

## **Tool 1: Rapid City Diagnostic and Selection of Organizations Focused on the Urban Poor**

DIG developed the **Rapid City Diagnostic and Selection of Organizations Focused on the Urban Poor** to select target cities and potential local partner organizations under the Urbis program. While there is extensive demand for capacity building throughout the developing world, DIG has developed a selection criteria based not only on assessing needs but also concrete opportunities the urban poor can access through targeted support to pro-poor organizations. These opportunities could include subsidies, available government resources to local authorities, and government slum eradication projects such as Morocco's Cities without Slums program. The tool allows practitioners to examine the singular context of a city and local innovative pro-poor organizations to propose targeted capacity building activities. The tool also includes having the user analyze potential challenges and opportunities related to implementing capacity building activities in the selected city. The estimated timeframe needed to conduct the diagnostic is five days. A team of two people is recommended as the diagnostic entails meeting with a variety of stakeholders.

The Urbis program is a three-year global learning initiative launched in September 2007 and implemented by the Development Innovations Group (DIG). Urbis strengthens the capacity of urban pro-poor organizations to increase their influence over the decision-making and planning processes that affect the lives of the urban poor. The focus of Urbis includes advocacy, slum improvement, provision of basic services such as potable water and sanitation, land tenure regularization, and financing for the urban poor, all of which DIG's local partner organizations have identified as priorities of the urban poor. The program is currently being implemented in seven cities in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

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## Introduction

Development Innovations Group (DIG), Inc. is implementing the Urbis Program with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. DIG is a private, women-owned management and consulting firm dedicated to excellence in the fields of development finance and urban and community services. DIG's geographical focus includes Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. The organization is committed to expanding the frontiers of finance and development by working with partners to design and implement innovative, high-impact programs, and by helping poor families and entrepreneurs around the world increase their income and build their asset base.

### What is *URBIS*?

Urbis is a three-year learning initiative launched in September 2007 to strengthen organizations of the urban poor and increase their influence over the decision-making and planning processes that affect their daily lives. The program seeks to answer the following key questions:

- What types of institutions help the urban poor increase their ability to influence decision making and planning processes that affect them?
- What types of institutions respond more effectively to targeted capacity building initiatives?
- What types of capacity building initiatives are effective in helping these organizations improve their ability to serve their constituencies in a streamlined and cost-effective manner?
- What roles do demographic and political contexts play in the success of capacity building efforts targeting these organizations?
- What are the factors for scale and replication which enable Urbis to be taken to scale or replicated elsewhere?

By answering these questions, DIG will help practitioners in the field of urban poverty alleviation understand why some initiatives are more successful than others. We will do this by developing and testing methodologies that:

- Support the capacity and strategic growth of NGOs serving the urban poor, and
- Integrate the needs of the urban poor into planning and development processes.

DIG's vision for success of Urbis includes answering the questions above and strengthening the institutional capacity of community based organizations, their partnerships and their strategic planning capacity to better address the priority needs of the urban poor.

The Urbis Program is divided into three main phases of activities in the field: 1) Diagnostics of Potential Urbis Cities and Pro-Poor Organizations (PPO), 2) Design Phase of Programs for each of the selected Urbis Cities, and 3) Program Implementation. This Toolkit is designed to assist exclusively in the second phase of the Urbis program: Design Phase of Programs for each of the selected Urbis Cities.

## ***Toolkit Overview, Process and Outputs***

This toolkit is intended to be used as a tool in the Design Phase of Urbis programs in the selected Urbis cities. Through use of this toolkit important lessons will be learned and later versions will be developed that can be shared with implementing organizations and others working with similar objectives targeting the urban poor. Future versions will include examples based on Urbis field experience in the design and implementation phases. This current version relies heavily on the experience and skill of the Urbis Team to follow this general approach and actively monitor its implementation and provide feedback so that future versions will be more useful to the Urbis efforts.

Please pay special attention to Annex A: Urbis Capacity Building Plan template. This template serves as the repository for the main information gathered during this Program Design Phase of Urbis for each of the selected Urbis cities.

### ***Main Tasks Assisted by this Toolkit***

Use of this toolkit and the guidelines will assist Urbis staff to develop plans for increasing the capacity of pro-poor organizations to better address urban poverty issues and prepare Urbis to maximize learning from ongoing and new experiences.

The production of a Capacity Building Plan for the pro-poor organization(s) in the selected cities entails several steps, some of which may have already been taken by the pro-poor organization partners in some selected cities. Through the course of producing this Capacity Building Plan, the following activities should transpire (and/or already exist):

- Conduct Problem Analysis. Urbis staff will assist pro-poor organizations in identify-

ing the main urban challenges in each city. (Output: Problem Statements).

- Create Action Plan. Urbis staff will assist the pro-poor organizations to identify the most appropriate interventions to have a meaningful impact for a determined target population. (Output: Action Plan).
- Determine Capacity Building Needs, Technical Areas. Urbis staff and the pro-poor organizations will identify technical areas that need to be reinforced or developed in order for the pro-poor organizations to effectively carry-out their action plans. (Output: Technical Capacity Training Needs).
- Determine Capacity Building Needs, Organizational Areas. As necessary, Urbis staff and the pro-poor organizations will identify organizational limitations that inhibit the implementation of the technical interventions. (Output: Organizational Capacity Training Needs).

In relation to the overriding learning objectives of Urbis, the Urbis teams will be asked to formulate “working hypotheses” that correspond to each of the five (mentioned above) Urbis Key Learning Questions (refer back to the section “What is Urbis?” above).

The Urbis team will follow a conceptually simple approach during the design and implementation phases of Urbis by keeping the urban problem(s) to be addressed at the center of the programming effort. The nature and characteristics of the urban problem coupled with the capacities and priorities of the pro-poor organization will determine the capacity building activities of Urbis.

### ***Summary Comments Regarding Use of this Toolkit***

This toolkit provides guidance/advice for the team in the Design Phase of the Urbis initiative. This toolkit is not meant to prescribe one specific way forward for this phase, but

is intended to be illustrative of an approach that should help yield practical results in a relatively short period of time. We will find that many organizations we may be working with have recently gone through organizational and/or technical capacity assessments, in which case we should build on these previous efforts. Also, we should seek out organizations working locally which have relevant tools and expertise as well as products, which Urbis can benefit from in the course of the implementation phase. Discovering and tapping into local reservoirs of expertise, tools, knowledge and experience should be an important initial task of the program design team.

### **Main Steps in developing the Capacity Building Plan**

The overall purpose of this toolkit is to assist DIG staff and consultants to identify capacity building requirements of the pro-poor organizations participating in the Urbis Program. Urbis endeavors to increase the voice and constructive action of the urban poor in addressing their needs (and, perhaps more importantly, learn lessons about addressing urban poverty issues that will inform future efforts). Community-based organizations (CBOs) and/or Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are the preferred vehicles for the Urbis program to help the urban poor better address their needs. While it is necessary for CBOs/NGOs to have basic organizational capacity to do their work well, Urbis is primarily concerned with the ability of these organizations to have a positive impact on the urban poor and, in the process, gathering information to help answer the key Urbis learning questions, listed above in the introduction.

### **General approach to Problem-Solving**

One of the pre-requisites for developing the capacity of pro-poor organizations is the appropriate determination of the pro-poor

objectives they would like to pursue. These objectives (or the inverse of the urban problems or challenges faced in their city) should be the central element in determining the capacity building to be provided by Urbis. As a basic refresher, a general approach to problem solving can be summarized as:

- Clearly describe the problem,
- Analyze causes,
- Identify alternative solutions
- Assess each alternative solution
- Choose a solution,
- Implement it, and
- Evaluate whether the problem was solved or not.

This general approach to problem solving is being tailored to the specific needs of Urbis, and is explained further below.

