the DPU News roving reporter at the World Urban Forum, so please contact him with your news and views. In addition, it would be wonderful if all DPU staff and Alumni attending the World Urban Forum could meet for dinner one evening. If you can join us for dinner please contact Alexandre for details. He can be contacted at: a.frediani@ucl.ac.uk

Partnership with the Indian Institute of Human Settlements (IIHS)

The DPU, led by **Yves Cabannes** and **Caren Levy**, has continued its collaboration with the Indian Institute of Human Settlements (IIHS) with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation. IIHS will create India's first independent National Innovation University to educate the next generation of "professionals, entrepreneurs and changemakers committed to the common good" to address the challenges and opportunities of the accelerating urban transition that will take place in India over the coming 50 years. To address this, IIHS has brought together a number of partners, including DPU, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Arup to support the development of an innovative interdisciplinary curriculum for urban practitioners.

Four events have been organised since the last issue of DPU News went to press. In July 2009, **Caren Levy** went to MIT to share experience around postgraduate curriculum development. In August 2009, **Yves Cabannes** and **Julio D Dávila** attended a curriculum development conference in the Rockefeller Foundation's conference centre in Bellagio, Italy.

In November 2009, the DPU hosted a follow-up conference in London to share experience of undergraduate curriculum development and the treatment of practice in postgraduate urban planning courses. This workshop drew in additional partners and educators from the African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town, South Africa; Autonomous Metropolitan University, Mexico; Federal University of the ABC Region in São Paulo, Brazil; Institut Français d'Urbanisme, Paris 8, France; and IIED and WEDC in the UK.

In January 2010, all the partners (over 70 participants from India and overseas, plus members of the IIHS board) were brought together for the first time in Bangalore, India, where the IIHS main campus is likely to be sited. Attended by **Yves Cabannes**, **Julio D Dávila** and **Ruth McLeod**, the conference saw four days of intense and rich debate, discussion and informal conversation among a wide range of professionals involved in different aspects of urban development in India and abroad, and centred both on issues of curriculum development and on the range of activities envisaged by the IIHS directors, such as consultancy and specialised professional capacity building.

5th Urban Research Symposium

In June 2009 **Le-Yin Zhang** attended the World Bank's Urban Research Symposium in Marseille. Its theme was: "*Cities and Climate Change: Responding to an urgent agenda*", where she presented a paper, entitled "*Does climate change make industrialization an obsolete development strategy for cities in the South?*"

N-Aerus 2009

In October 2009, **Eleni Kyrou** and **Camillo Boano** attended the N-AERUS (Network-Association of European Researchers on Urbanisation in the South) Conference in Rotterdam. This year, taking the advantage of the Architectural Biennale focused on the "Open city" hosted by the Dutch port city, the conference (organised by the Institute of Housing and Development Studies), was on "*Challenges to open cities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East: shared spaces within and beyond*". Camillo Boano presented a paper on "Conflicting urbanism in Dharavi: dialectics of mega-projects and mega resistances" based on the BUDD/UDP field trip to Mumbai. At this conference, Eleni Kyrou completed three years serving at the network's Coordinating Committee along with Harry Smith (Herriot-Watt University) and Peter Gotsch (Karlsruhe University) and will now be a member of the Facilitating Committee in an advisory support role.

AHRA Conference

Building on her personal research into adult learning and professional development, generally, and the pedagogy of urban planning specifically, **Eleni Kyrou** attended the 6th Architectural Humanities Research Association (AHRA) conference on 'Field/Work' in November 2009. The conference explored the integral role of fieldwork in urban planning. Eleni presented a paper titled "*Practical Learning Environments and the Emergence of the Learner – Planning Practitioner in Fieldwork*".

Talk at Engineers Without Borders, Cambridge University

In February 2010 **Eleni Kyrou** delivered a talk to Engineers Without Borders (EWB) at Cambridge University on "*Community-led housing: partnerships of cooperative conflict in Mumbai and the role of the reflective practitioner*". Her talk drew on four years of case-based action research in Mumbai, India, highlighting the tensions and possibilities arising in the ongoing struggles over the co-production of a city's development vision.

