



Participatory Local Governance

Technical Advisory Paper 1



LIFE

Local Initiative
Facility for Urban
Environment



Participatory Local Governance

LIFE's Method and Experience
1992–1997

Technical Advisory Paper 1

Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE)
Management Development and Governance Division
United Nations Development Programme

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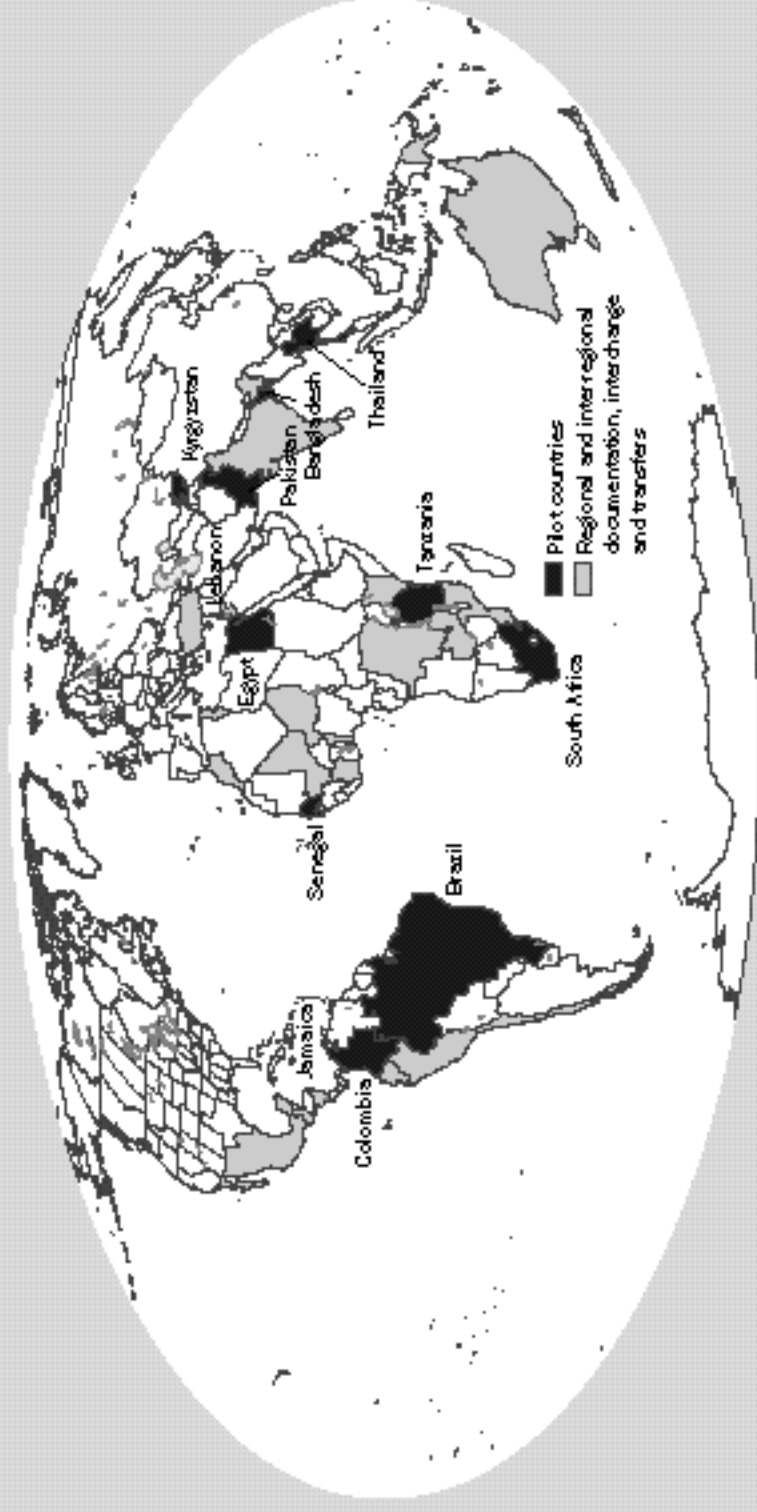
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The Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE) demonstrates what UNDP can do to make its contribution to sustainable human development practical. The project was intended as a pilot effort in constructing practical models to influence the building of local partnerships to tackle urban poverty and improve the condition of the urban environment. The project has had a demonstration effect and significant local impact. In some cases it has also influenced the way in which UNDP designs an element of its country programmes. With a properly developed and adequately financed learning strategy, this project could also contribute to broader development thinking, in UNDP and elsewhere, as well as help to inform country programme formation. For UNDP the project demonstrates the effectiveness of new partnerships in building community-level projects and the positive benefits to be achieved through participatory approaches to project planning and implementation.

–Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning, UNDP

LIFE's Global Laboratory





Abbreviations

ACHR	Asia Coalition for Housing Rights
AP2000	Asia-Pacific 2000
BPPS	Bureau for Policy and Programme Support
CASSAD	Centre for African Settlement Studies and Development
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CEVAE	Cento de Vivência Agro-Ecológica
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DANCED	Ministry of Environment, Denmark
EMME enda-TM	Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East Environmental Development Action in the Third World
DGIS	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of the Netherlands
GAC	Global Advisory Committee
GEF/SGP	Global Environment Facility-Small Grants Programme
GO	Governmental Organisation
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HIC	Habitat International Coalition
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IULA	International Union of Local Authorities
LIFE	Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment
NC	National coordinator

Participatory Local Governance

NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSC	National selection committee
MDGD	Management Development and Governance Division
OESP	Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning
PDP	Partners in Development Programme
PLUS	Programme of Livelihood Improvement in the Urban Settlements
RAED	Arab Network for Environment and Development
RDC	Regional Development Committee
SHD	Sustainable human development
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPARC	Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WHO	World Health Organisation
WB	World Bank



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Foreword

Sustainable human development (SHD) places people at the centre of development and gives the highest priority to poverty reduction, sustainable livelihood, environmental regeneration and women's participation in all phases of the development process. The goal of sustainable human development is to create an enabling environment where all people can act to improve the quality of their lives.

Attaining sustainable human development is not possible without good governance. Improving governance means effecting change at the local, national, regional and global levels. UNDP is committed to developing capacities for good governance as a primary means of eradicating poverty and all other forms of exclusion. On an unprecedented scale, central governments around the world are allocating substantial portions of their national budgets, devolving administrative responsibilities and decentralising economic control to regional and local authorities.

Building capacity for local governance requires involving civil society organisations and the private sector in partnership with government. A key message of UNDP's Policy on Governance is that building capacity in all three domains of governance—the state, civil society and the private sector—is critical for sustaining human development. The role of government becomes that of a facilitator—a catalytic force to spur partnerships and encourage cooperative solutions to the challenges of urban and rural development.

In the past, a large portion of UNDP funding was given to central governments to improve public sector economic and financial management. This focus has changed. UNDP—at the request of governments and in support of sustainable human development—assists in building capacity for good governance, popular participation, private and public sector development and growth with equity. Almost 30 percent of UNDP funding support is currently provided to projects focussing on strengthening capacities for governance. Support to decentralisation and local governance appears in almost 70 percent and support to civil society institutions in 65 percent of all planned UNDP programmes.

The UNDP 2001 change management process has highlighted the need to transform UNDP into a learning organisation to link policy development and evaluation by capturing and disseminating country-based experience and best practices. Within this change process, the key responsibilities of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) include acting as a global hub for the synthesis and development of cross-regional and global knowledge and products, developing policies, strategies and methodologies in UNDP's main focus areas, and developing and pilot-testing a series of well-defined global products and programme instruments.

The Management Development and Governance Division (MDGD) of BPPS has assumed these responsibilities since the inception of the Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE) in 1992. The primary objective of LIFE is to demonstrate that facilitating local dialogue can lead to local cooperation and, in turn, to effective and sustainable local action on development projects.

We intend the LIFE Programme to continue to serve as a global laboratory of method and practice for future development efforts. Our understanding of what constitutes “good” local governance will also benefit from informed discussion around this topic. We therefore welcome the opportunity to hear your thoughts and comments on this book.