### **Main Steps during Urbis Design Phase:**

Specific to the needs of this Design Phase of the Urbis program, a step-by-step approach is offered below. The underlying assumptions to begin the Design Phase are two-fold:

- There is general consensus about the main urban challenges being faced by the selected city, which were identified in the Urbis Diagnostic phase and presented in the Diagnostic document.
- There are one or more pro-poor organizations selected by Urbis to be partners in addressing selected urban challenges and these partners are open to building their own capacity through Urbis technical assistance and sharing their experiences in order for Urbis to meet its' learning objectives.

While this process is intended to support the Urbis Teams field visits, many of the steps can be performed with the partners from a distance. Following these steps will entail producing (or affirming) the Problem Analysis, an Action Plan for Addressing the Problem(s),

and Technical and/or Organizational Capacity Needs of the pro-poor organization by the Urbis extended teams, including both Urbis staff and consultants as well as the pro-poor organization itself. The outlined approach can be realized in a short period of time (a few weeks or less depending on the dedication of time and human resources). Depending on the level of preparation and/or sophistication encountered in each city and/or at different pro-poor organizations, several of the early steps listed below may be moved through quickly or skipped over entirely, as the information may already exist in readily usable form. A flow chart of the process is provided below and with more narrative detail in Annex B: Flow Chart of the Design Phase of Urbis Programming in Selected Cities.

**Step A:**  
*Review the Key Urban Challenges of the Poor*

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Local Officials, and Pro-Poor Organizations.

**Time:**

Prior to arrival in country or immediately upon arrival.

**Description:**

The key urban challenges have already been identified in the Diagnostic. The Urbis team should reconfirm immediately the key priorities that should be the target of interventions. If there are more than three urban challenges that are considered to be important, an effort should be made to choose the most important challenges (up to three) that should be reviewed further. These challenges should be articulated as problem statements.

**Step B:**  
*Analyze Potential Problems to be Addressed*

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers, Board Members), and Local consultants.

**Time:**

2 hours.

**Description:**

Benefiting from the participation of key stakeholders, analyze carefully the problems (challenges) to be addressed. As a tool, it is recommended to use the Problem Tree methodology (see Annex C) to accurately understand the main urban challenges, determining the causes and the effects of the problem(s). This process should be facilitated by the Urbis Team. This should be repeated two or more times so that a small number of the most significant urban challenges are clearly understood. At the end of the exercises, ask the participants to reflect on which of the problems they believe are the most appropriate for interventions by the pro-poor organization. Provide assignments to participants to complete missing information.

**Step C:**  
*Select Key Problem(s) to be the Focus of Efforts*

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), and Local consultants

**Time:**

1 hour.

**Description:**

Using additional information collected, if any, conduct discussion with programming team of the pro-poor organization(s) to select the priority problems that will be the focus of their

efforts. This could be a challenge they have been working on for some time or this could be a new area for the group. The Urbis Team members should come to this meeting prepared to make a recommendation as to which problem they believe seems the most reasonable to address and be prepared to engage in the discussion. Ideally, a consensus should be reached.

*Note: Steps A, B, and C may appear to be somewhat redundant. Many of the Urban Challenges identified in the Diagnostics were broad in nature and/or described in general terms. Steps A through C take us from a general menu of issues to a more specific selection of the problems to be addressed. Depending on the level of specificity encountered in each city, these steps may be combined into one step of reaching consensus on the main problem(s) to be addressed with Urbis support.*

#### **Step D:** **Analyze Causes of the Problem**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), and Local consultants

**Time:**

2 hours.

**Description:**

Once an agreement is reached on the main problem(s) to be addressed, a careful review of the causes needs to be conducted. Once satisfied that the causes are correctly identified, brainstorm with the pro-poor organization the possible interventions (solutions) that could be staged to eliminate or mitigate the causes of these problems. Creativity should be encouraged when imagining possible solutions for the different causes of the problems. Facilitation techniques that ask participants to look at

issues from new perspectives are especially useful.

#### **Step E:** **Prioritize Solutions**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), and Local consultants

**Time:**

2 hours.

**Description:**

The potential solutions or interventions to mitigate or eliminate the problems should be prioritized. Careful attention should be paid to the obstacles affecting the implementation of certain solutions. Some solutions should be relatively easy to implement (requires moderate amounts of time, planning, coordination and minor levels of human and financial resources) while others will seem more daunting. The more daunting solutions should not be discarded, but should be viewed very carefully to determine “what it would take” to solve/address the root causes. Identify all of these where “training or greater capacity” might be “what it would take” to have an effective intervention. Create a list of possible solutions and rank them from those that are relatively easy to implement to those that are more difficult because of certain obstacles that need to be overcome.

*Note: For this step, it would be valuable to have completed an Inventory of Strengths and Capacities of the pro-poor organization.*

#### **Step F:** **Develop Basic Action Plan with Pro-Poor Organization**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director,

Key Program Manager), and Local consultants

**Time:**

6 hours.

**Description:**

Assist the pro-poor organization in drafting an Action Plan that outlines the activities needed to be implemented over the next period (at least 12 months) to address the prioritized key urban challenges. At this point, the pro-poor organization has a clear idea of the main urban challenge (problem) to be addressed, is clear on the causes and has identified several possible interventions to address these problems. This important information needs to be organized into an Action Plan (or annual work plan).

**Step G:**  
**Review Action Plan**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers, Financial Staff and Board Members), and Local consultants

**Time:**

2 hours.

**Description:**

Identify the activities in the Action Plan that require additional support that could potentially be provided by Urbis. Refer to section IV. “What can Urbis do?” of this manual.

**Step H:**  
**Identify Capacity Building Needs of the Pro-Poor Organization**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers, Financial Staff and Board Members), and Local consultants

**Time:**

2 hours.

**Description:**

With the potential programmatic interventions available from the Action Plan, identify technical areas (related to the key urban challenges being addressed) of the pro-poor organization that could be strengthened through Urbis. Identify organizational limitations that potentially inhibit the implementation of the pro-poor organizations’ Action Plan. Prioritize those areas that have the most direct bearing on the urban challenges being addressed.

*Note: Several NGO/CBOs will have done their own internal capacity assessments during the course of their normal work. It is important for the Urbis team to review these assessments and, when available, speak with other international or national organizations that have worked with the selected pro-poor organizations in capacity building to better understand their progress to date and their continuing needs.*

**Step I:**  
**Draft DIG Capacity Building Plan for the Pro-Poor Organization**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), and Local consultants

