



UN-HABITAT



GLOBAL REPORT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS 2007

ENHANCING **URBAN SAFETY AND SECURITY**

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

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FOREWORD

Over the past decade, the world has witnessed growing threats to the safety and security of cities and towns. Some have come in the form of catastrophic events, while others have been manifestations of poverty and inequality or of rapid and chaotic urbanization processes. This publication, *Enhancing Urban Safety and Security: Global Report on Human Settlements 2007*, addresses some of the most challenging threats to the safety and security of urban dwellers today.

As the report tells us, urban violence and crime are increasing worldwide, giving rise to widespread fear and driving away investment in many cities. This is especially true in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, where urban gang violence is on the rise. Recent widespread violence in the *banlieus* of Paris and throughout urban France, as well as terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid and London, have all demonstrated that cities within high-income countries are also vulnerable.

Large numbers of people in cities all over the world, including most of the 1 billion currently living in slums, have no security of tenure, while at least 2 million are forcibly evicted every year. Forced evictions predominantly affect those living in the worst housing conditions, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including women and children. Many such evictions are carried out in the name of urban redevelopment, with little regard for consequences among the poor, who are left without alternative shelter provisions. The resulting social exclusion swells the army of the poor and the angry.

As this report points out, there is a very real nexus between natural events and human safety and security. The vulnerability of cities is increasing due to climate change, which has accelerated extreme weather events and rising sea levels. At the same time, urban slums are expanding into areas vulnerable to floods, landslides, industrial pollution and other hazards.

The report highlights the key role urban planning and governance have to play in making our cities safe and secure for generations to come. Through its documentation of many successful experiences, it promotes learning and sharing of knowledge on urban safety and security. I commend it to all those interested in the health of cities around the world.



Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General
United Nations

INTRODUCTION

Enhancing Urban Safety and Security: Global Report on Human Settlements 2007 addresses three major threats to the safety and security of cities, which are: urban crime and violence; insecurity of tenure and forced evictions; and natural and human-made disasters. It analyses worldwide conditions and trends with respect to these threats and pays particular attention to their underlying causes and impacts, as well as to the good policies and best practices that have been adopted at the city, national and international levels. The report adopts a *human security* perspective, the concern of which is with the safety and security of people, rather than states, and highlights concerns that can be addressed through appropriate urban policy, planning, design and governance.

The report examines a broad spectrum of crime and violence, all of which are generally on the rise globally. Over the period 1980–2000, total recorded crime rates in the world increased by about 30 per cent, from 2300 to over 3000 crimes per 100,000 people. Over the past five years, 60 per cent of all urban residents in developing countries have been victims of crime. The report shows that while the incidence of terrorist-related violence is quantitatively smaller in relation to other types of violence, it has, however, significantly worsened the impacts of violence on cities in recent years. These impacts include: increased fear among urban residents; falling income resulting from the destruction or flight of businesses from affected areas; growth of the private security industry and of urban gated communities; and the diversion of development resources towards investment in public and private security. The report highlights several policy responses aimed at reducing crime and violence, ranging from effective urban planning, design and governance, through community-based approaches in which communities take ownership of the various crime and violence prevention initiatives, to reduction of risk factors by focusing on groups that are likely to be perpetrators of crime, such as the youth.

Turning to insecurity of tenure and forced evictions, the report estimates that at least 2 million people in the world are forcibly evicted every year. The most insecure urban residents are the world's 1 billion poor people living in slums. Incidents of forced eviction are often linked to bulldozing of slums and informal enterprises in developing countries, as well as to processes of gentrification, public infrastructure development, and urban redevelopment and beautification projects. The report emphasizes that forced evictions are most prevalent in areas with the worst housing conditions; that women, children and other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are most negatively affected by evictions; and that evictions invariably increase, rather than reduce, the problems that they aim to 'solve'. The report documents a number of recent policy responses to the threat of tenure insecurity, including, at the international level, legislation against forced evictions and secure tenure campaigns and, at the national level, policies on upgrading and regularization, titling and legalization, as well as improved land administration and registration.

