



Monitoring the MDGs in Bogotá, Colombia

Monitoring the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at city level in Latin America entails defining various measurements for poverty. Such monitoring also calls for better ways of identifying the poor, and through best practices, identifying model ways of reducing urban poverty.

Since 1997, the Ibero-American and Caribbean Forum on Best Practices, with funding from the Government of Spain, has been working to analyze, document and disseminate regional best practices that have contributed to improving the quality of life in the region's cities. The regional initiative is part of UN-HABITAT's global Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme.

Since 2004, it has concentrated efforts to promote the sharing of experience and knowledge, and to stimulate horizontal cooperation among cities and their partners. It has already collected over 500 examples as part of a programme that is still ongoing.

Already, the programme with a budget of USD 108,640, has conducted a survey to better understand the problems facing cities in the region, and produced various publications in Spanish, Portuguese and English, and strengthened partnerships in the region.

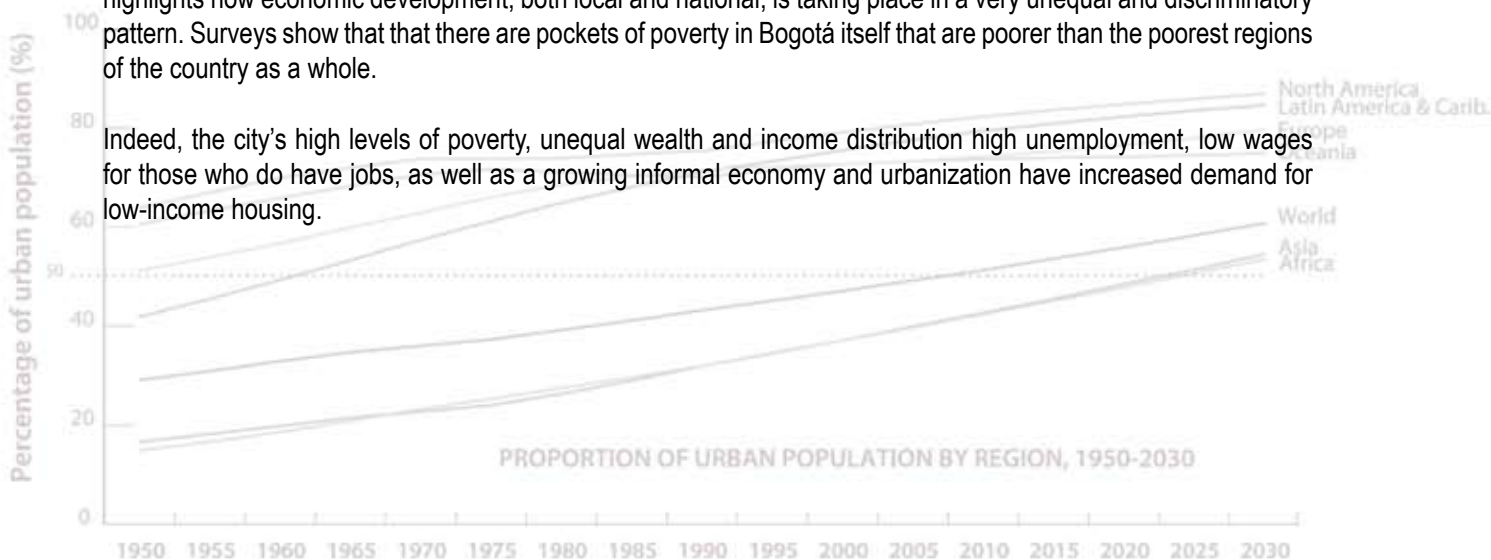
In Colombia, the Municipality of Cali, the local chamber of commerce, UN-HABITAT and the World Bank's Cities Alliance have teamed up in September 2004 on a one-year slum upgrading and land tenure regularization project. Scheduled for completion in October 2005, it aims to regularize land tenure for 6,000 slum dwellers and to support the Municipality of Cali in promoting and coordinating regularization of land tenure and slum upgrading programmes.

On monitoring the MDGs, the main instruments to address problems such as employment and uneven income distribution come under the remit of federal or national government, which, most of the time, acts with very little coordination with local authorities. However, this does not stand in the way of MDG monitoring in a city like Bogotá.

In a city with a total of population of seven million, over 50 percent of people are living in poverty, many of them in slums.

Recent data collected by UN-HABITAT in the Colombian capital shows that wealth is very unevenly distributed. This highlights how economic development, both local and national, is taking place in a very unequal and discriminatory pattern. Surveys show that there are pockets of poverty in Bogotá itself that are poorer than the poorest regions of the country as a whole.

Indeed, the city's high levels of poverty, unequal wealth and income distribution high unemployment, low wages for those who do have jobs, as well as a growing informal economy and urbanization have increased demand for low-income housing.



On the MDG water target, the Colombian authorities have already greatly improved water and sanitation infrastructures in urban areas. Urban Colombia had probably met the standards set under the Target 10 as early as 1993. Therefore, the new goal for the city is for current water and sanitation services to keep up with the accelerated pace of urbanization, as well as to extend coverage to the poorest sectors.

Despite the uphill struggle against urban poverty, monitoring progress on the goals in Bogotá has opened up a fresh dialogue in the sphere of human development.

This article is written by Fabio Giraldo, UN-HABITAT Programme Manager in Colombia for the Habitat Debate. Please feel free to publish or quote from this article provided UN-HABITAT is given credit¹. Suitable photographs are available on our website. For further information, please contact: Mr. Sharad Shankardass, Spokesperson, Ms. Zahra Hassan, Press & Media Liaison, Tel: (254 20) 7623153/7623151/7623136, Mobile: 254 733 760332: Fax: 254 20 7624060, E-mail: habitat.press@unhabitat.org, Website: www.unhabitat.org