**Time:**

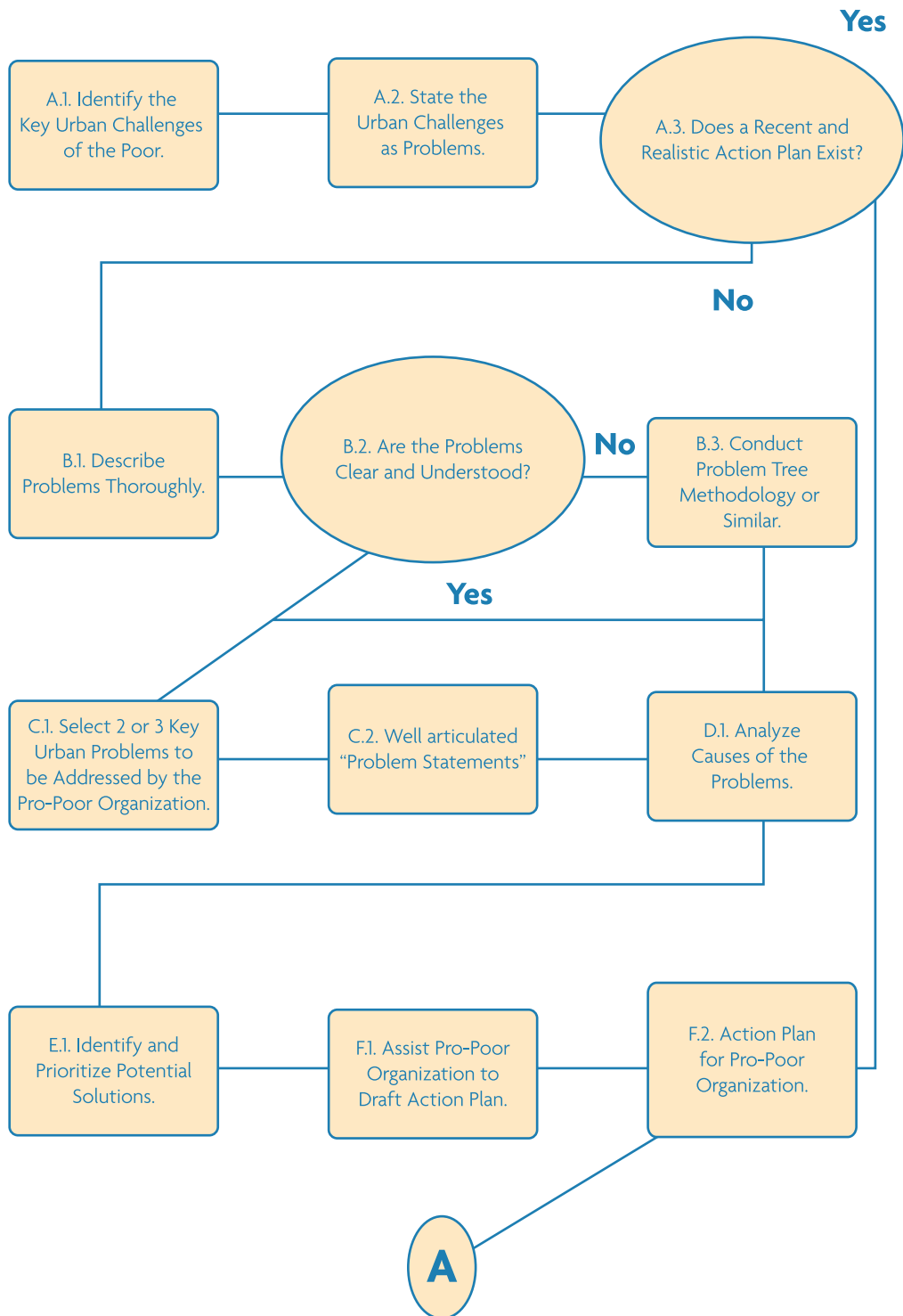
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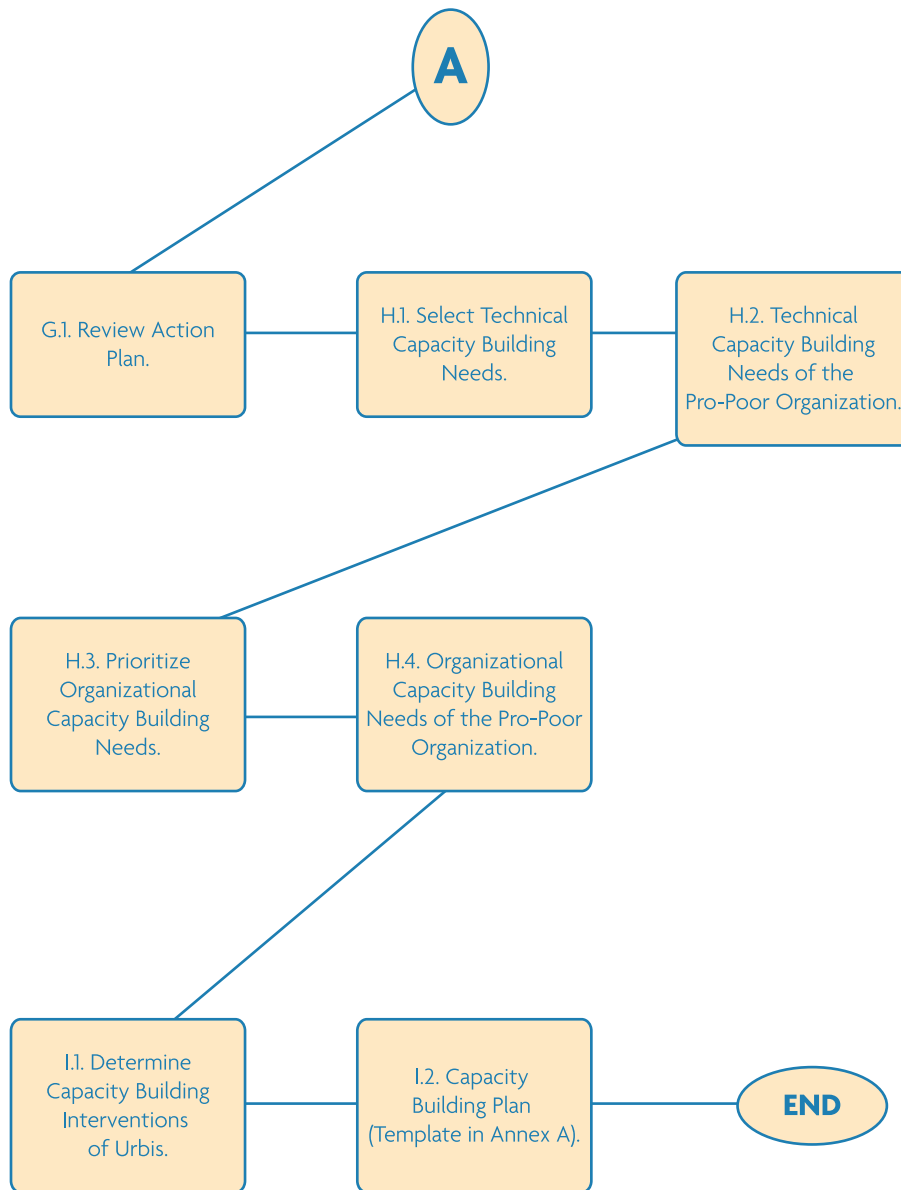
**Description:**

This final document is the culmination of the Design Phase of Urbis. An outline is provided in Annex A. It summarizes information gathered to date through Urbis and includes estimations of resources to be utilized, as well as a Gantt chart.

*Note: The Urbis team should be actively seeking information about local resources that could be used to build capacity. In the large cities that Urbis will typically work in, there are likely to be many organizations that can offer relevant expertise to the Urbis efforts, with some obvious advantages (local knowledge, cost and accessibility). While the Diagnostic*

# Flow Chart, Design Phase





*phase of Urbis may have identified some resources, there should be a continued effort to uncover additional resources (both international and national) that could support Urbis efforts.*

## Learning: Working Hypotheses of Urbis

Urbis is a learning initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. While everyone involved with Urbis would like the efforts of the program to produce short-term positive change for the urban poor, in the long-term, the lessons learned may be of much greater value to the urban poor. There are five key learning questions that Urbis addresses:

1. **What types of institutions help the urban poor increase their ability to influence decision making and planning processes that affect them?**
2. **What types of institutions respond more effectively to targeted capacity building initiatives?**
3. **What types of capacity building initiatives are effective in helping these organizations improve their ability to serve their constituencies in a streamlined and cost-effective manner?**
4. **What roles do demographic and political contexts play in the success of capacity building efforts targeting these organizations?**
5. **What are the factors for scale and replication which enable Urbis to be taken to scale or replicated elsewhere?**

For each of the above questions, the Urbis Team should identify an appropriate working hypothesis based on the specific context they are working on. These working hypotheses<sup>1</sup> should respond to each of the above questions. By having these statements developed, we will more readily be able to gather evidence that supports or refutes each. It will be the responsibility of the collective Urbis Team to look at

the results of the efforts in each of the Urbis cities, identify trends and draw broader conclusions regarding working with pro-poor organizations in addressing urban poverty issues. A simple format for presenting these working hypotheses is found in the DIG Urbis Capacity Building Plan template (Annex A).