With respect to disasters, which are increasing globally, the report shows that, between 1974 and 2003, 6367 natural disasters occurred globally, causing the death of 2 million people and affecting 5.1 billion people. A total of 182 million people were made homeless, while reported economic damage amounted to US\$1.38 trillion. The report also shows that the aggregate impact of small-scale hazards on urban dwellers can be considerable. For example, traffic accidents kill over 1.2 million people annually worldwide. Factors rendering cities particularly vulnerable include rapid and unplanned urbanization; concentration of economic wealth in cities; environmental modifications through human actions; expansion of slums (often into hazardous locations); and ineffective land-use planning and enforcement of building codes. An increasingly important factor is climate change. There has been a 50 per cent rise in extreme weather events associated with climate change from the 1950s to the 1990s, and major cities located in coastal areas are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise. Cities have been able to reduce disaster risk through, among other approaches, effective land-use planning and design of disaster-resistant buildings and infrastructure, improved risk mapping, institutional reform and training, establishment of effective communication and emergency response systems, as well as strengthening of reconstruction capacity. At the national level, governments are putting in place disaster risk reduction legislation, strengthening early warning systems, and instituting inclusive governance and planning in order to strengthen the resilience of cities and communities.

An important socio-economic determinant of vulnerability to the three threats to urban safety and security addressed in the report is poverty. The urban poor are more exposed to crime, forced evictions and natural hazards than the rich. They are more vulnerable to disasters than the rich because they are often located on sites prone to floods, landslides and pollution. The urban poor also have limited access to assets, thus limiting their ability to respond to hazards or manage risk, for example through insurance. Because the poor are politically powerless, it is unlikely that they will receive the necessary social services

following disasters. The report therefore highlights the need for policy responses that place people, poverty reduction and community participation at the centre. It is my belief that this report will significantly raise global awareness of the current threats to the safety and security of our cities and assist in the identification of appropriate policy responses at the urban, national and international levels.



Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka

Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director
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The preparation of this issue of the *Global Report on Human Settlements* is the result of the dedicated efforts of a wide range of urban researchers, practitioners and policy-makers. Their knowledge and expertise has been essential to the preparation of this and, indeed, also earlier issues in this biennial series. The current volume — which is concerned with urban security and safety, focusing on crime and violence; security of tenure and forced evictions; and natural and human-made disasters — reflects a fundamental commitment to the goals of sustainable and equitable development of human settlements, as outlined in the Habitat Agenda, the Millennium Declaration and in international law relevant to human settlements.

Enhancing Urban Safety and Security: Global Report on Human Settlements 2007 was prepared under the general guidance of two successive Directors of the Monitoring and Research Division, UN-Habitat, i.e. Don Okpala (till February 2006) and Banji Oyeyinka (from January 2007). Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza, Chief of the Policy Analysis, Synthesis and Dialogue Branch, UN-Habitat, supervised the preparation of the report, and was responsible for the substantive editing and drafting of parts of the two introductory chapters, as well as the overall editing of the report. Ben Arimah, Inge Jensen and Edlam Abera Yemeru (Human Settlements Officers, UN-Habitat) were responsible for the substantive editing and drafting of parts of the chapters on crime and violence; security of tenure; and natural and human-made disasters, respectively. They also reviewed and prepared summaries of the case studies contained in Part VI of the report.

The Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Dr. Anna K. Tibaijuka, and the following members of the UN-Habitat Senior Management Board provided strategic and substantive advice at different stages in the preparation of the report: Subramonia Ananthkrishnan, Nefise Bazoglu, Daniel Biau, Selman Ergüden, Lucia Kiwala, Frederico Neto, Toshiyasu Noda, Lars Reutersward and Farouk Tebbal.

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The report benefited substantially from the contributions of the members of the Advisory Board of the Global Research Network on Human Settlements (HS-Net). This network was established in 2004 with the primary objective of providing substantive guidance to the preparation of the Global Report series. The members of the Board who contributed to the preparation of the current report, through discussions at Board meetings and/or by providing extensive comments in writing on the first draft of the report itself were: Marisa Carmona, Department of Urbanism, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands; Nowarat Coowanitwong, School of Environment, Resources and Development, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand; Suocheng Dong, Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China; Alain Durand-Lasserve, Sociétés en Développement dans l'Espace et dans le Temps, Université Denis Diderot, Paris, France; József Hegedüs, Metropolitan Research Institute, Varoskutatás Kft, Budapest, Hungary; Paula Jiron, Housing Institute, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile; Vinay D. Lall, Society for Development Studies, New Delhi, India; José Luis Lezama de la Torre, Centro de Estudios Demográficos, Urbanos y Ambientales, Mexico City, Mexico; Om Prakash Mathur, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (IDFC), Delhi, India; Winnie Mitullah, Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Nairobi, Kenya; Peter Newman, Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy, Murdoch University, Australia; Peter Ngau, Department of Regional and Urban Planning, University of Nairobi, Kenya; Tumsifu Jonas Nnkya, Institute of Housing Studies and Building Research, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Carole Rakodi, International Development Department, University of Birmingham, UK; Gustavo Riofrio, Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo (DESCO), Lima, Peru; Nelson Saule, Instituto de Estudios Formacao e Assessoria em Políticas Sociais (POLIS), São Paulo, Brazil; Mona Serageldin, Centre for Urban Development Studies, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Massachusetts, US; Dina K. Shehayeb, Housing and Building National Research Centre, Cairo, Egypt; Richard Stren, Centre of Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, Canada; Luidmila Ya Tkachenko, Research and Project Institute of Moscow City Master Plan, Moscow, Russia; Willem K.T Van Vliet, College of Architecture and Planning, University of Colorado, Boulder, US; Vladimer Vardosanidze, Institute of Architecture, Tbilisi, Georgia; Patrick Wakely, Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College