Twenty Years of Human Development: The Past and the Future of the Human Development Index

This workshop on the contribution of the Human Development Reports and recommendations their future was run by the Von Hügel Institute/ Capability and Sustainability Network (University of Cambridge) with the United Nations Development Programme. **Alexandre Apsan Frediani** attended the event and presented the paper "*Participation: From Tyranny to Human Development? Participatory Capabilities and Development Planning*". The objective of Alex's contribution was to support the process of democratisation of the human development reports. The participatory capabilities framework was proposed to assist on the use of participatory processes in the design and dissemination of the human development reports.

Disaster Risk Reduction Conference

This conference on "*Disaster Risk Reduction for Natural Hazards: Putting Research into Practice*" was co-organized by DPU and the Aon Benfield Hazard Research Centre in November 2009. It brought together researchers and practitioners from academia, civil society and the humanitarian, development and business sectors. The aim was to examine the concept and process of disaster risk reduction, with particular emphasis on multi-hazard environments and multi-disciplinary approaches to risk and vulnerability reduction. **Adriana Allen**, **Camillo Boano** and **Cassidy Johnson** were asked to present a key note speech provocatively titled "*(Re)production of disaster risk reduction*". The conference was well attended, and rich in cases and debates. Presentations and papers are available at: www.ucl.ac.uk/drrconference/presentations.html

Risk Perception Symposium

Cassidy Johnson, **Adriana Allen** and BRAC University's **Huraera Jabeen** presented their work from the '*Adapting Cities to Climate Change*' research project (funded by British Council) at the 1st International Risk Perception Symposium "*Cities at Risk: Living with Perils in the 21st Century*", hosted by EPI-CENTRE in UCL's Engineering Department in October 2009. The symposium featured new research on risk perception in disasters from Turkey, Japan, UK, New Zealand and Bangladesh. The papers presented are being compiled for a book to be published by Springer in 2011.

Ordinary Families, Extraordinary Lives

In December 2009, the DPU ran a workshop and book launch in collaboration with the Global Urban Research Centre, Manchester University and DPU Associates to mark the publication of **Professor Caroline Moser's** book, "*Ordinary Families, Extraordinary Lives: Assets and Poverty Reduction in Guayaquil, 1978-2004*". This book draws together Caroline Moser's longitudinal research in Ecuador, which she initiated during her years at the DPU (1978-86).

The workshop, subtitled "*The Past, Present and Future of Urban Slums and Human Settlements*", brought together different generations of urban specialists working on cities in the global South. It was a stimulating exchange of ideas through presentations and discussion of critical debates in the urban field. It took a nostalgic turn when **Ronaldo Ramirez** produced a 'yellowing' copy of a paper he had received in Chile in 1966 before he had joined the DPU – the hugely influential and policy changing paper on self-help housing presented by **John Turner**, who was among the workshop participants. The workshop closed with a reception to celebrate the launch of the book, rounding off an event that was interesting, enjoyable and filled with warmth.

Session on Participatory Budgeting at Africities

Since the first summit in 1998 in Abidjan, Africities, (officially the Pan-African Local Government Day) has become the major event for reflection and evaluation of progress of decentralization, local governance and municipalisation in Africa. In 2009 the 5th session of Africities was held in Marrakesh, Kingdom of Morocco, with the participation of over 1200 mayors. The DPU and UCLG-A (United Cities and Local Governments of Africa) took this opportunity to organize a special session on Participatory Budgeting in Africa in close collaboration with a large number of institutions, associations and networks primarily from Africa: ASSOAL, ENDA Tiers Monde, MDP-ESA, National Network of Inhabitants of Cameroon, PASOC. Organizations from Europe and Latin America and international agencies promoted the event as well. The session was used to identify and exchange on more than 50 experiences that have been taking place since 2003.

