Bulletin Board

I. THEMES FOR FUTURE ISSUES
April 2000: Poverty reduction and urban governance. This seeks to address the priority that readers give to poverty reduction in urban areas in combination with the particular interest expressed by many for more papers on urban governance or urban management. The deadline for the submission of papers is December 31st, 1999.

October 2000: Sustainable Cities Revisited III. We received so many papers for this October 1999 issue that deserved to be published but for which there was no room that we decided to transfer these to the October 2000 issue. The deadline for the submission of papers is June 30th, 2000. However, there is not much room left for new papers as much of this issue is already full from papers held over from the October 1999 issues.

April 2001: Rethinking aid to urban development - see below.

II. RETHINKING AID TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FOR DONORS
The April 2001 issue on Rethinking aid to urban development: lessons for donors will focus on the views on development assistance of the groups that are meant to be the recipients of aid, or the channels through which recipients are reached (community based organizations, NGOs, municipal authorities, national agencies). We have been trying to develop an issue of Environment and Urbanization on this theme for several years. This is a theme that is popular with readers, but it is difficult to get articles on this, as people working for organizations that depend on aid are obviously reluctant to write critically about their experience and relationships with aid agencies. The result of this is a lack of critical reflection about aid in general and about the appropriateness of aid agencies’ institutional structures and funding procedures in particular. Virtually every NGO in Africa, Asia and Latin America that we have worked with or have talked to has a series of “horror stories” about their relationship with foreign donors - for instance:

- Promises not met, or agreed funding suddenly cut;
- Decisions delayed so much or funding arriving so late that the initiative was compromised;
- Procedures for applying for funds that were unnecessarily complicated and had a poor fit with the kinds of processes that were most likely to be effective;
- Sectoral priorities that were too narrow or poorly defined for many needed initiatives to be funded; and
- Conditions regarding the raising of matching funds or of developing “partnerships” with other actors that were unrealistic.

We do not intend this issue of the journal to be “anti-aid” but we do want it to provide an opportunity for some critical reflections on the limitations of current policies and practices, and some suggestions for how these can be improved.

Deadline for article submission: December 31st, 2000. Submissions earlier than this are welcome and if we receive too many papers, those that arrive first and are accepted for publication after external reviews will be the ones that are printed in this issue.

III. NEW TELEPHONE AND FAX NUMBERS
Early in 2000, all London telephone and fax numbers will change. Since the new numbers can already be used, we have included them in this issue.

The new numbers for Environment and Urbanization at the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) are:

International: (44) 207 388 2117
Fax: (44) 207 388 2826

Within the UK: Tel: 0207 388 2117
Fax: 0207 388 2826