



Alleviation of Poverty; the Role of Surveyors, Land Economists and Related Professions

21-24 April 2004, Chelmsford, UK

AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

To exchange ideas and experiences on the role of surveyors, land economists and related professions in the generation of economic activity, sustainability, and the economical use of resources, contributing to the alleviation of poverty. To consider the education and Life Long Learning of Geomatics Surveyors, Land Managers, Planning and Development Surveyors, Quantity Surveyors, Valuers, Building Surveyors, Construction Managers, Estate Managers, Facilities Managers and related professions.

FEATURING

- a Competition for Young Surveyors (aged 35 or under)
- bursaries to provide assistance to Young Surveyors
- exhibition of surveying technologies

CONFERENCE REPORT

SURVEYORS AND LAND ECONOMISTS focused on the role they can play in helping to fulfil the United Nations' Millennium Goals relating to:

- **reduction of poverty**
- **gender equality**
- **sustainable development**
- **necessary partnerships**

The conference attracted attendance from 13 countries in the Commonwealth drawn from five continents. 25 refereed papers were presented, and three workshops concentrated on the principal topics. To see the full programme of presentations and those abstracts and papers available online from the CASLE website.

The High Commissioner for Kenya, HE Mr Joseph Muchemi, spoke at the Opening Ceremony, and referred to the basic roles encompassed in the 'logo wheel'. Without land information systems based on accurate survey little of worthwhile effect would be achieved, and it was significant that **CASLE and UN-Habitat** working together had been mandated to work towards the development of **innovative land tenures and pro-poor affordable land management systems**. The problem of slum settlements had to be tackled including re-location provided the criteria for **sustainable development** could be met - the key word was implementation within national, regional and local policies. **Construction economics** and the working of **property markets** were all part of the expertise of the surveying profession. Particular emphasis was placed on **education for all ages and capacity building**.

The conference was formally opened by Baroness Flather, who stressed the need for **gender equality and empowerment for women** (the third Millennium goal).

THE 'CITIES WITHOUT SLUMS' ACTION PLAN was considered in detail by Dr. Clifford Dann (UK), who referred to the World Bank proposal that **Secure Tenure** be used as a key indicator to measure progress, and the frightening projections resulting from the official assertion that **the daily increase of people living in cities and towns is 180,000**. Dr Dann claimed that the only way to achieve alleviation of poverty was through planned sustainable development with an efficient, reliable and enforceable land tenure system. After considering the various types of tenure and the degrees of security for loan purposes, two case studies were referred to: the origin and evolution of the **New Towns movement** in the United Kingdom, and municipal **schemes of rehabilitation including title to the woman of the household** in Managua.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NIGERIA was considered by Mr Olugbenga Nubi, who regarded housing production as a panacea. Nigeria has a deficit of 8 million housing units. Urban dwellers spend 40-60% of income on rent, reducing spendable income and aggravating poverty - the assessment variables are mostly housing related, e.g. access to water, electricity, health and occupancy ratio. Mr Nubi called for co-operative housing schemes, loans to establish cottage industries for local building materials, and the establishment of a sustainable finance system. These were all activities in which surveyors could play their part. The solution lay in programmes which would result in the building of 8 million new dwelling units.

Faoziah Gamu, also from Nigeria, advocated **women's access to opportunities** enabling them to own their homes.

Spike Boydell, University of the South Pacific, Fiji, investigated the challenges confronting **poverty alleviation** and **sustainable development** against a backdrop of vulnerability. He referred to the particular situation in the Pacific, where there are 22 nations, and to the wide scope of opportunities for **surveyors, land economists** and related professions in supporting sustainable community lifestyles. The profession had not embraced the opportunities. A recent World Bank report regretted that there had been too little attention paid to the importance of land rights for **empowering the poor** and improving **local governance**, to the gender and equity aspects associated with land, and to the marginal areas at the interface between urban and rural areas. Greater attention is needed to legitimacy and legality of existing institutional arrangements, governance, conflict resolution and corruption. Too few members of the **surveying and land economy professions** had been represented on the development agenda. Mr Boydell identified specific steps that need to be taken to:

- propagate the value of surveying and land economy skills
- draw attention to the considerable manpower requirement of these skills,

especially in land economy

- provide the educational facilities needed to expedite recruitment
- ensure adequate practical training to complement academic education
- provide a means of continuing professional development
- strengthen the organisation of the profession in each country, so enabling it to make its contribution to policy making in matters relating to land.

Willing and able individual **surveyors and land economists** need strong institutional support, and **CASLE** has a significant role as catalyst.