Special thanks are due to the governments of the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Denmark for their continuing substantive and financial contributions to this global programme.

The views expressed in this volume are not necessarily shared by UNDP's executive board or the member governments of UNDP.

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Director

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Bureau for Policy and Programme Support

New York

June 1997



Preface

This book analyses the method and experience of the UNDP Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE) from September 1992 to May 1997. It reviews the LIFE process as a facilitator of participatory local governance through “local-local” dialogue—the participatory method at the heart of the process. Although these development activities focus on the urban environment, the method is neutral—and can be applied to any sector where multiple stakeholders have an interest in an agreed upon development strategy, implementation and sustainable outcome.

This book is intended primarily for the partners of the LIFE Programme, the local governments, NGOs and UNDP offices in programme countries, and the bilateral donor development agencies in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden that have joined UNDP in financing the project through cost-sharing and parallel co-financing. It is also for a wider audience: those interested in effective approaches to improving the living conditions in the low-income urban settlements in developing country cities and towns through participatory local governance.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the origins of the LIFE Programme, which includes the UNDP mandate of sustainable human development (SHD), the importance of participatory local governance in achieving SHD; the global trend of urbanisation; the underlying rationale for LIFE embedded in the need for local initiatives; and a description of the LIFE Programme objectives. Chapter 2 details the design of the programme and describes the LIFE structure, process and

methodology. Chapters 3 and 4 describe the LIFE experience to date, illustrating the impact of the LIFE methodology at the country, regional, inter-regional and global levels. These chapters also include a look at the financial strategy and cost-sharing approach of the programme. Chapter 5 assesses the strengths and constraints of LIFE's participatory process and the local-local dialogue method. Chapter 6 examines the critical issues in mainstreaming and institutionalising the methodology and the implications for LIFE's future. Chapter 7 reviews the lessons learned from experiences at the local, national and global levels, and it summarises the implications for donors of UNDP's new country-based trust-fund proposal. It also considers the impact of LIFE Programme experience on UNDP programming. Chapter 8 includes recommendations for the tasks ahead and a summary of the challenges to be faced in the last phase of the pilot programme. As a companion to this book a financial summary report has been prepared to complete the picture of Programme inputs, outputs and impact to date, and this report is available upon request.

We are deeply indebted to the team of consultants led by Professor Babar Mumtaz (DPU, London) who reviewed the last four years of reports and who prepared the primary analysis upon which this publication is based. In addition to Professor Mumtaz, Ms. Kendra Collins, Ms. Catherine Davis and Ms. Deborah Musinger provided inputs to the report. Editorial assistance and correlative inputs were provided by Mr. George Walters, UNDP editorial consultant, and Mr. Bruce Ross-Larson and Ms. Heidi Gifford, Communications Development Incorporated. The most up-to-date sources of information were the comprehensive surveys completed by the national coordinators on almost every dimension of the programme within their country. Other sources used in preparing this report include quarterly and annual country programme progress reports, country programme assessments by national consultants, Global Advisory Committee workshop reports, global coordinator reports and analysis, an external assessment of the programme conducted by Mr. Hugo Navajas, international consultant, several UNDP policy and discussion papers on urban development and local governance, and feedback from cost-sharing partners, LIFE national coordinators and technical support staff on the draft edition of this report. The Director of MDGD provided substantive guidance throughout.

UNDP hopes that this analysis will contribute to the global dialogue about the role of participatory local governance in achieving sustainable human development objectives, particularly for urban poverty alleviation.

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May 1997



Executive Summary

The Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment, popularly known as “LIFE”, has become operational at the community, country, regional, inter-regional and global levels with more than \$11 million in programme resources since its launch at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

The LIFE Programme is a community-based initiative operating in more than 60 cities in 12 pilot countries—Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Thailand. It confirms the effectiveness of participatory local governance through local-local dialogue to address urban environmental problems affecting the poor. In collaboration with local urban authorities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and the private sector, the programme supports small projects that improve the local environment. These projects become the basis for policy dialogues and strategies for scaling up the assault on urban environmental problems that mar urban neighbourhoods and deter the economic advance of the poor.

