

# Origin of the People's Process

During the early 1980s, UN-Habitat worked with the Government of Sri Lanka to pioneer a community engagement philosophy that placed the communities at the heart of their own development – this philosophy would later become the cornerstone of UN-Habitat's community development programmes in urban and rural environments.

During that time, the municipality of Colombo integrated the People's Process into its own development agenda and operationalized over 1500 Community Development Committees (CDCs) to work with local government for implementation of a large-scale housing programme. This was the first example of the People's Process being adopted by government.

## Fundamental principles

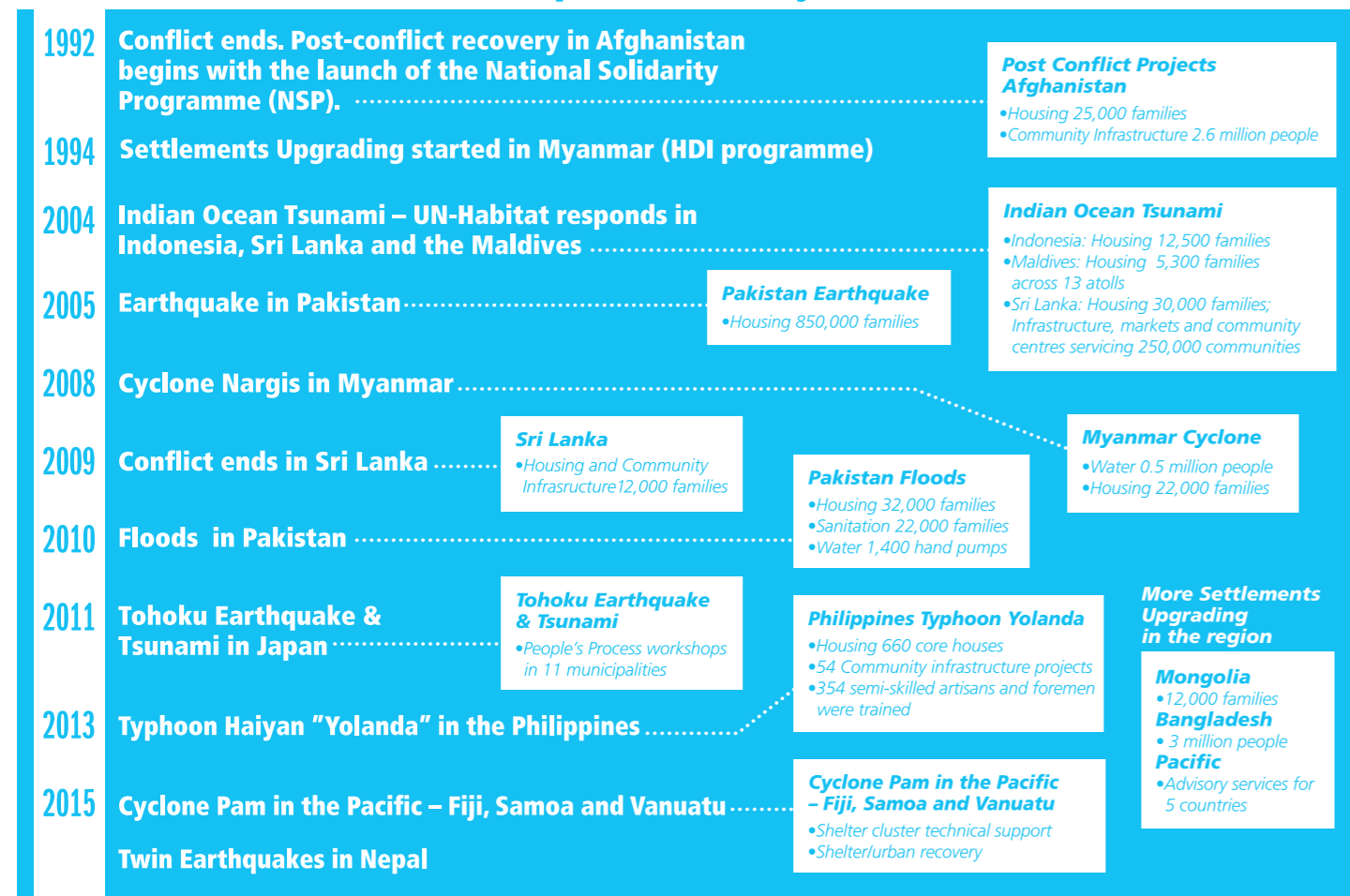
The People's Process brings about a paradigm shift moving from a model of control by authorities to one of support to people – this is done through a participatory community development methodology built around 5 steps



## Multiple spillover effects

The People's Process achieves sustainability by combining technology with local knowledge: Moreover interventions are cheaper (approximately 30% more value for money), enhances the local economy, unlocks potential for local entrepreneurial opportunities, and national constructions standards are familiarized to local artisans through training. The approach also ensures human rights through inclusivity and sustainability through a low environmental footprint.