## Capacity Building

### *What support can Urbis provide?*

The main tool of Urbis in supporting pro-poor organizations is capacity building through technical assistance. These tools include the direct provision of:

- **Expert Technical Assistance.**  
National or international assistance that is typically of a short-term nature.
- **Training of members of the pro-poor organizations.**  
These trainings can be delivered by local or international trainers. Trainings will develop specific competencies needed by the organization or its staff members. Classic training develops the Knowledge, Skills and/or Attitudes of the participants. Adult training methodologies will be applied, including experiential learning when possible.
- **Study tours.**
- **Long-term sustainable on-site technical assistance (SOSTA).**  
This type of assistance is primarily aimed at incorporating additional staff who add new technical or organizational competencies.
- **Resident advisor.**  
In some cases, Urbis may deem appropriate that an expatriate representative of Urbis be fielded long-term (six months or more) to provide mentoring, training, oversight and monitoring and evaluation support.
- **Special grants.**  
In rare cases, basic equipment or software might be afforded pro-poor partners.

This assistance represents less than 1% of the budget of Urbis (or a few thousand dollars per year per city), so these allocations will be made only on an exceptional needs basis.

It is important to note that Urbis does not have a vehicle for making sub-grants to pro-poor organizations. The Urbis staff needs to be careful not to raise expectations of delivering assistance in any form other than technical assistance. Having stated this, creativity is encouraged to ensure that a maximum impact on the capacity of the pro-poor organizations is achieved through the resources available.

### **Capacity Building**

Building capacity of CBOs/NGOs is not an end in itself, rather a means to the larger objective of improving the lives of the urban poor and building their capacity to address the needs of the urban poor today and in the future. When we look at the general capacity of the CBO/NGO, we are looking to strengthen it so that it can be a better pro-poor organization and deliver better programming to the target populations. There are two main areas of capacity that we are concerned with in working with the pro-poor organizations of the Urbis program: Organizational Capacity and Technical Capacity. We will take a look at each of these areas:

### **Technical Capacity**

Urbis staff and the pro-poor organizations will identify technical areas that need to be reinforced or developed in order for the pro-poor organizations to effectively carry out their programming interventions. The Technical Capacity of the pro-poor organization refers to the ability to implement relevant and effective programming. A pro-poor organization needs to possess know-how and experience in addressing (at least some of) the main urban challenges facing the urban poor. Through the Diagnostics conducted by Urbis in late 2007, main urban challenges have been identified in

the Urbis learning cities.

These urban challenges include the following:

- Land Tenure
- Housing
- Threat of Eviction
- Environmental Sanitation
- Access to basic services (water, electricity, sanitation)
- Governance
- Livelihoods/informal sector/labor
- Slum upgrading

Additionally, pro-poor organizations will often require other program delivery competencies in areas including:

- Advocacy Skills
- Association Building
- Social Marketing
- Training of Trainers
- Project Design
- Project Management
- Problem Analysis
- Networking
- Proposal Writing/Development
- Municipal Budget Process
- Outreach (capacity of pro-poor organizations to transfer know-how to others, including other pro-poor organizations, community groups, local governments, etc.)

Given the very broad range of technical skills potentially needed, it is not realistic to define each of the above areas at this point. Urbis will rely on its experienced and highly skilled team members to assist pro-poor organizations to identify and articulate their needs and assist them in accessing appropriate capacity building opportunities.

### **Organizational Capacity<sup>2</sup>**

As necessary, Urbis staff and the pro-poor organizations will identify organizational limitations that inhibit the implementation of the technical interventions. For the purposes of this toolkit, organizational capacity refers to the overall competencies in the following

areas:

- Governance and Management
- Financial Resources
- Human Resources
- Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
- External Relations
- Sustainability

While these competency areas are important for the management of pro-poor organizations, not all organizations need to achieve a high degree of effectiveness in all of these areas. In fact, effectiveness as a pro-poor organization is measured more in their technical competencies (to deliver effective programming) than in their organizational capacity. Of course, a minimum organizational capacity is necessary to function. For the purposes of Urbis, we want to invest in the development of organizational capacity only where necessary to allow the pro-poor organization to achieve its technical programming objectives. In most cases, little investment on the part of Urbis will be made to develop organizational capacity. However, Urbis will encourage NGO/CBOs to perform self-assessments of their organizational capacities and identify areas of self-improvement. In cases where the organizational capacity substantially inhibits the ability of the organization to achieve its pro-poor objectives, Urbis can consider providing assistance in building organizational capacity. (Please see Annex E: Organizational Capacity, for further details.)

### ***Competency-Based Training and Adult Learning***

The main recipients of the capacity building of Urbis will be pro-poor organizations. Capacity building efforts work to improve/develop the Knowledge, Skills and/or Attitudes of the staff (or volunteers, etc.). It is very important to clearly identify what it is that the staff will be able to do (or do better) as a result of the training or technical assistance. Specific training competencies should be identified before capacity building initiatives are started. The

Urbis assistance should result in the staff being more capable (more able “to do,” “understand,” or “interact”) in pre-defined areas. A key element to look for in designing and evaluating a capacity building initiative is how well (clearly defined) the competencies that are being created/strengthened are articulated.

In addition to clearly identifying the competencies that the technical assistance/training should produce, the methodologies for building these competencies is also very important. In other words, it is important to both know clearly what it is that should be learned (the competencies) and how the learning will be achieved (the methodology). The staff members of pro-poor organizations, like most adults, benefit greatly from experiential learning. Experiential learning simply means providing opportunities to relate the new learning to previous experiences. In the case of completely new materials, one should use a real (or simulated) experience to assist the adult in assimilating the learning. It is important to remember that most adults learn more from actually “doing” something or being able to closely relate a new concept/skill to a known one than by simply listening to instructions or new information. When adults can clearly see/understand how to “apply” their newly acquired/enhanced skills, knowledge or attitudes to important real-life situations, they tend to learn quickly and retain their learning for a longer period of time.

### **Notes**

1. A typical hypothesis makes some claim about a cause, effect, or characteristic observed in a certain experiment or situation. Hypotheses therefore tend to be very limited in scope, and address only one particular aspect of the situation. They arise from a question that is asked based on observation of some sort of phenomenon, and give a possible answer to that question. (This definition is attributed to Hope Matis, in

“Writing Thesis Statements & Hypotheses,” no date.)

2. The explanation of these items are extracted from the Organizational Capacity Assessment Report of CDLG (May 2007) by Pact Kenya.

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END of Toolkit Main Document  
Please see Appendices for additional  
information

through completion of plan (visits, consultant input, workshops, Urbis staff, etc.)

- Main problem(s) to be addressed in this city
- Main partners to work with (pro-poor organizations)
- Type and intensity of capacity building inputs contemplated in the plan

## Urbis Goals and Objectives

### Goal:

Help the Gates Foundation further develop its strategy for giving in the area of urban poverty and mainstreaming of community participation. This initiative will help the Foundation better understand organizations working with the urban poor. Urbis will explore methods for building the capacity of particularly strong NGOs and CBOs by analyzing their capacity and increasing their voice and reach. Ultimately, Urbis will enhance the Foundation’s ability to promote and work with NGOs and CBOs working with the urban poor. Specifically, this will assist the Foundation’s Special Initiatives team as it strives to engage and integrate the urban poor into their larger municipal communities’ planning and development processes.

### Objectives:

- Identify innovative practices among NGOs that operate in the urban setting;
- Provide the Foundation with a better idea of the goods and services that are being

# Annex A: Urbis Capacity Building Plan for (pro-poor org) in (city X, country Y)

## Executive Summary

Summarize the following:

- Principal effort made since diagnostic

provided by these NGOs, with an emphasis on urban planning and development issues;

- Determine which methods of capacity building are most effective and useful for relevant urban-focused NGOs;
- Offer insights into the needs of the urban poor in cities of different sizes and political climates;
- Identify measures for helping poor urban populations increase their knowledge of and influence over the community decision making and planning processes that affect their daily lives; and
- Lead to the creation of a “blueprint” (in the form of various learning reports and tools) to engage and integrate the urban poor into their larger municipal communities’ planning and development processes.