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The Advisory Board met in September 2005 in New Delhi, India, to discuss a preliminary outline of the report and a background paper on current issues and trends in urban safety. At this stage, the focus of the report was confined to natural and human-made disasters. The Board met again in June 2006 in Vancouver, Canada, at which time it had been agreed to expand the focus of the report to include urban crime and violence as well as security of tenure and evictions. At this second meeting, the Board members discussed annotated outlines of the report's chapters.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
AGFE	Advisory Group on Forced Evictions
AIDS	acquired immuno-deficiency syndrome
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU\$	Australian dollars
AUDMP	Asian Urban Disaster Mitigation Programme
CBO	community-based organization
CCTV	closed circuit television camera
Cdn\$	Canadian dollar
CESCR	United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the 'Committee')
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
Committee, the	United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (unless explicitly stated otherwise)
Covenant, the	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (unless explicitly stated otherwise)
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CPTED	crime prevention through environmental design
CSI	Community Security Initiative (Jamaica)
CSJP	Citizens Security and Justice Programme (Jamaica)
CSP	Community Safety Plan (Canada)
DDMC	Dominican Disaster Mitigation Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DHS	Department of Homeland Security (US)
DMP	Disaster Management Plan (Mumbai)
DoE	UK Department of the Environment
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
EIA	environmental impact assessment
EM-DAT, CRED	Emergency Events Database, Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (University of Louvain, Belgium)
ERL	emergency recovery loan
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Administration (US)
FIA	Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile
FIG	International Federation of Surveyors
G8	Group of 8 industrialized nations: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK and the US
GCB	Global Corruption Barometer
GDP	gross domestic product
GHI	GeoHazards International
GIS	geographic information systems
GNP	gross national product
GRSP	Global Road Safety Partnership
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)
HDI	Human Development Index
HLP (rights)	housing, land and property (rights)

ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (the ‘Covenant’)
ICVS	International Crime Victimization Survey
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDP	internally displaced person
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IIMG	Interagency Incident Management Group (US)
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INS	incident of national significance
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPV	intimate partner violence
ISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
km	kilometre
km ²	square kilometre
KMA	Kingston Metropolitan Area (Jamaica)
LDSP	Lagos Drainage and Sanitation Project (Nigeria)
MADD	Mothers against Drunk Driving (US)
MANDISA	Monitoring, Mapping and Analysis of Disaster Incidents in South Africa
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEERP	Maharashtra Emergency Earthquake Rehabilitation Programme (India)
NDF	National Development Foundation (St Lucia)
NGO	non-governmental organization
NRP	National Response Plan
OAS	Organization of American States
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OCPI	Organized Crime Perception Index
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
P-GIS	participatory GIS
PIE	Prevention of Illegal Evictions from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (South Africa)
Pinheiro Principles	Principles on Housing and Property Restitution for Refugees and Displaced Persons
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMC	risk management committee
SEEDS	Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (India)
SERAC	Social and Economic Rights Action Center (Nigeria)
SEWA	Self-Employed Women’s Association (India)
SKAA	Sindh Katchi Abadis Authority (Pakistan)
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (<i>now</i> UN-Habitat)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (<i>formerly</i> UNCHS (Habitat))
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRP	United Nations Housing Rights Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drug and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNTFHS	United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
US	United States of America
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

KEY FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

INTRODUCTION

The theme of ‘urban safety and security’ encompasses a wide range of concerns and issues. These range from basic needs such as food, shelter and health, through impacts of natural disasters, such as those triggered by earthquakes and cyclones, to collective security needs, such as protection from urban terrorism or war. However, only a few of these concerns and issues can be addressed from a human settlements perspective through appropriate urban policy, planning, design and governance. *Enhancing Urban Safety and Security: Global Report on Human Settlements 2007* focuses on three major threats to the safety and security of cities: crime and violence; insecurity of tenure and forced eviction; and natural and human-made disasters.