Professor Dr Richard Bullard, Anglia Polytechnic University UK, identified sustained economic growth as the means for **alleviation of poverty**, and called for macro-economic measures as well as increased private investment. Income generating agencies are a source of additional and alternative income for the ultra poor, especially women. An exclusive focus on micro-credit should be replaced by expansion of other support measures. **Land reform policies** that ensure secure, safe, affordable and guaranteed access to land for the poor are a significant factor in achieving property reduction.

Spatial data information (SDI) and relevance to **poverty alleviation** formed the basis of a paper by Clare Hadley of Ordnance Survey (Great Britain). Spatial data goes far beyond geographical matters, and includes data such as electoral registers, census data, property prices - in fact anything which is located in some way to a grid reference, an address or an area. The concept of an **information infrastructure** is helpful to understand how critical accurate, reliable, up to date and consistent information is in any kind of decision-making or planning. Progress is being made in many of the developing countries, and an example in Kenya was referred to - the setting up of a computerised **Land Information Service** by Nyahururu Municipal Council. There is now a Permanent Committee for spatial data in Africa, promoting a wide range of services in which surveyors have an essential part to play. Professionals concerned with land and property can make an informed response to SDI, and so use it to move forward in advising on schemes designed to alleviate poverty and achieving the many potential benefits.

THE CADASTRAL SYSTEM as a tool in poverty alleviation was the subject of a paper by Mr Eugene Silayo, University College of Lands and Architectural Studies, Tanzania. The surveyor's contribution is a prerequisite for proper land use planning, land recording, titling, development, environmental management, and control of land development. Mr Silayo advocated a simple, fast and affordable cadastral programme for informal settlements, which would:

- bring land and properties into the register
- create security of tenure
- provide information about property values and ownership

- act as collateral for investment funding
- create socio-economic cohesion among landowners

POVERTY IN RURAL AREAS in Zanzibar was examined by Mohammed Haji Ali, who considered that land registration is a key factor in the fight against widespread poverty. The process of sporadic registration needs to be streamlined. Any land registration programme must go hand in hand with complementary arrangements for credit facilities, extension services, creation of proper market institutions and infrastructure, in order to attain the fundamental objective of **poverty reduction**.

Mr Noble Hemuka of Enugu State University of Science and Technology referred to **URBAN SLUMS** as a common feature in the Nigerian environmental landscape. The Government has taken bold steps and actions aimed at solving the urban problems, but there is a serious lack of implementation. Professionals have a major part to play in helping to take the initiatives forward.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) was the subject of a presentation by Mr David Omulo, an undergraduate in the Department of Land Economics, University of Nairobi. Such studies were essential in the achievement of **sustainable development**, and they helped towards the alleviation of poverty by:

- ensuring that social benefits outweigh social cost
- utilising available resources for the benefit of future generations
- providing pointers to project cost-saving.

Professor Pantaleo Rwelamila outlined the challenges to surveyors and land economists in **INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**, and the need for innovation in project finance. Much could be achieved through **public/private partnerships (PPPs)**, and members of the profession need to recognise practical principles, the potential for change, identifying poverty-focused projects and spending time personally in the field. One lesson of experience in desperate poor-areas development is that many successes start small and slowly and evolve through participation and mutual learning, with and by committed surveyors and land economists.

This subject was further considered by Professor Alan Spedding, University of the West of England, whose paper dealt with **financing long-term social projects**, the data gap and life-cycle costing. Surveyors in the construction field were well equipped with the skills needed in all aspects, and lack of maintenance of buildings was less likely to occur if future costs were properly assessed.

THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY as a vital part of a country's overall national economy was highlighted by Mr Joseph Segun Ajanlekoko, President of the Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors. He referred to the need to stabilise the fluctuation in the demand of construction outputs, and advocated the setting up of a **National Bank for Construction Development**, in order to ensure availability of funds when required at consistent and justifiable rates of interest.

Workshops were conducted on sustainable **housing policies** in relation to upgrading or replacing informal settlements, the extension of **cadastral systems**, the establishment of a **construction development bank**, the interaction and impacts on the **real estate market** arising from conflicts, and the furtherance of **education** for the profession and for capacity building.

The resolutions and action plans resulting from these workshops will be posted on this web site in the near future.

PANEL OF REFEREES FOR CONFERENCE PAPERS

Professor Alec McEwen, University of Calgary, Canada
Professor Peter Dale, University College, London
Professor Philip White, University of British Columbia, Canada
Professor George Henderson, Henderson Associates, UK
Professor Rodney Harber, University of Natal, South Africa
Professor William Seabrooke, Polytechnic University of Hong Kong
Associate Professor Peter Stewart, RMIT, Melbourne, Australia
Professor Dr Razali Bin Abdul Hamid, University of Technology, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Professor Dr Alan Spedding, Convenor