### **What is Urbis?**

Urbis is a three-year learning initiative launched in September 2007 to strengthen organizations of the urban poor and increase their influence over the decision-making and planning processes that affect their daily lives. The program seeks to answer the following key questions:

- What types of institutions help the urban poor increase their ability to influence decision making and planning processes that affect them?
- What types of institutions respond most effectively to targeted capacity building initiatives?
- What types of capacity building initiatives are effective in helping these organizations improve their ability to serve their constituencies in a streamlined and cost-effective manner?
- What roles do demographic and political contexts play in the success of capacity building efforts targeting

these organizations?

- What are the factors for scale and replicability which enable URBIS to be taken to scale or replicated elsewhere?

By answering these questions, DIG will help practitioners in the field of urban poverty alleviation understand why some initiatives are more successful than others. We will do this by developing and testing methodologies that:

- Support the capacity and strategic growth of NGOs serving the urban poor, and
- Integrate the needs of the urban poor into planning and development processes.

### **Anticipated Areas of Urbis Learning**

For each of the KEY questions of the Urbis program, the Urbis team, in coordination with the pro-poor partner organizations, has identified a corresponding hypothesis. The overriding purpose of this activity is to identify at an early stage and to stay cognizant of learning opportunities for Urbis. By formulating working hypotheses, the Urbis team hopes to be able to gather evidence to support (or not) each hypothesis more aptly and consistently.

The working hypotheses for city XX are:

- What types of institutions help the urban poor increase their ability to influence decision making and planning processes that affect them?

**Working Hypothesis 1:** Well established (five years or more) national NGOs with a strong history of collaborating with local and national governments have great potential to assist the urban poor by leveraging their contacts and their local knowledge of urban issues. (Example)

**Evidence:**

**Hypothesis 2:**

**Evidence:**

- What types of institutions respond more effectively to targeted capacity building initiatives?

**Hypothesis 1:**

**Evidence:**

- What types of capacity building initiatives are effective in helping these organizations improve their ability to serve their constituencies in a streamlined and cost-effective manner?

**Hypothesis 1:**

**Evidence:**

- What roles do demographic and political contexts play in the success of capacity building efforts targeting these organizations?

**Hypothesis 1:**

**Evidence:**

- What are the factors for scale and replicability which enable URBIS to be taken to scale or replicated elsewhere?

**Hypothesis 1:**

**Evidence:**

## Urbis Diagnostic Summary for Xxxx, Yyyyy

This section should be a brief summary of the Diagnostic for this selected city. It should list all the main urban challenges identified in the Urbis diagnostic for this city and list the partners deemed most appropriate for the Urbis effort.

*Note: In Section IV and V (below), you will go into more detail regarding the selected urban challenges to be addressed as well as the outline for the action plan for addressing priorities of the pro-poor organization partner organization. This section (III) is meant to be*

*a brief refresher of the main findings/conclusions of the Diagnostic Phase.*

## Priority Urban Challenge(s) to be Addressed by PPO

What are the main urban challenges/problems to be addressed? Provide detail about the nature of the problem and explain causes and effects, including the magnitude of the effects. Describe previous efforts made to address the causes and, when appropriate, describe lessons learned from past experience.

Explain why Urbis believes the selected PPO is the appropriate choice for addressing the above problem/challenge. Provide some evidence that suggests that this organization provided the appropriate supports, might be able to address this problem.

What is the demographic and political context (outside of the control of the PPO) that might have an impact on the success of the PPO in gaining the capacity to have a meaningful impact on the problems.

## Action Plan for Addressing Capacity Needs of PPO

Describe the main activities that are envisioned in order to wage an intervention aimed at addressing the identified urban problem by the selected PPO.

Insert a simple Action Plan table into the report demonstrating the relationship between the actions of the PPO and an improvement in the designated condition/problem selected.

## Capacity Building Needs of the PPO

Related directly to the main urban challenge/problem to be addressed, identify the strengths and weakness of the PPO.

### Technical Capacity

List the areas where Technical Capacity will need to be improved. Identify which areas Urbis will be able to support and which areas the PPO will improve its own capacity through self-development or via assistance from third parties.

### **Organizational Capacity**

List the areas where Organizational Capacity will need to be improved. Identify which areas Urbis will be able to support and which areas the PPO will improve its own capacity through self-development or via assistance from third parties.

### **Summarize the type of Capacity Building, Costs, Providers, etc.**

The main tool of Urbis in supporting pro-poor organizations is capacity building through technical assistance. These tools include the direct provision of the following TYPES of capacity building:

- **Expert Technical Assistance (Expert TA).** Either national or international assistance and typically of a short-term nature.
- **Training of members of the pro-poor organizations (Training).** These trainings

Description of Capacity Building Needed	Recipient or Target of Capacity Building	Type of Capacity Building	Period of Capacity Building	Provider	Estimated Cost	Other

can be delivered by local or international trainers. Trainings will develop specific competencies needed by the organization or its staff members. Classic training develops the Knowledge, Skills and/or Attitudes of the participants. Adult training methodologies will be applied, including experiential learning when possible.

- **Study tours (Study Tours).**
- **Long-term sustainable on-site technical assistance (SOSTA) can be provided (Long-term**

**SOSTA).** This type of assistance is primarily aimed at incorporating new staff, or adding new technical or organizational competencies.

- **Resident advisor (Resident Advisor).** In some cases, Urbis may deem appropriate that an expatriate representative of Urbis be fielded long-term (six months or more) to provide mentoring, training, oversight and monitoring and evaluation support.

### Summary Chart of the Urbis Capacity Building Plan

Insert summary chart of Capacity Building Plan below.

Or use GANTT Chart format

## Annex B: Flow Chart of the Design Phase of Urbis Programming in Selected Cities

### Purpose:

Build on the work realized during the Urbis Diagnostic Phase (selecting high potential cities and pro-poor organizations) to design capacity building interventions for those selected. Create a Capacity Building Plan for the selected pro-poor organization(s).

### Assumptions:

A basic understanding of the key urban challenges facing the city and a short list of pro-poor organizations that demonstrate potential and interest to work with Urbis in further assisting the urban poor to address one or more of the key urban challenges/problems.

### Brief Narrative of each step

#### Step A:

## *Determine the Key Urban Challenges of the Poor in City*

### **Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team Diagnostic, Local Officials, Pro-Poor Organizations.

### **A.1. Process**

Identify the Key Urban Challenges of the Poor.

### **A.2. Process**

State the Urban Challenges as Problems.

### **A.3. Decision**

Does a recent and realistic Action Plan that addresses one or more key urban challenges exist at the pro-poor organization?

### **If Yes:**

Go to Step F (Identify Capacity Needs of the Pro-Poor Organization)

### **If No:**

Go to Step B

## *Step B: Analyze Potential Problems to be Addressed*

### **Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers, Board Members), Local consultants, local officials

### **B.1. Process**

Describe the Problems thoroughly. Identify the Causes and the Effects of the problems. Use Problem Tree Methodology if necessary.

### **B.2. Decision**

Are the problems clearly stated and their causes and effects well understood?

### **If Yes:**

Go to Step C

### **If No:**

Continue

### **B.3. Process**

Utilize Problem Tree Methodology (or similar tool).

## *Step C: Select Key Problem(s) to be the Focus of Efforts*

### **Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), Local consultants

### **C.1. Process**

Select two or three main problems to be the focus of the pro-poor organization's urban poverty alleviation efforts.

### **C.2. Document**

Well-articulated "Problem Statements"

## *Step D: Analyze Causes of the Problem*

### **Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), Local consultants

### **D.1. Process**

Analyze causes of (each of) the problem(s) identified. Understand the main factors and actors that are linked to the causes of the problem(s).

## *Step E: Prioritize Solutions*

### **Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), Local consultants

### **E.1. Process**

Brainstorm a series of potential actions that would mitigate or eliminate the causes of the

problem(s). Determine which potential solutions are within the sphere of influence of the pro-poor organization.