Combined, these three threats to the safety and security of urban residents currently pose a huge challenge to both city and national governments, as well as to the international community. The report analyses worldwide trends with respect to urban crime and violence, security of tenure and forced eviction, and natural and human-made disasters. It pays particular attention to the underlying causes and impacts of these three threats to the safety and security of urban residents, as well as to the good policies and practices that have been adopted at the city, national and international levels in response to these threats.

The report places urban safety and security within the wider perspective of human security, which specifically focuses on the security of people rather than states and encompasses a wide range of biological, social, economic and political needs. It shows how poverty exacerbates the impacts on cities of the three threats to urban safety and security addressed in the report by influencing the levels of *vulnerability* and *resilience* of urban-poor communities.

The report illustrates how the poor are disproportionately victimized by the three threats to safety and security that it examines. The urban poor are generally more exposed to risky events (such as crime, forced eviction or disasters) than the rich, partly because of their geographical location within the city. The urban poor are more vulnerable to the outcomes of natural and human-made hazards than the rich because they are often located on sites prone to floods, landslides and pollution. The urban poor also have limited access to assets, thus limiting their ability to respond to hazards or to manage risk – for example, through insurance. Because the poor are politically powerless, it is unlikely that they will receive the social services that they need during disasters.

The report shows that the unequal distribution of risk and vulnerability is an important and growing component of daily urban life. It is often linked to the presence of millions of urban residents in slums, which are environments in which much crime and violence occur, where tenure is least secure, and which are prone to disasters of many kinds. These slums, which are presently home to about 1 billion urban dwellers worldwide, represent one part of what has been termed ‘the geography of misery’.

CRIME AND VIOLENCE

Key findings

Global trends indicate that crime rates have been on the increase. For instance, over the period of 1980 to 2000, total recorded crimes increased from 2300 to 3000 crimes for every 100,000 people. This trend is, however, not replicated in all regions of the world. In North America and Western Europe, total crime rates fell significantly over the two decades, whereas in Latin America and the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Africa, total crime rates increased.

Regional variations in crime and violence are more pronounced when specific types of crime are examined. In the case of homicides, which are indicative of violent contact crimes, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean report double-digit figures, while significantly lower rates are reported for Southeast Asia, Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean and the West Pacific region. At the national level, Colombia, South Africa, Jamaica, Guatemala and Venezuela have very high homicide rates, while Japan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Spain, Cyprus and Norway have considerably low rates.

Crime and violence are typically more severe in urban areas and are compounded by their rapid growth. A recent study has shown that 60 per cent of urban dwellers in developing and transitional countries have been victims of crime, over a five-year period, with victimization rates reaching 70 per cent in parts of LAC and Africa. In Latin America, where 80 per cent of the population is urban, the rapidly expanding metropolitan areas of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Mexico City and Caracas account for over half of the violent crimes in their respective countries. The homicide rate in Rio de Janeiro has tripled since the 1970s, while the rate in São Paulo has quadrupled. In the Caribbean, Kingston, Jamaica’s capital, consistently accounts for the vast majority of the nation’s murders.

In Africa, cities such as Lagos, Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Nairobi account for a sizeable proportion of their nation's crime. Urban areas in Africa also have the highest reported levels of burglary, with victimization rates of over 8 per cent of the population. Although a non-violent crime, burglary is a serious offence in developing regions such as Africa. Here, burglary tends to be partly motivated by poverty, even though material possessions are fewer.

Robbery also poses a major threat to urban areas in many developing countries. This is because it not only results in injury and property loss, but also increases the general fear of crime and feeling of insecurity. In South Africa, the police in 2000 recorded 460 robberies for every 100,000 people, with 30 per cent of residents in Johannesburg reporting to have been victims of robbery. Regionally, the victimization rates for robbery are much higher in Latin America and Africa than in other regions of the world.

The fear of crime and violence is pervasive in both developed and developing countries. Public opinion surveys in the US and the UK repeatedly show that people rank crime among the top concerns they have in everyday life. In Nairobi, more than half of the citizens worry about crime all the time or very often. Likewise, in Lagos, 70 per cent of respondents in a city-wide survey were fearful of being victims of crime, with 90 per cent being fearful of the prospects of being killed in a criminal attack.

In addition to the above, residents of cities in developing, transitional and developed countries have to contend with increasing levels of domestic violence, child abuse, proliferation of youth gangs, corruption and various forms of organized crime.