LIFE also funds and supports regional and inter-regional NGO networks and cities’ associations concerned with local urban environmental problems, guiding and propelling country-based initiatives from conception to reality. It encourages sharing and dissemination of best practices at all levels of the programme’s reach: local, municipal, country, regional, inter-regional and global. LIFE also engages its bilateral and multilateral donor partners in national and global dialogues to

reflect on, analyse and advocate local participatory governance in achieving sustainable human development.

The premise of LIFE is that local people and organisations best determine which environmental problems need urgent attention—and that local solutions to local problems have a better chance of creating lasting change in a community. The programme has had a profound impact on those communities where it is active, and the success of its collaborative efforts is evidence that community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations and local authorities can work together to improve the lives of people in the swelling low-income urban settlements of the developing world.



“To me LIFE means much more than a process or methodology for development—to me it seems to be an ideology or philosophy for getting community people into the centre of development.”

*—Najmus Sahar Sadiq,
Programme Officer,
Bangladesh*

LIFE has emerged within the larger context of concern for identifying and incorporating participatory methods that further sustainable human development. Integral to the paradigm is the notion of decentralisation—nurtured by the awareness that the central government cannot be the sole source and support for development. As a mode of sustainable human development, LIFE’s focus has been empowering individuals and institutions in local communities to understand and improve the environment in which they live and work.

LIFE is designed to incorporate action at country, regional and global levels, but the core focus is at the country level—on a three-stage process that includes “upstream-downstream-upstream” phases. In the initial upstream phase, interactive workshops and broad-based consultations help formulate national strategies to activate communities and mobilise resources for local projects. Through downstream ongoing local consultations, collaborative projects are identified, supported and implemented, and systems for monitoring and evaluation are established. An upstream policy dialogue occurs in the final phase as collaborative projects lead to a collective impact on the means and methods of municipal or national policy-making.

The overarching objective of the LIFE process is to mainstream and institutionalise this participatory approach by forging new partnerships among government, civil society and the private sector. While mainstreaming and institutionalisation of the LIFE process have begun in some quarters, the degree to which they can effect change requires a major paradigm shift in the development community.

LIFE has found that strengthening the institutional capacities of NGOs, CBOs and local authorities requires technical assistance in proposal writing, financial reporting, project development and management, fund-raising and negotiation. It is also clear that the skills and methods learned in LIFE's small environmental projects are easily transferred and applied to issues in other areas, such as health or education. In some projects LIFE's impact has already extended beyond local environmental problems to address other issues such as gender equality and income generation.

Other lessons include the awareness that the media and the private sector are key elements to sustaining LIFE's projects and practices. The media must be enlisted to publicise and celebrate successful projects, to educate and inform the public about the programme method and to disseminate best practices to as wide an audience as possible. The private sector must be involved to help sustain the projects over time: by leveraging private source support, encouraging the income-generation aspect of projects and ensuring that small development enterprises are investment opportunities.

The success of the LIFE programme will be measured by the extent to which LIFE takes on appropriate institutional forms in countries and the extent to which it influences national and international policy-making. At the regional and global levels, significant progress has been made working with NGO networks and cities' associations to exchange and share successful approaches and experiences. Inter-regional conferences and workshops have extended the LIFE philosophy and practice to every region of the world. And a process of reflection, analysis and advocacy of local participatory governance has begun to change the thinking of the global development community.

Significant challenges remain in the last phase of the LIFE programme (1997–2000) to institutionalise, mainstream and scale up its methods and practices. One challenge is grappling with the political and institutional resistance to a shift in the balance of power as more citizen groups take action. A second is ensuring quality leadership and building capacity within local NGOs and CBOs to make them more effective agents of change. A third is internalising the programme to make it part of national strategic planning rather than an independent pilot under UNDP's aegis. And a fourth is developing a system to expand the programme across regions and within national borders in ways



“What we are looking at now are the lessons learned—that this could be the best solution to urban environmental problems. This includes partnerships and the involvement of the local community in deciding what has to be done for the community and their sharing in the implementation and the evaluation of these experiences.”