## Timeline : UN-Habitat in response to major events & critical issues



# 35 YEARS OF PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT

The People's Process: From Grassroots to Governance



Representatives of a Community Development Committee (CDC) that worked to develop and construct the first women's park in a province of Afghanistan. ©UN-Habitat Afghanistan

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# People's Process

A structural framework that places people's needs and their rights at the heart of urban development

## Generating revenue through land and property taxation

The Property Taxation Project is an innovative component of a larger Community-based municipal support programme being implemented in Afghanistan via the People's Process. The taxation project was designed to capacitate cities to manage expected & rapid urban growth for delivering public services by increasing municipal revenues through the Safayi tax on land and property. Through increasing the efficiency of the Safayi tax by streamlining all steps of the safayi system, including survey and registration of land and property, invoicing, tax collection, and accountable spending – the initiative has had spillover impacts such as improved land administration, increased tenure security, while stimulating local economic development. To date the surveying and registration of 33,108 properties is complete, which could generate municipal revenues of up to \$ 500,000 per annum.



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## Technical and coordination support for long term recovery

The 7.6M earthquake which struck Pakistan in 2005 left 3.5 million people homeless. The Government established the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) to coordinate the response - UN-Habitat made major contributions to this collaboration including, developing and publishing building standards, construction guidelines, and training curricula; supporting the launch of ERRA's public information campaign that helped individuals engaged in reconstruction on housing standards and safer housing reconstruction techniques; as well as assisting the Pakistani authorities on building inspections from early 2006 and assuming direct responsibility for housing inspections from 2008 onwards. UN-Habitat also provided a comprehensive Management Information System developed to strengthen decision making of all involved partners and facilitated the Pakistani Revenue Department in the swift and transparent acquisition of new land for rural families. By 2009 over 400,000 houses of the 436,300 destroyed houses were completed via the People's Process.



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## Upgrading informal settlements – A platform for the New Urban Agenda –



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A large-scale project on access to basic services and community infrastructure development for Ger-areas in Ulaanbaatar, allowed UN-Habitat to demonstrate viability of urban development, slum upgrading and community empowerment via the People's Process. The project became a model for Ger-area redevelopment in Ulaanbaatar and led to the city government and ADB providing resources for continued technical assistance via the People's Process for ongoing initiatives and programmes under the aegis of the Ulaanbaatar City Master plan 2030. The platform provided by delivery of urban basic services via the People's Process, paved the way for similar engagements with partners around diverse urban development issues such as affordable housing, health systems strengthening and small-medium enterprise (SME) sector development in the capital city.

## Fast-tracking earthquake recovery – pre- monsoon early-recovery shelters –

The intensity of Nepal's twin-earthquakes of 2015 brought about huge loss of life, massive economic and structural damages in both unplanned urban areas & rural areas. The Shelter, WASH and Early Recovery Clusters recognized that the most urgent demand of affected families was for safe and durable temporary shelters, particularly ahead of the monsoon season. To address this immediate need a total of 1,780 families in the five most-affected districts were provided temporary shelters through the People's Process. These shelters were built to last for at least two years and rental support was also provided to families residing in areas where the land for the construction was limited. The project was conducted in close coordination with the Government of Nepal, local NGOs and local communities, including social minorities and disadvantaged groups such as Dalits, single women, extremely poor people, families with sick or elderly people and ethnic minorities.



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## Urban poverty reduction – Rapid urbanization & informal settlements –

The Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction Project (UPPR) was designed to address the challenges of rapid urbanization in Bangladesh – and the huge proportions of the 50 million strong urban population (2015) living in slums and in extreme poverty. UPPR, implemented in partnership with the Government and UNDP, improved the livelihoods and socio- economic living conditions of 3 million urban poor and extremely poor people, particularly women and children in Bangladesh. The 5 year intervention from 2010-2015 was implemented through 2,600 CDCs created via the People's Process, covered 30 towns and influenced national and local urban poverty reduction and economic development policies.