Cities are increasingly becoming targets of terrorist attacks. Notable examples include the attack on the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001, the coordinated bombings of Madrid in March 2004, the London bombings of July 2005, and the bombing of commuter trains in Mumbai in July 2006. This Global Report notes that the incidence of terrorist attacks is significantly small in comparison to common crime and other types of violence. For example, the US National Counterterrorism Center reported 13 terrorist incidents in the US between February 2004 and May 2005 and, for approximately the same period, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) identified 10.32 million property crimes and over 1.36 million violent crimes. However, the impacts of terrorism on cities have been enormous. For example, the attack on New York left about 3500 people dead. It also resulted in the destruction or damage of about 2.8 million square metres of office space in Lower Manhattan and damaged the Port Authority Trans-Hudson train station at the World Trade Center.

A multiplicity of factors underlies the observed trends in crime and violence. These include social and cultural factors that might exacerbate or mediate crime. For instance, in cities such as Kabul, Karachi and Managua, violence is so interwoven into the fabric of daily life that it has become the norm for many slum dwellers. On the other hand, in Hong Kong and other parts of East and Southeast Asia, Confucianism-based family values and a generally compliant

'pro-social' population are major factors in keeping crime and violence low. Other factors associated with urban crime and violence include poverty; unemployment; inequality; inter-generational transmission of violence as reflected in the continuous witnessing of parental abuse during childhood; the rapid pace of urbanization; poor urban planning, design and management; growth in youthful population; and the concentration of political power, which facilitates corruption.

The impacts of crime and violence are multidimensional. Apart from injury and death, victims of crime and violence suffer long-lasting psychological trauma and continuously live with the fear of crime. At the national level, crime and violence are impediments to foreign investment, contribute to capital flight and brain drain, and hinder international tourism. In Jamaica, for instance, high levels of homicide have adversely affected tourism and contributed to brain drain. At the local level, crime and violence result in the stigmatization of neighbourhoods or even entire sections of the city. Such areas become 'no-go' zones and eventually lose out in terms of investment or provision of infrastructure and public services.

Key messages

Policies designed to reduce crime and violence fall into several broad categories. At the local level, these include effective urban planning, design and governance; community-based approaches, in which communities take ownership of the various initiatives; reduction of risk factors by focusing on groups that are likely to be perpetrators and victims of crime; and strengthening of social capital through initiatives that seek to develop the ability of individuals and communities to respond to problems of crime and violence. The combination of several of these approaches – all of which are specially suitable for implementation at the local level into a systematic programme, driven by a broad strategy and based upon a careful understanding of the local context – seems more likely to succeed than the *ad hoc* application of individual initiatives.

The preferred mechanism for supporting such a broad-based approach is usually the partnership mechanism. Local authorities can play an important role in organizing such partnerships, while central governments provide the resources, enabling environment and necessary policy framework. The best institutional structures for implementing such programmes are likely to be those that succeed in getting the key players involved in ways that commit them to the programme. Local authorities will often be the most appropriate leaders of such structures. Local communities need to be as fully involved as possible in these processes, not only in terms of consultation, but also as generators and implementers of such initiatives.

At the national level, there is a need to strengthen the formal criminal justice and policing systems. It is important that the police and the criminal justice systems are 'fit for purpose' in the modern world and are seen as key contributors to the fight against crime. A vital issue is the need for public confidence that the police and criminal justice

systems will play their part in this process effectively, and where this is not the case, the problems that give rise to this lack of confidence need to be vigorously addressed. Key elements of such action will include the active participation of senior managers in police and criminal justice organizations, resources and political support, and a willingness to try new approaches where existing approaches are not working.

Programmes aimed at strengthening the police, particularly in developing countries, should also address their welfare and poor conditions of service. In many African countries, the police earn a pittance and often lack the necessary resources and equipment to perform their duties. In countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa and Kenya, members of the police force have not been spared from the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Furthermore, the living conditions in most of the existing police accommodation are appalling.

Prison reforms are one of the key policy areas through which central governments can contribute to tackling crime. By improving prison conditions and placing more emphasis on rehabilitation, the situation where prisons become finishing schools or ‘universities’ for criminals can be prevented. It is possible for re-offending, or recidivism, rates to be significantly reduced as a consequence of greater emphasis on rehabilitation. This will have a beneficial impact on crime because a high proportion is committed by previous offenders.