—Brigitte Kheir Keirouz,
National Coordinator,
Lebanon

that balance LIFE's decentralised structure with the need for country-level communication, evaluation and feedback.

In the next few years the LIFE cycle will continue with pilot testing of new small projects and the initiation of the local-local dialogue method at the same time as projects already established will focus on lessons, mainstreaming and institutionalisation. The projects just starting in Bangladesh and South Africa will benefit from the lessons shared and evaluations exchanged from other pilot countries. The other 10 countries where LIFE is already active will continue to fund new "policy experiments" while shifting to dissemination of best practices, scaling up and institutionalisation.

There are encouraging signs that the local-local dialogue method and the local participatory approach to project development have taken hold outside of LIFE's direct influence. Programmes in Mongolia and Uganda are being patterned on the LIFE cycle, and other countries will follow.

The goal in the next few years is to build the capacities and partnerships of local actors in communities all over the globe. To this end, LIFE will ensure high-quality evaluation of the experiences to date, promote the documentation, dissemination and interchange of successful approaches to urban environmental improvements, and continue to move the local-local methodology and policy dialogue from a local context to national and international arenas.



"It is the purpose of the LIFE team to help us face problems of the environment, and the environment problems of Kyrgyzstan, or Pakistan, Colombia, or Jamaica are not the problems of these states or these particular peoples but the problems of all humankind."

*—Bakyt Beshimov,
National Coordinator,
Kyrgyzstan*

LIFE's Origins and Objectives



LIFE—The Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment—was launched as a pilot by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Its primary objective is to demonstrate local solutions to urban environmental problems. At the core of the programme are small projects designed, implemented and operated by local community-based organisations (CBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local authorities. The programme incorporates a three-stage process and uses “local-local” dialogue to address urban environmental issues and improve the lives of the urban poor. These small projects are intended as “policy experiments” that provide feedback for policy elaboration at the national, regional and global levels.

In 1991–92 the LIFE Programme was designed in a participatory process that involved consultations among mayors from developing country cities, NGO networks, cities’ associations, UN administrators, World Bank officers and bilateral donors. The networks and partnerships that emerged during this consultative process helped build a strong foundation for the preparation of the LIFE Programme Document and its approval by UNDP in April 1992.

The programme has had financial support from UNDP and the governments of four industrial countries as well as from public and private organisations in the participating developing countries. Funding for the first two-year pilot phase was generously committed by the governments of Sweden, the

Netherlands, and Germany and by three units in UNDP—the Division for Global and Inter-regional Programmes, the Environment and Natural Resources Group of the Special Programme Resource for Environment and the Poverty Alleviation Programme through the Special Programme Resource for Poverty Alleviation.

Following discussions by the bilateral donors, the regional bureaux of UNDP, the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Programme Development and Support Division, criteria were established to determine the countries to be selected for the pilot programme. The criteria included a well-developed NGO and CBO movement, sufficient autonomy and strength of municipal authorities, willingness on the part of local authorities to collaborate with CBOs and NGOs, and serious urban environmental issues. Geographic distribution and social and economic contexts were also factors.

Seven countries were chosen for the first two-year phase: Thailand and Pakistan in the Asia-Pacific region; Senegal and Tanzania in the Africa region; Brazil and Jamaica in Latin America and the Caribbean; and Egypt in the Arab States. They varied in their urban population (from 23 percent of the total in Thailand to 75 percent in Brazil), in urban growth rates (from 2.2 percent in Jamaica to 7.5 percent in Tanzania), in GNP per capita (from \$110 in Tanzania to \$2,680 in Brazil), and in life expectancy (from very low in Senegal to high in Jamaica). LIFE began in all countries with initiating missions that included dialogue with more than 260 representatives from local, municipal, provincial and national governments; NGOs; CBOs; participants from the private sector; bilateral donor agencies and multilateral organisations. Dialogue took the form of individual interviews and briefings, group meetings and brainstorming sessions and on-site visits to low-income urban settlements. The missions were intended to initiate the local-national process and not to select particular projects. Each mission was a catalytic intervention to introduce a *process*—not to administer another small grants programme.