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## Improving human security – Communities in extreme poverty, minorities and women –

Ethnic and minority communities in Chin, Kachin, Kaya and Shan states of Myanmar were provided with technical support for improved settlements and economic resilience via the People's Process. Shelter, access infrastructure, water & sanitation and hygiene education were combined with skills development, training and community saving schemes for restoration of livelihoods. The people's process placed these individuals at the heart of their own development empowering them and increasing their resilience as communities. The project supported 49,981 families, 256,083 individuals in 502 villages.



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## Working with low-income migrants and disaster affected communities – Community mortgage programme –

Rural-urban migration evidenced over the past decades in the Philippines, had led to serious housing issues for low-income and migrant workers, causing the government to launch a number of community-based housing programs to address the escalating urban housing problem of poor residents. The Community Mortgage Program designed in 1988 with UN-Habitat support provided low-interest loans to informal settlers in urban areas to enable them to acquire the land 'lot' they had been living on. A 'Social Housing and Finance Cooperation' was later established, primarily in support of urban poor communities, to address slum upgrading through the provision of 3 tiers of loans – loans for land acquisition, land development and housing. Given the prevalence of natural disasters, this initiative also began supporting poor communities with post-disaster shelter recovery support. For instance, UN-Habitat's post-Yolanda shelter recovery programme was implemented in partnership with this initiative and affected communities, via the People's Process.



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## The Indian Ocean Tsunami – Settlements recovery & local governance support –

In 2004 UN-Habitat became a leading partner of the Indonesian Government for post-tsunami reconstruction in Aceh and Nias. UN-Habitat's integrated settlement upgrading programme was implemented and provided support for over eight years, covering policy advice, coordination support, urban planning, housing reconstruction, reconstruction of basic services and capacity building of cities and districts in the management of basic services. The comprehensive programme of support was built on the foundation of the People's Process and played a fundamental role in laying the ground work for recovery and development by the national authorities.



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## Harmonizing urban infrastructure development with communities

Rapid industrialization over the past decades caused severe environmental problems in Colombo – one case in particular was the discharge of waste water to Lunawa Lake severely affecting the health of communities living in close proximity. The Lunawa Lake project - the first initiative of the Sri Lanka's National Involuntary Resettlement Policy - was designed for smooth involuntary resettlement of people living in affected areas through a well-structured participatory process. To facilitate the process, legal and institutional frameworks and CDCs were created in the resettlement zones, with affected community members playing a steering role in the resettlement process. All affected residents were offered an "entitlement package" with options to choose between settling in resettlement areas or self-relocation with technical assistance; further options were provided for families who were land-owners and for families without land-ownership. By 2009, over 99% of affected households had accepted a package and had not only become recipients of compensation but partners in the entire project implementation.



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INFLUENCING POLICY, PRACTICES & GOVERNANCE AT COMMUNITY, CITY AND NATIONAL LEVELS

The UN-Habitat strategy is to increasingly support the institutionalization & mainstreaming of the People's Process and expand the use of the approach to impact on municipal, provincial and national urban policies.

## INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Governments recognize the People's Process as a key modality and approach for sustainable development and post crisis recovery; and institutionalizes the key elements of Community Development Committees (CDCs), and the Community Contract within national policies and programmes.

● Afghanistan ● Myanmar ● Sri Lanka

## MAINSTREAMING

### 7 FOCUS AREAS

The People's Process contributes to multiple sectors through UN-Habitat's seven focus areas and four cross-cutting issues

- 1 Land, Legislation & Governance
- 2 Urban Planning and Design
- 3 Urban Economy
- 4 Urban Basic Services
- 5 Housing and Slum Upgrading
- 6 Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation
- 7 Research and Capacity Development

### CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

- A Human Rights
- B Climate Change
- C Gender
- D Youth

## COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Community ownership and engagement via participatory decision making has demonstrated un-paralleled success in raising human dignity, building social cohesion and trust amongst stakeholders, along with the ability to deliver massive operations within a relatively short timeframe. Ensuring accountability and transparency between communities and authorities; and the empowerment of communities contributes to the sustainability of the projects in the long run.