Support at the international level can help cities, particularly in developing and transitional countries, to improve their ability to implement measures effectively that address crime and violence. Such direct assistance should be part of a package that also includes continuing and strengthening international cooperation in tackling various types of organized crime, such as trafficking of drugs, arms and people – all of which have international dimensions. There are several examples of international support that have been of immense importance to particular cities. For example, assistance from the US has been a key factor in recent efforts at tackling crime and violence in Kingston (Jamaica). Likewise, Canada, The Netherlands and Sweden have contributed to Safer Cities projects in several African cities.

One particular type of international support that can be very helpful is in the field of training and staff development. There are already several examples of this practice. As part of its support for the reform of the Jamaica Constabulary Force since 2000, the UK government has been providing financial resources to support international police officers working alongside Jamaica’s force in addressing crime. This has included Metropolitan Police officers working directly with their Jamaican counterparts, as well as training being offered by the Metropolitan Police to the Jamaica Constabulary Force.

SECURITY OF TENURE AND FORCED EVICTIONS

Key findings

More than 150 countries have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Governments in all of these countries are legally obliged to collect data and report on the scale and scope of tenure insecurity, forced evictions and homelessness (among other issues) in their countries. Despite this, there is a glaring lack of comprehensive and comparative data on security of tenure and forced evictions, both globally and within most countries.

In the absence of such data, perhaps the best indicator on the scale of urban tenure insecurity is the extent of informal settlements and other slums. Insecure tenure is, in fact, used as one of the indicators defining what constitutes a slum. Today, there are about 1 billion slum dwellers in the world. The vast majority of these, more than 930 million, are living in developing countries, where they constitute 42 per cent of the urban population. In the urban areas of the least developed countries, slum dwellers account for 78 per cent of the population. The proportion of slum dwellers is particularly high in sub-Saharan Africa (72 per cent of the urban population) and in Southern Asia (59 per cent).

The most visible outcome of tenure insecurity is the practice of forced evictions. Based on incidents reported to an international non-governmental organization (NGO) in a limited number of countries, at least 2 million people in the world are forcibly evicted every year. The actual figure is probably significantly higher. In addition, every year, several million people are threatened by forced evictions.

In Nigeria alone, an estimated 2 million people have been forcibly evicted from their homes since 2000. In Zimbabwe, an estimated 750,000 people were evicted in 2005 alone. In China, during the 2001 to 2008 period, it is estimated that 1.7 million people are directly affected by demolitions and relocations related to the Beijing Olympic Games. Evictions are not only found in developing countries, however. Each year, 25,000 evictions, on average, are carried out in New York City alone.

The main causes of large-scale forced evictions are public infrastructure development, international mega events (including global conferences and international sporting events, such as the Olympic Games) and urban beautification projects. Often, such evictions are undertaken with bulldozers, supported by heavy police presence, and the targets of such forced evictions are nearly always the residents of poor informal settlements or slums.

In addition to the millions of people subjected to forced evictions, perhaps an even higher number of people are subject to market-based evictions. This is a phenomenon directly linked to increased globalization and commercialization of land and housing. Through a process commonly known as gentrification, individuals, households or even whole neighbourhoods – most of them urban poor – are forced out of their homes, due primarily to their inability to pay higher rents.

Security of tenure is not necessarily related to specific tenure types. Tenure security is also related to a number of other cultural, social, political and economic factors and processes. A whole range of tenure types may thus offer security of tenure to urban dwellers. Even residents with title deeds living on freehold land may be evicted by the state in legitimate (and sometimes less legitimate) cases of expropriation or compulsory acquisition for the 'common good'.

As noted above, evictions are most prevalent in areas with the worst housing conditions. Furthermore, when evictions do occur, it is always the poor who are evicted. Furthermore, women, children, ethnic and other minorities, and other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are most negatively affected by evictions. Invariably, evictions increase, rather than reduce, the problems they were aimed at 'solving'.

Just as particular groups are more exposed to tenure insecurity, particular events are also major factors affecting tenure security. Natural and human-made disasters, as well as armed conflict and civil strife, are major factors threatening the security of tenure of a large number of people every year. The groups most vulnerable to tenure insecurity in the aftermath of such events are, again, the poor, women, children, ethnic and other minorities, and other vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

Lack of security of tenure is not only a problem in itself. It is part of a vicious cycle since it is often accompanied by poor or deteriorating dwellings and infrastructure, which, in turn, may lead to increased exposure to crime and violence, as well as to natural and human-made disasters.