Planning in Global Crisis

In November 2009, **Julio D Dávila** presented a paper and chaired a track at an international conference on “*Positioning Planning in Global Crises*” at the Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), one of Indonesia’s most prestigious universities. He was invited by **Dr Haryo Winarso**, ITB associate professor and former DPU student (PhD 2000). Links between ITB and the DPU date back to the early 1980s, when DPU staff, led by former director **Prof. Colin Rosser**, helped set up ITB’s first MSc programme in urban planning. Julio was also invited to lecture on urban infrastructure and sustainability at the Ministry of Public Works in Jakarta, as part of a regular seminar series co-sponsored by the Ministry and UN-Habitat. The event attracted some 100 people, including civil servants, NGO staff and academics. In Indonesia Julio met former DPU students Sugyantoro (also an ITB lecturer), Yolanda Tobing (MSc UDP 1994) and Jasmin Sander (MSc ESD 2007).

Globalization: Past, Present and Future

In January 2010, **Julio D Dávila** presented a paper in Graz (Austria) at an international conference on “*Globalization: Past, Present and Future*”, jointly organised by Sophia University, Tokyo, and the Schumpeter Centre of Graz University. Conference participants were generously hosted by Prof. Heinz Kurz of the Schumpeter Centre (named after the eponymous economist who taught there for 10 years). Notwithstanding the minus 8 degrees centigrade that greeted participants, organisers managed to take them on a short walk among Graz’s rich medieval and baroque architectural heritage (as well as its most famous contemporary building, designed in 2002 by Peter Cook and Colin Fournier, from the Bartlett School of Architecture).

Community Land Trusts

In October 2009, **Yves Cabannes** delivered a paper on the ‘*Potentials of Community Land Trusts to Revitalize Historical Districts*’ (linking up the accumulated work of the BUDD studios in Istanbul, and his research on the Champlain Community Land Trust, CLT, in Burlington, Vermont, USA) at the symposium on “*Revitalizing Built Environments: Requalifying old places for new uses*”, hosted by The Istanbul Technical University and organized by the IAPS – CSBE Culture and Space in the built environment and the IAPS-Housing Networks.

Connections

News from former DPU students and friends

John Alege (DAP 2005-6) is currently serving as Country Program Officer for Family Health International, working on the project Regional Outreach Addressing HIV/AIDS through Development Strategies (ROADS) in Southern Sudan. Writing to Julio Dávila, he notes the value of his DPU studies on Development and Planning, highlighting in particular “the participatory approaches to community needs assessment, issues of good governance, strengthening of local government capacity to provide services to the community, empowering civil society organisations to make appropriate decision and project monitoring & evaluation among others [as] some of the concepts that I use and apply in my everyday work.” He emphasises that for us as Alumni we are proud to identify with the DPU.”

Emmanuel Baidoo (DAP 2004-5) now works with Christian Aid as Programme Officer in their Ghana Office. He is particularly responsible for managing a DFID contract for Civil Society Collaboration on conflict prevention and good governance in Ghana.

Eve Leonard (ESD 2006-7) Has been working since graduation first with Concern Worldwide and then, following a short term position in India, with the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin, as Professional Officer. She currently project manages a range of outreach and communications projects with a ‘focus on hunger’.

Shanila Athulathmudali (ESD 2008-09) Over the past few months Shanila has been out of Colombo volunteering at the Galle Literary Festival and helping with the climate change lecture series at the British Council. On returning she had an offer of a 5 month internship to look at ISO 14000 certification and Sustainability reporting of a printing company where she has just started. From this position, she writes: “It is quite an eye opener working with people that have little understanding of the concept of sustainable development yet want to incorporate it in their business!”

Julia Maurer (UED 2008-09) has recently started a six-month internship with the Thames Gateway London Partnership. The internship programme, exclusive to the DPU’s Urban Economic Development programme, builds on the course’s long-term collaboration with TGLP, and includes guest lectures and practice-based student projects. Julia’s responsibility is to coordinate the inclusion of cultural aspects in the regeneration process of Woolwich in the London Borough of Greenwich, as part of the Government’s ‘Living Places’ initiative that values the importance of culture in creating successful places that people want to live in, work and visit. This project will eventually serve as a case study to be used in other Thames Gateway boroughs as well.