The LIFE cycle has been divided into three phases, ending in 2000 with completion of the programme.

- In Phase I (1993–94) the programme was initiated in seven countries, and national committees selected 45 projects to receive support. Four regional and two inter-regional projects also received support.

- In Phase II (1995–96) the programme was extended to another five countries—Bangladesh, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon and South Africa—with 129 projects being implemented in the 12 countries and with support for six regional and four inter-regional projects. The programme held its third annual Global Advisory Committee (GAC) workshop in Istanbul in June 1996 to coincide with the Habitat II City Summit to review and share its performance and lessons and make proposals for future directions and action.

- Phase III (1997–2000) will complete the implementation of projects initiated between 1992 and 1996, will initiate new projects and will facilitate the mainstreaming and institutionalisation of the local-local method at the national and international levels.

Sustainable human development

The free market reforms and structural adjustment strategies of economic policy of the 1980s and the 1990s by and large discounted the negative social impact of policy on developing country populations. In response, UNDP advocated a concept of sustainable human development (UNDP 1990) to place people at the centre of the development process.

The conventional model of development sought to achieve social welfare and the harmonisation of conflicting interests through a combination of macroeconomic growth and welfare policies. The sustainable human development concept redefines economic growth as a means for enhancing all human lives—and defines human development as enlarging the range of choices available to people in all spheres of their lives. Development is understood to be a process that not only generates growth but distributes it equitably. It enhances peoples' capabilities and creates opportunities for using these capabilities. It helps to empower the poor rather than marginalise them. It regenerates rather than destroys the environment. And it ensures choices for present and future generations (UNDP 1994). The critical issues of sustainable human development include poverty elimination, gender equity, employment creation, environmental improvement and sound governance.

Integral to sustainable human development is the idea of social capital—accumulated as the result of living together in society and sharing norms and values. Social capital enables community members to make conscious decisions for achieving

common goals through collective action. To address sustainable human development, the LIFE Programme uses urban environmental problems—and remedies—as entry points. Consistent with UNDP’s urban development cooperation strategy, LIFE provides the poor with services and infrastructure; it enlists and empowers women in all phases of projects; it strengthens local CBOs, NGOs and governments; and it invests in income-generating projects.

Governance

Adapting the concept of sustainable human development requires concerted efforts by those managing the affairs of developing countries.¹ Governments—the elected officials and civil servants who make up governing institutions—used to be broadly equated with the term “governance”, which referred to a political regime or to those with the capacity to formulate and implement policies and discharge functions and with the authority to manage a country’s economic and social resources. Due to their public administration and management functions, government officials were believed to have the ultimate capacity and wisdom to manage and influence development—in all its forms. Although it was understood that “government” referred to the collective tiers of administration, including local government, the emphasis was on central or national governments.

Over the years, this somewhat limited concept of governance has been replaced by a broader, more inclusive definition that takes into account the realities of how countries are run and managed and recognises the limitations of governments. The term “governance” refers to the process by which society manages its economic, social and political resources and institutions—not only for development, but also for the cohesion, integration and well-being of its people. Clearly, the ability of developing countries to achieve their development goals hinges on the quality of governance and the extent to which government interacts with commercial and civil society organisations.

UNDP defines governance as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a society’s affairs. This broad concept encompasses the organisational structures and activities of central, regional and local government; the parliament; the judiciary; and the institutions, organisations and individuals that constitute civil society and the private sector (figure 1.1). This concept of governance stresses the nature and

Figure 1.1
The three domains
of governance



quality of interactions among social actors and between social actors and the state.

Governance begins in communities, villages and towns, and local governance provides the basis for the concept and the structure of governance. Two aspects of governance are particularly relevant: the technical and the representational. The technical aspect refers to the how and what of development—the processes and procedures of resource mobilisation, plan formulation, technical application and resource allocation. The representational aspect refers to the way decisions are taken and who takes them—and thus includes issues of representation and participation, accountability and empowerment.