Key messages

When evictions are being considered, it is essential that all alternatives to evictions are considered – in collaboration with the potential evictees themselves – before an eviction takes place. When evictions are unavoidable (e.g. in the case of non-payment of rent), such evictions should only be carried out in accordance with the law, and such evictions should never result in individuals being rendered homeless or vulnerable to the violation of other human rights. Under no circumstance should evictions be undertaken without acceptable relocation sites being identified in close cooperation with the evictees.

Interventions addressing the issue of security of tenure should always ensure that the requirements of all groups are adequately addressed. In essence, it is essential to prevent any detrimental discrimination with respect to housing, land and property. For example, land titles should be issued equally to both men and women. Similarly, slum upgrading programmes should consult with and consider the needs of both 'owners', tenants and sub-tenants.

When developing housing and urban policies, it is essential that governments adopt a framework based on housing, land and property rights, as elaborated in international law. Such a framework should take cognisance of the fact that there is a whole range of tenure types which may offer increased security of tenure to the urban poor. In some

cases, perceived security of tenure may even be improved simply through the provision of basic services and infrastructure. Perhaps the most important component of improving the security of tenure in informal settlements and slums is that governments at all levels should accept the residents of such settlements as equal citizens, with the same rights and responsibilities as other urban dwellers.

It is essential that states fulfil their obligations under international law with respect to the collection and dissemination of information regarding the scale and scope of tenure insecurity, forced evictions and homelessness. Without the timely collection of such data, it is, in effect, impossible for governments to verify whether they are contributing effectively to the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing according to their obligations as defined in the ICESCR.

Under international law, forced evictions are regarded as *prima facie* violations of human rights. Despite this, the vast majority of forced evictions carried out in the world are in breach of international law. A global moratorium on forced evictions could be an effective first step towards addressing this recurrent violation of human rights.

Application of international criminal law to violations of housing, land and property rights is also necessary. If such rights are to be taken seriously, there should be strong legal grounds on which to discourage the impunity almost invariably enjoyed by violators of these rights. All of those who advocate ethnic cleansing, those who sanction violent and illegal forced evictions, those who call for laws and policies that clearly result in homelessness, or those who fail to end systematic discrimination against women in the land and housing sphere – and all of those promoting such violations – should be held accountable.

NATURAL AND HUMAN-MADE DISASTERS

Key findings

Between 1974 and 2003, 6367 natural disasters occurred globally, causing the death of 2 million people and affecting 5.1 billion people. A total of 182 million people were made homeless, while reported economic damage amounted to US\$1.38 trillion. Since 1975, the number of natural disasters recorded globally has increased dramatically (fourfold), especially in Africa. An even higher tenfold increase in the incidence of human-made disasters has been observed between 1976 and 2000. Between 2000 and 2005, average mortality from human-made disasters was lower (30 per cent) than deaths caused by natural disasters (225 per cent). A total of 98 per cent of the 211 million people affected by natural disasters annually from 1991 to 2000 were in developing countries.

The catastrophic impact of disasters on individuals has been illustrated in recent years by the toll of death (220,000 people) and homelessness (1.5 million) from the Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004 and the Pakistan earthquake of October 2005, which killed 86,000 people and left millions homeless. Moreover, losses during disaster and

reconstruction deepen existing socio-economic inequalities, thus creating vicious cycles of loss and vulnerability. Especially in poorer countries, women and children tend to be most affected by disasters, as observed in the aftermath of the 2005 Indian Ocean Tsunami. The elderly and those with disabilities are often among the most vulnerable to natural and human-made hazards.

Economic losses associated with disasters have increased fourteen-fold since the 1950s and, during the last decade alone, disasters caused damage worth US\$67 billion per year, on average. Wealthier countries incur higher economic costs due to disasters, while poorer countries face greater loss of human life. By destroying critical urban infrastructure, disasters can set back development gains and undermine progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Cities connected to regional or global financial systems have the potential to spread the negative consequences of disaster across the global economy, with huge systemic loss effects.

Large and megacities magnify risk since they concentrate human, physical and financial capital and are frequently also cultural and political centres. The potential for feedback between natural and human-made hazards in large cities presents a scenario for disaster on an unprecedented scale. Large urban economies that have sizeable foreign currency reserves, high proportions of insured assets, comprehensive social services and diversified production are more likely to absorb and spread the economic burden of disaster impacts. Smaller cities (less than 500,000 residents) that are home to over half of the world's urban population are also exposed to multiple risks, but often have less resilience against the economic consequences of disasters.