Daniel Viliesid (ESD 2005-6) has just concluded a four-year spell working with the entrepreneurial charity Bioregional on its One Planet Living project and has moved back to his home town of Queretaro in Mexico to set up a sustainability consultancy and a sustainable communities development firm.

Jo Maguire (BUDD 2006) is working in Cochabamba with Fundación Pro-Hábitat, an organisation which gives loans and technical advice to low income families to build their housing incrementally <http://www.pro-habitat.org.bo/>. In her spare time she is working with another organisation called Somos Sur, who provide a space for discussion and analysis about the ‘process of change’, facilitating a new initiative called Colectivo Sur, www.somosur.net to give people information about the New Constitution, trying to combat the flood of misinformation in the Media.

Hands on

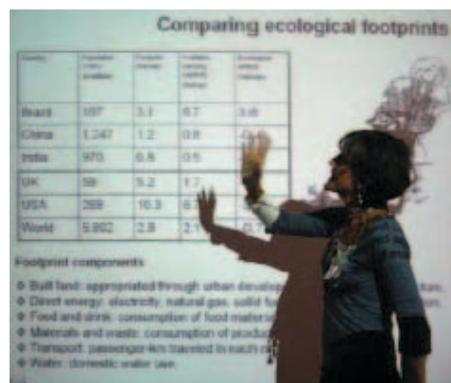
Training and Advisory Services

Elizabeth Ontaneda (UDP 2005) moved to Lima, Peru, in early 2009 from New York, working for a small “start-up” NGO called Espacio Expresion (www.espacioexpresion.org) that works in Pisco, a town of about 50,000 people three hours south of Lima affected by the earthquake two years ago. Even before then, the town was hit hard by migration during the violence in the 1980s and drug traffic, but the last two years have brought potential in the form of millions of dollars in public investment from regional and national government (reconstruction) as well as private investment in the form of the second largest airport set to open next year, natural gas processing and agricultural exports. She focuses on the idea that cultural activity in and urban design of public spaces can create the social interaction, trust, identity and will among residents to capitalize on their local culture and knowledge to create and negotiate income generating activities.

Jordi Sánchez-Cuenca (UDP 2005) moved on from previous contracts in Belo Horizonte, Mumbai, Pune, Nanjing, Accra and Ho Chi Minh City. In 2009 he accompanied the UDP fieldtrip to Mumbai and undertook research work for Spain’s International Development Cooperation Agency from Palma de Mallorca. Currently he is posted with UN-HABITAT in Quito, Ecuador, in a large water and sanitation programme.

Edible Places

In summer 2009, **Adriana Allen** was invited to contribute to the Architecture Sans Frontières ASF-UK’s 5th annual summer school ‘Edible Places: Agriculture, cities and development’. The workshop took place at the Eden Project and was organised and facilitated by Melissa Kinnear, Sarah Ernst, Caroline Dewast, Mina Simagooci and Peter Newton. Participants started by exploring the wider implications of urban agriculture in relation to cities, the environment and development and then worked hands on the construction of green wall and green roof prototypes. To find more about the workshop please visit: www.asf-uk.org/case_studies.htm



Above: Adriana Allen was invited to contribute to the Architecture Sans Frontières ASF-UK’s 5th annual summer school ‘Edible Places: Agriculture, cities and development’ which took place at the Eden Project in Cornwall, England.

Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA)

In 2009, **Caren Levy**, **Jose Puppim de Oliveira** and **Adriana Allen** were invited by International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to join an external group of reviewers to assess a number of research proposals on vulnerability to climate change in African cities. CCAA is a joint program of the Canada IDRC, and the Department for International Development (DFID), UK and it aims to support African countries in their efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate change. For more information, please visit: www.idrc.ca/en/ev-94424-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

UNESCO-IHE Summer School and Online Course on Urban Sanitation

Adriana Allen and **Pascale Hofmann** in collaboration with **Rita Valencia** produced a set of lecture notes to support the development of the UNESCO-IHE online Module on Decentralised and Community Managed Urban Sanitation, an initiative led by Dr Matthew Kurian. The output sets the sanitation challenge in the context of rural-urban linkages, introducing the reader to a number of conceptual and practical considerations that underpin possible approaches to address such challenge. This was an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of over two decades of debate and experimentation with different and often controversial approaches to urban sanitation from a rural-urban perspective. The lecture notes were presented by Adriana Allen during the UNESCO-IHE summer course on urban sanitation, held in Delft in September 2009. It is expected that the online course will be offered in 2010.