**Step F:**  
***Develop Basic Action Plan with Pro-Poor Organization***

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers, Financial Staff and Board Members), Local consultants

**F.1. Process**

Assist the pro-poor organization to draft an

Action Plan that outlines the activities needed to be implemented over the next period (at least 12 months) to address the prioritized key urban challenges.

**F.2. Document**

Action Plan for Pro-Poor Organization

**Step G:**  
***Review Action Plan***

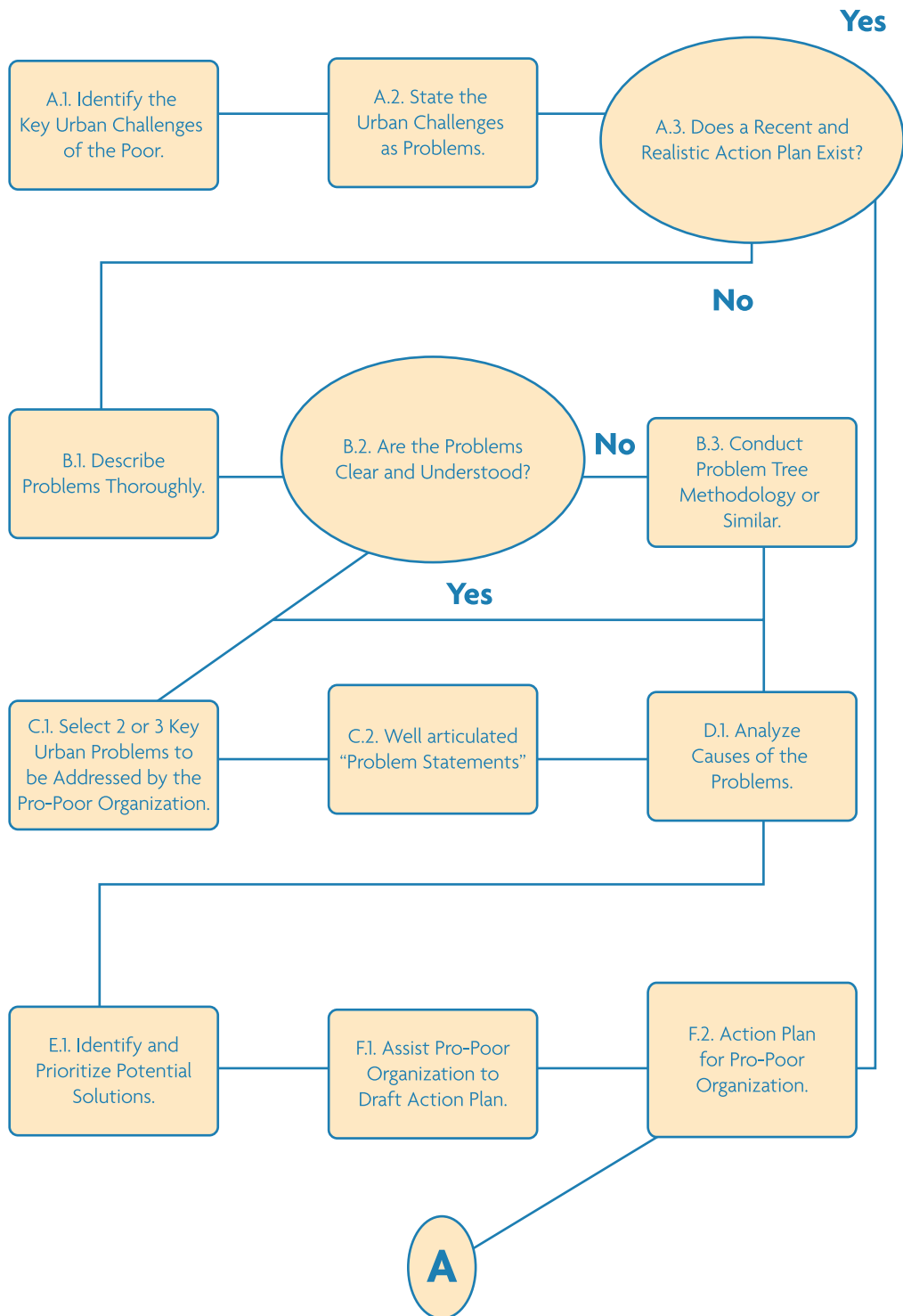
**Stakeholders:**

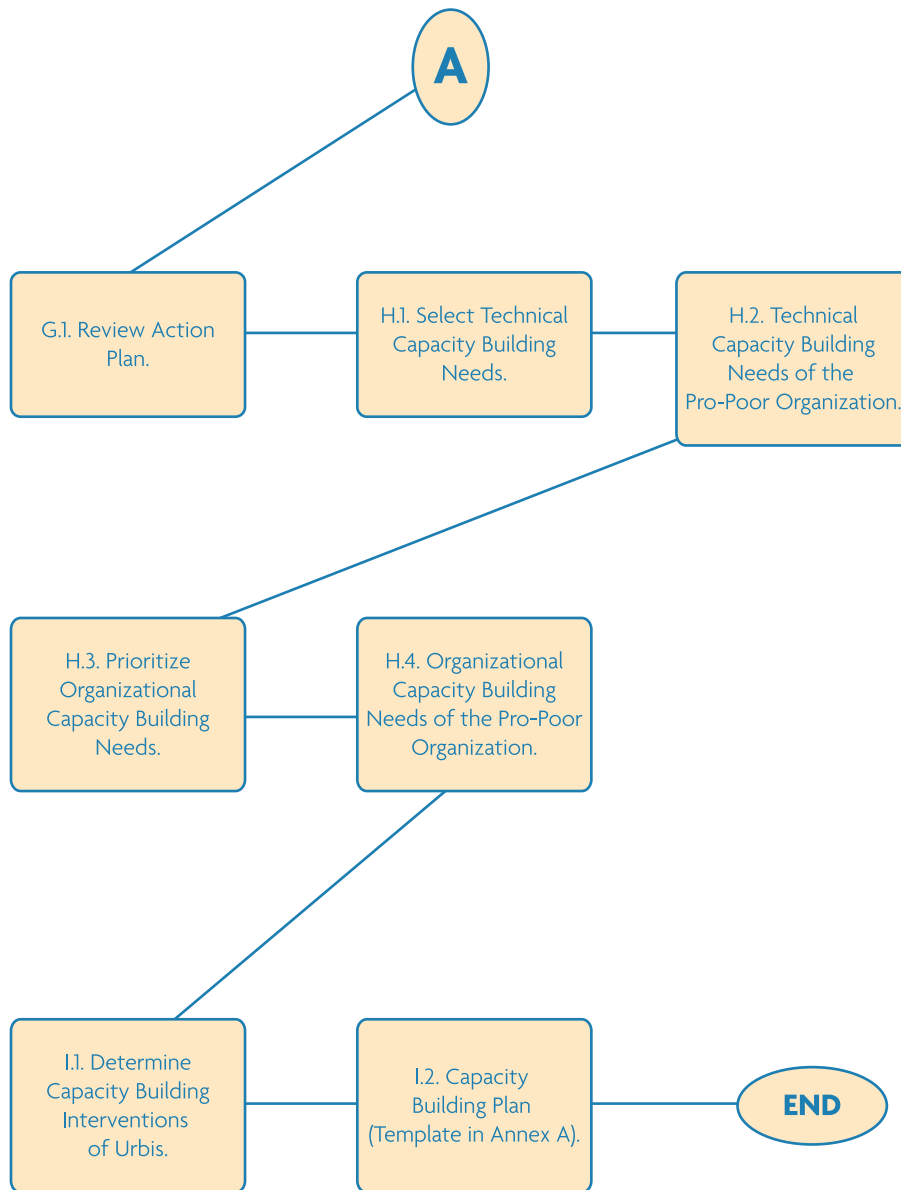
Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers), Local Consultants

**G.1. Process**

Identify the activities in the Action Plan that require additional support that could potentially be provided by Urbis.