There has been a 50 per cent rise in extreme weather events associated with climate change from the 1950s to the 1990s, and the location of major urban centres in coastal areas exposed to hydro-meteorological hazards is a significant risk factor: 21 of the 33 cities which are projected to have a population of 8 million or more by 2015 are located in vulnerable coastal zones and are increasingly vulnerable to sea-level rise. Around 40 per cent of the world's population lives less than 100 kilometres from the coast within reach of severe coastal storms. In effect, close to 100 million people around the world live less than 1 metre above sea level. Thus, if sea levels rise by just 1 metre, many coastal megacities with populations of more than 10 million, such as Rio de Janeiro, New York, Mumbai, Dhaka, Tokyo, Lagos and Cairo, will be under threat.

Additional factors rendering cities particularly vulnerable include rapid and chaotic urbanization; the concentration of economic wealth in cities; environmental modifications through human actions; the expansion of slums (often into hazardous locations); and the failure of urban authorities to enforce building codes and land-use planning. The urban landscape, which is characterized by close proximity of residential, commercial and industrial land uses, generates new cocktails of hazard that require multi-risk management. The rapid supply of housing to meet rising demand without compliance with safe building codes is a principal cause of disaster loss in urban areas. Lack of

resources and human skills – compounded by institutional cultures that allow corruption – distort regulation and enforcement of building codes.

Small-scale hazards, while less dramatic than major hazards, have serious aggregate impacts. This is illustrated by the incidence and impacts of road traffic accidents, which result in more deaths worldwide each year than any large natural or human-made disaster type. Traffic accidents cause extensive loss of human lives and livelihoods in urban areas, killing over 1 million people globally every year. At least 90 per cent of the deaths from traffic accidents occur in low- and middle-income countries. Young males and unprotected road users are particularly vulnerable to injury or death from traffic accidents. Traffic accidents cause substantial economic costs, amounting to an estimated US\$518 billion worldwide every year. If no action is taken, traffic injuries are expected to become the third major cause of disease and injury in the world by 2020.

Key messages

Land-use planning is a particularly effective instrument that city authorities can employ to reduce disaster risk by regulating the expansion of human settlements and infrastructure. Evidence-based land-use planning at the city level requires accurate and up-to-date data. Technological innovation can help to fill part of this gap; but the global proliferation of slums also calls for more innovative and participatory land-use planning procedures.

The design of disaster-resistant buildings and infrastructure can save many lives and assets in urban areas from natural and human-made disasters. The technological and engineering expertise to achieve this is available; but implementation is a major challenge. Interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral training, research and partnerships, especially with the private sector, can enhance implementation capacity at the city level. Interaction between different practitioners is essential to avoid professional separation and to foster the integration of risk reduction within urban development and planning efforts. Governance systems that facilitate local participation and decentralized leadership are more effective, especially in the context of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization where capacities for oversight and enforcement are limited.

Governments need to improve risk, hazard and vulnerability assessment and monitoring capacity through increased investment, with support from the international community, where necessary. In addition to informing policy formulation, assessment data should feed into national initiatives that aim to build a culture of awareness and safety through public education and information programmes. Furthermore, risk knowledge should be communicated to relevant actors through effective early warning systems in order to enable timely and adequate responses to disasters.

It is especially important that disaster risk reduction is mainstreamed within national development and poverty reduction policies and planning. Examples of disaster risk reduction strategies that have been designed purposely to contribute to meeting individual MDG targets are available

worldwide. National initiatives should move from managing risk through emergency relief and response towards a more proactive pre-disaster orientation.

Greater partnership between humanitarian and development actors is required during reconstruction in order to reconcile demands for rapid provision of basic services against the more time-consuming aim of 'building back better'. Clear legislative and budgetary frameworks should also be in place to avoid uncoordinated and fragmented reconstruction activities by city governments, local actors, donors and humanitarian agencies.

Drawing on existing international frameworks for disaster risk reduction (e.g. the Hyogo Framework for Action, 2005–2015), national governments should continue putting in place disaster risk reduction legislation and policy; strengthening early warning systems; incorporating disaster risk education within national education curricula; and instituting inclusive and participatory governance and

planning in order to strengthen the resilience of cities and communities.

International frameworks are important in focusing the attention of multilateral and bilateral donors, as well as international civil society actors, towards disaster risk reduction. They can also facilitate advocacy and guide the development of disaster risk reduction strategies at national and city levels, including through internationally coordinated early warning systems for hazards such as cyclones and tsunamis.

Furthermore, many governments – especially in developing countries – require assistance from the international community in the form of finance, data and information, and technical expertise to establish or improve their disaster risk reduction systems. International assistance for disaster risk reduction should not focus on recovery and reconstruction efforts alone, but also on longer-term development objectives.