ECOPOLIS Graduate Research and Design Awards.

For the second time **Adriana Allen** joined an expert team commissioned to evaluate proposals submitted to the ECOPOLIS Programme run by the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC). For more information about this innovative programme and the projects supported since its launch in 2007, please visit: www.idrc.ca/upe-ecopolis/ev-101266-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Migration and Gender in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

In June 2009, **Julian Walker** was the Resource Person for the 14th Session of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Division, Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development which was held in Budapest. The meeting was designed to examine the gender issues relating to migration in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia in this period of transition to market systems. In this role, Julian wrote a discussion paper for the meeting on the causes and scale of migration, and the impacts on rural women, men and communities in the region.

Unpacking the Social Construction of Natural Disaster Through Policy Discourses and Institutional Responses in Mexico: The Case of Chalco Valleys Floods, State of Mexico

Fernando Aragon (PhD completed in 2009)
A familiar story: one o'clock in the morning, February 5, 2010, once again, a man-made disaster has caused human tragedy in the peri-urban interface of Mexico City. A sewage canal (La Compañía Canal) has collapsed and flooded four colonias of the Chalco Valley municipality, a repeat of a similar incident nine years earlier. The victims seemed to be the same: vulnerable people from colonias Avándaro, El Triunfo, San Isidro and Unión de Guadalupe. The same story (despite nine years of maintenance works carried out to reinforce the canal walls), and the same affected people. Strikingly, policy makers' and politicians' explanations of the floods point to different culprits, through the construction of different discourses.

Fernando Aragon's PhD research analysed 'natural' disaster policies for Mexico using the Chalco Valley's floods of June 2000 as a case study. The objective was to demonstrate that 'natural' disasters and the policies oriented to prevent them are socially constructed. This study focused on the relation between the discourses of disaster causality, policy problem construction and policy responses in Mexico. The central argument was that in Mexico when disaster is conceived as a 'natural' phenomenon the exposure of vulnerable people to disaster risk is concealed, thereby inhibiting the emergence of socially sensitive responses at policy level.

Two analytical inter-related frameworks were elaborated. The first framework was set up to examine the discursive construction of the causes of floods as a policy problem and the second to unpack the construction of policy responses. These were applied to the institutional responses deployed before, during and after the Chalco floods.

Four different disaster discourses were found at policy level, namely inadvertence by 'ignorance', inadvertence by 'carelessness', accidental and structural. These were shaped by how causal ideas of disaster were assembled and made persuasive. In turn, these four discourses each constructed the flood as a different kind of policy problem, and therefore implied four (different, but connected) types of policy responses, which represented relevant policy coalitions upon which policy change can be sought. Strikingly, people's vulnerability to floods was only a component in the 'structural causality' discourse. The research findings contribute to a better understanding of the how scientists, policy makers and people affected by disaster assign meanings and beliefs, construct knowledge and use evidence to support and legitimise disaster causality claims in different ways. These epistemological differences have to be acknowledged for improving policy formulation and implementation aimed at reducing disaster risk of vulnerable people.