# Flow Chart, Design Phase





**Step H:**  
**Identify Capacity Needs of the Pro-Poor Organization**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations

(Director, Key Program Managers, Financial Staff and Board Members), Local consultants

**H.1. Process**

Identify technical areas (related to the key urban challenges being addressed) of the pro-poor organization that could be strengthened through Urbis.

**H.2. Document**

Technical Capacity Building Needs of the Pro-Poor Organization

**H.3. Process**

Identify organizational limitations that potentially inhibit the implementation of the pro-poor organizations' Action Plan. Prioritize those areas that have the most direct bearing on the urban challenges being addressed.

**H.4. Document**

Organizational Capacity Building Needs of the Pro-Poor Organization

**Step I:**  
**Draft DIG Capacity Building Plan for the Pro-Poor Organization**

**Stakeholders:**

Urbis Team, Pro-Poor Organizations (Director, Key Program Managers, Financial Staff and Board Members), Local consultants

**I.1. Process**

Identify the most appropriate Capacity Building interventions from Urbis to support the pro-poor organization, including a Gantt Chart.

**I.2. Document**

Capacity Building Plan.

## Annex C: Problem Analysis and the Problem Tree Methodology

### Problem Analysis

Urbis will assist pro-poor organizations in identifying the main urban challenges in each city. There are many different techniques that can be utilized to analyze problems. Problem identification and analysis is a highly intuitive process that all members of the Urbis team and partner organizations are capable of conducting to one degree or another. Essentially, we want to achieve three main outcomes through a careful problem analysis:

1. Clearly articulated problem statements which are understandable and recognizable to different stakeholders.
2. An identification of the principle causes of the problems, including a basic understanding of these causes. Understanding the causes includes knowing whether these causes are increasing/decreasing in intensity and to what degree these causes can be effectively acted upon.
3. Knowledge of the effects or ramifications of these problems. An effort should be made to understand both the qualitative and quantitative nature of these effects, including who are the most affected and whether these effects tend to grow or diminish over time.

Understanding the importance of careful and thorough problem analysis is paramount to successfully assisting the pro-poor organizations in coming up with problem solving strategies and greater capacity to address the problems. A tool which may aid in the analysis of these problems (also sometimes referred to as challenges) is a simple methodology called the Problem Tree.

## Problem Tree Methodology

*(Adapted from: "Tools for Policy Impact: A Handbook for Researchers," by Daniel Start and Ingje Hovland, October 2004.)*

Problem tree analysis is central to many forms of project planning and is well developed among development agencies. Problem tree analysis (also called Situational analysis or Problem analysis) helps to find solutions by mapping out the anatomy of cause and effect around an issue in a structured way. This brings several advantages:

- The problem can be broken down into manageable and definable chunks. This enables a clearer prioritization of factors and helps focus objectives;
- There is better understanding of the problem and its often interconnected and even contradictory causes. This is often the first step in finding win-win solutions;
- It identifies the constituent issues and arguments, and can help establish who and what the political actors and processes are at each stage;
- It can help establish whether further information, evidence or resources are needed to make a strong case, or build a convincing solution;

- Present issues—rather than apparent, future or past issues—are dealt with and identified;
- The process of analysis often helps build a shared sense of understanding, purpose and action.

## Detailed Outline of the Problem Tree Analysis Process

Problem tree analysis is best carried out in a small focus group of about six to eight people using flip chart paper or an overhead transparency. It is important that factors can be added as the conversation progresses. The first step is to discuss and agree on the problem or issue to be analyzed. Do not worry if it seems like a broad topic because the problem tree will help break it down. The problem or issue is written in the center of the flip chart and becomes the ‘trunk’ of the tree. This becomes the ‘focal problem’. The wording does not need to be exact as the roots and branches will further define it, but it should describe an actual issue that everyone feels passionately about. (Please see example below).

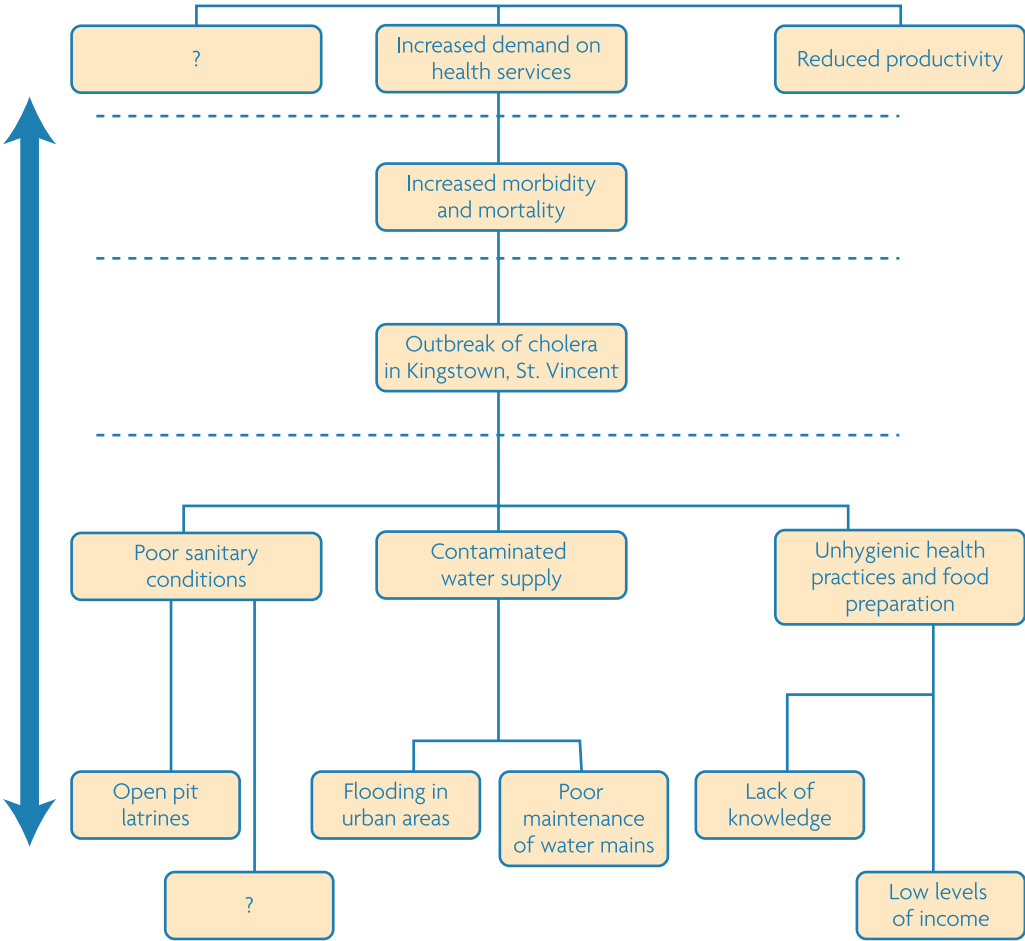
Next, the group identifies the causes of the focal problem—these become the roots—and then identify the consequences—which become the branches. These causes and consequences can be created on post-it notes or cards, perhaps individually or in pairs, so that they can be arranged in a cause-and-effect logic.

The heart of the exercise is the discussion,

debate and dialogue that is generated as factors are arranged and re-arranged, often forming sub-dividing roots and branches. Take time to allow people to explain their feelings and reasoning, and record related ideas and points that come up on separate flip chart paper under title such as: solutions, concerns and decisions.

Discussion questions might include:

**Effects**  
 Does this represent the reality? Are the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions to the



**Causes**

problem considered?

- Which causes and consequences are getting better, which are getting worse and which are staying the same?

An Action Plan is a simple list of all of the tasks that you need to carry out to achieve an objective. It differs from a simple “to-do” list in that it focuses on the achievement of a single goal.

Outcome	Output	Activity	Time frame	Resources Needed
Improved...	Programming capacity strengthened	Develop		
		Support implementation		
		Establish	June 2005	
		Conduct		
		Verify		
		Design a capacity building program for		
	Program formulated	Circulate		
		Provide input towards		
		Align		
		Organize		
Reduced ...	Technical assistance to	Mainstream		
Increased access to information				

- What are the most serious consequences? Which are of most concern? What criteria are important to us in thinking about a way forward?
- Which causes are easiest / most difficult to address? What possible solutions or options might

there be? Where could a policy change help address a cause or consequence, or create a solution?

- What decisions have we made, and what actions have we agreed?

The Problem tree is closely linked to the Objectives tree, another key tool in the project planner’s repertoire, and well used by development agencies. The Problem tree can be converted into an objectives tree by rephrasing each of the problems into positive desirable outcomes—as if the problem had already been treated. In this way, root causes and consequences are turned into root *solutions*, and key project or influencing entry points are quickly established. These objectives may well be worded as objectives for change. These can then feed into a Force field analysis which provides a useful next step.

### Example of an Elaborated Problem Tree:

The Focal Problem (“trunk”) in this example is the “Outbreak of cholera....” The Causes (“roots”) are listed below the Focal Problem and the Effects (“branches”) are listed above the Focal Problem.

## Annex D: Action Plan Format

## Annex E: Organizational Capacity

The following is a description of basic organizational competencies that NGOs/CBOs should possess to some degree. This basic outline can assist Urbis Team members as well as NGOs/CBOs to gauge general organizational capacity. Urbis will support the development of organizational capacity **ONLY** when the deficiency in this capacity poses a

significant risk to the successful achievement of the organizations pro-poor programming objectives. NGOs/CBOs are encouraged to self-assess their own organizational capacity and take corrective measures to strengthen their organizations.

## Governance and Management

Governance refers to the leadership and direction of the NGO/CBO. Leadership involves articulating and maintaining the NGO/CBO's vision and mission, which is defined by the founding members/institutions and shared by the board of directors/trustees or other stakeholders. The board provides direction, maintains independent oversight of the management, and ensures that effective strategic planning takes place. The board can help to identify and obtain resources for activities, carry-out public relations, and lobby government for effective policy development or reform. It can bring additional professional and ethical expertise to join it.

Management is responsible for day-to-day operations, assuring that the NGO/CBO implements policy as established by the board. The responsibilities separate the functions of the board and management. Effective leadership fosters the involvement and participation of NGO/CBO members, staff and other stakeholders in all aspects of organizational activities.

In governance and management, an ideal NGO/CBO demonstrates the following characteristics:

- The NGO/CBO has a clearly articulated vision, mission and goals which are shared by all in the organization and by the stakeholders
- Advocacy strategies are aligned with the mission
- Board provides overall policy and strategic oversight
- NGO/CBO is credible to stakeholders

- NGO/CBO has a defined organizational structure with clear lines of authority and responsibility
- Decisions are made appropriate to the level of organizational structure
- NGO/CBO has operational systems to ensure accountability
- NGO/CBO's membership and/or constituency is clearly defined and actively participates in its activities
- Board and management appropriately undertakes advocacy activities

## Financial Resources

An organization's achievement depends largely on the resources it has available and how these are managed and utilized. A viable NGO/CBO will initiate measures to mobilize adequate resources to meet financial needs and obligations. These resources are well allocated and consistently tracked. Utilization of resources is reported to donors and stakeholders in an open and accountable fashion. Financial systems and procedures including procurement are integrated within the strategic and operations plans for the NGO/CBO. The systems meet internal and external requirements and obligation of the NGO/CBO.

In regard to financial resources, an ideal NGO/CBO demonstrates the following characteristics;

- NGO/CBO has a funds mobilization strategy with the in-house capacity to consistently implement it
- NGO/CBO has a track record of diversified sources of funding; including generating its own funds, multiple donors and private sector partnerships (no one single external source exceeds 25% contribution to the overall)
- The NGO/CBO adequately allocates resources to advocacy activities

- The budgeting process is integrated into annual implementation plans
- Financial management systems enable the organization to allocate resources and achieve financial balance for its operations
- NGO/CBO adequately captures and quantifies in kind contributions to the advocacy effort
- NGO/CBO is accountable to its donors and stakeholders
- Procurement practice is in line with universally accepted standards
- Human resource policies support management practice and decision making
- Staff are fully motivated to work within the NGO/CBO

## Performance Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PMEL)

One of the key pillars of success in development work is to demonstrate relevance to the sector—the extent to which the NGO/CBO is delivering on its vision and mission. NGO/CBOs are able to do so by managing resources and programs effectively. NGO/CBOs show the degree to which long term goals and short term objectives have been achieved and how they contribute to a higher purpose or result. This is also part of the system of accountability. Resources are mobilized to benefit constituency through services delivered and through the demonstration of output and impact. The NGO/CBO is accountable to both its donors and the constituency. The practice of learning and reflection results in knowledge creation and generation of new insights that contribute to an established knowledge base in the sector and an overall improvement in lives of the constituency.

In regards to PMEL, an ideal NGO/CBO demonstrates the following characteristics;

- NGO/CBO internal working style is evident; meetings are held regularly and decisions communicated in a timely manner, there is team work and staff demonstrate initiative, staff are empowered
- NGO/CBO is adequately staffed with capacity to implement current activities and develop/design future activities
- NGO/CBO uses interns, volunteers and outsources support effectively
- Human resource development functions are fully funded and learnt skills are effectively integrated into implementation/operations
- NGO/CBO has a comprehensive PMEL system that includes plans (organizational or program specific), information needs, performance indicators, tools for data collection and analysis, reporting needs and necessary conditions, and the capacity needed to make the ME&R system work well.
- PMEL is central to the organization; it is intrinsic to the strategic plan and key program documents; there are various levels

## Human Resources

Any persons who are substantially connected with the work of NGO/CBO form part of its human resources. This includes the staff, the management, the board, volunteers, some of the other stakeholders and the community. The manner in which the workforce is organized, motivated and compensated to achieve the vision and mission of the NGO/CBO is the management aspect of the HR. Staff and volunteers are trained and developed to contribute meaningfully to the organization and find satisfaction with their work.

In regard to human resources management, an ideal NGO/CBO demonstrates the following characteristics;

- NGO/CBO internal working style is evident; meetings are held regularly and decisions communicated in a timely manner, there is team work and staff demonstrate initiative, staff are empowered
- NGO/CBO is adequately staffed with capacity to implement current activities and develop/design future activities
- NGO/CBO uses interns, volunteers and outsources support effectively
- Human resource development functions are fully funded and learnt skills are

of indicators to measure performance; and there is skilled staff dedicated to PMEL.

- Data quality is ensured for validity, integrity, reliability, timeliness and precision
- NGO/CBO has information management systems and consistently obtains and gives feedback to stakeholders.
- Information generated is used for decision making and improving effectiveness.

- Program evaluation is an integral part of program implementation and resources are allocated for both internal and external evaluations.
- There is commitment at all levels of the NGO/CBO.

## External Relations

An effective NGO/CBO recognizes and responds appropriately to the larger context within which it operates, including the social, political, ecological, and economic environment. In order to build collaborative and supportive relationships within the larger context, NGO/CBO becomes known among sector players, establishes a track record of achievements, and widens its impacts through partnerships with government, development partners and private sector.

In external relations, an ideal NGO/CBO demonstrates the following characteristics;

- Is credible to multiple donors
- Has successful partnerships with private sector to address the advocacy issues
- Has principled engagement with government
- Seeks to actively participate in government planning processes

## Sustainability

Sustainability refers to the long-term continuation of an organisation, program or project. Sustainability results when adequate mechanisms are put in place to maintain the six components—governance, management practices, human resources, financial resources, service delivery (Advocacy work), external relations and partnerships. Program sustainability occurs when constituency and other stakeholders perceive that services rendered are important and of value to them; when they feel a sense of ownership; when program activities can continue because