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Researcher on risk, disaster and policy
El Colegio de la Frontera Sur, Unidad Villahermosa, MEXICO

Resilience to Climate Variability in coastal Social-Ecological Systems

By Rosalina Babourkova

The aim of this ongoing doctoral research is to shed light on the concept of resilience to climate variability of coastal communities in Vietnam. In particular, the research will explore how the traditional fishing community of Mui Ne, Vietnam copes with and adapts to increase in frequency and severity of climate events at the same time as it sees its access to resources and its traditional social-ecological environment reconfigured due to the fast growing local tourism industry. It builds theoretically on Social-Ecological Systems (SES) thinking. SES is a novel way of studying an ecological system together with its associated social actors and institutions. SESs are seen to exhibit non-linearity, uncertainty, self-organisation and adaptive capacity. The latter (drawing on the work of Berkes et al, 2003) describes the capacity of the system to evolve, learn and work towards adjusting to change and forms a key component of what is defined as resilience in SES. A main objective of the research is to explore the role of human agency in the re-organisation of a local social-ecological system when its social actors and institutions are faced simultaneously with a range of environmental, social and economic changes.

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Left: Women from Mui Ne village, Southern Vietnam, seize new livelihood options with the expanding tourism industry.

Right: Traditional fishing methods are still used by communities around Mui Ne beach in Southern Vietnam.





Linda Bruch Retires

Linda joined the DPU from the University of London Institute of Education in 1994 when she was appointed the Unit's first Manager at a time when the DPU's income and staff were growing largely as a result of its Training and Advisory Service (TAS) activities and the new PhD programme. She rapidly restructured the DPU's administration and accounting system. She set up an efficient system for the management of TAS contracts of which just over 100 were undertaken in 35 different countries in her first ten years with the Unit. She also established and managed a highly effective audit and accounting system for the complex research grants that the DPU had in the late 1990s following the liberalisation of overhead funding by the main research funding bodies, including DFID's Infrastructure and Urban Development Department Knowledge and Research programme, which made a large contribution to DPU's research funding.

She built up and led a highly professional administrative team, developing and strengthening the human resource capacities of the Unit at all levels. She was always the calming voice, managing an administrative system and structure that allowed the academic staff room to operate efficiently and smoothly. She created a positive dynamic, both within her team and between the administrative and academic staff.

Linda played a crucial role in facilitating the retirement of a generation of DPU staff and the settling in of the new staff

cohort over the last 7 years. She also made a crucial contribution to DPU's move from 10 Endsleigh Gardens to 34 Tavistock Square – not only playing a key role on the Relocation Committee but also managing interactions with the numerous UCL departments involved in this process.

Linda was always accessible and easy to talk to for staff and students alike, clear and firm in her opinions, and fair and sympathetic in her actions. She not only steered the DPU through an increasing raft of changing university policies and procedures, but also made a positive contribution to their development and application within UCL, The Bartlett and the DPU.

Linda worked closely and always supportively with three DPU Directors, each appreciative and thankful for her competence, skill and loyalty. She is guided by a deeply held morality and a willingness to help and support people, which will be sorely missed. It is testament to her professionalism and her careful supervision and nurturing, that she leaves behind an able and super-efficient administrative team and several hundred grateful DPU alumni, who continue to remember her care and attention on their arrival in London and the UK for the first time.

We wish her and Tom all the best and wonderful sailing in the next phase of their lives.

Caren Levy (DPU Director 2005 to date),
Babar Mumtaz (DPU Director 2003-05) and
Patrick Wakely (DPU Director 1989-2003)



Left: (From left to right) Michael Safier, Linda Bruch, Julian Walker, Nadia Taher & Pascale Hofmann.

Above right: Patrick Wakely, Linda Bruch & Caren Levy

New appointments

Dr. David Dodman

from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) has joined the DPU as a Teaching Fellow for the new module on “How Cities Can Adapt to Climate Change” (see David's piece on this new module in the Head On section)



Dr. Katherine Wellard Dyer

has joined the DPU as a teaching fellow for the module on “Social Development and Poverty Reduction”. She is a social development practitioner who has recently returned to the UK after living and working in Malawi.



Two new Postgraduate Teaching Assistants have joined the DPU staff. **Monika Jankauskaite** (an SDP graduate from 2007-2008) has joined as PGTA for the Social Development Practice course and **Virginia Stephens** has joined as PGTA for the Development Administration and Planning course. We are also pleased to welcome **Matthew Brown** and **Jolanta Skorecka** to the administration team.

Publications

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