With this as the context, the implementation of sustainable human development strategies requires a decentralised, local participatory process to identify and address the priority objectives—of poverty elimination, employment creation, gender equity and ending environmental degradation. This is the approach used in LIFE—participatory local governance. Underlying these objectives are issues that can most effectively be resolved through local coordination, planning and action, all supported by enabling national and international policies.

Urbanisation

Another factor leading to the LIFE Programme was the search for ways to counter the negative effects of urbanisation and the deleterious impacts of industrial policies on cities.²

Cities promote the modernisation of agriculture by providing domestic markets for farm goods, providing the infrastructure necessary for wider export markets and relieving land pressures by absorbing rural migrants. Cities also offer residents the opportunity to obtain the knowledge and skills to become more productive. Employment and wage opportunities—particularly for women—are generally greater in cities than in rural areas. That is why national economic development requires the growth and development of cities. But without adequate city planning and management, the efficiencies of cities can be overshadowed by increased poverty and environmental degradation.

Until recently, the response in most countries was to institute land-use planning measures to minimise the immediate



Local slum communities cleaned and dredged this canal and built a community boardwalk in Thailand

environmental impact by separating economic and residential areas. In practice, however, this has contributed to the creation of low-value and even no-value urban land—often the only land accessible to the poor and those with limited incomes. As a result, thousands of “unplanned” communities evolved—without adequate sanitation, access to safe water or basic health considerations—throughout the urban areas of developing countries.

“Sound governance is a prerequisite for sustainable human development, and governance at the local level is of crucial importance for attaining sustainable human development.”

—Rasheda Selim

Residents of urban slums and squatter settlements are often denied legal access to municipal services and infrastructure, and they end up paying disproportionately more for inferior, privately supplied water and other urban services. Systematic waste disposal and sanitation services often do not exist. So, the hazards affecting the urban poor include undisposed wastes, contaminated water, flooding, landslides, erosion and poisoning from industrial pollution. When insecurity of tenure and inadequate employment are added, the result is not just severe health and malnutrition problems but also a fragmentation of social values that leaves the poor open to exploitation and abuse.

Improvements in these conditions are, therefore, visible—and in many cases immediate. They produce mutual, collective benefits rather than individual benefits and can best be brought about through collective, cooperative action rather than individual action.

The creators of the LIFE Programme recognised that urban environmental problems are an ideal entry point for getting local actors to work together and to arrive at a greater mutual understanding. Introducing the programme through small environmental projects provides the opportunity to develop and test the viability of implementing community-based participatory projects in urban settings. The characteristics of urban populations—young, often mobile populations, great diversity and heterogeneity, weak social cohesion and interaction and a high degree of anonymity—are often cited as detrimental to cooperative and collective action of the sort that has been advocated and implemented in rural communities. But working together, local actors can accomplish more and be more productive and efficient than acting alone.

The LIFE Programme focuses on eight urban environmental problems:

- Inadequate provision of water supply and sanitation services
- Deficiencies in solid and liquid waste management

- Air and water pollution
- Occupancy of hazard-prone areas
- Poor health from environmental degradation
- Poverty from limited income-generation opportunities
- Absence of environmental education
- Exclusion of environmental considerations in urban planning

The extent to which a project addresses these areas is one of the main criteria developed in each country for the selection of the projects to be supported by the LIFE Programme. Additional criteria include gender equity, income generation, participatory governance and the professional capacity of the implementing organisation.

LIFE's objectives

The LIFE Programme has consciously used urban environmental improvements to galvanise local actors—to reach consensus and to understand each actor's strengths, weaknesses and contribution to solving a community's problems. The larger objective of the LIFE Programme has been for the initiatives of local actors to complement national efforts.

Identifying a local institution that is both able and willing to act is not easy. Local authorities have the mandate to act and should therefore provide institutional support. But in most developing countries, local authorities have been rendered ineffective and powerless, often by central governments that have stripped them of their revenue and authority. Until the recent decentralisation to rehabilitate local governments in many developing countries, few could meet even their operating expenses—and most were totally reliant on central government grants.

The involvement and intervention of NGOs is motivated by the inability of local governments to deal with the growing demand for urban shelter services and income-generating opportunities, especially for women. Most urban NGOs have emerged in response to the problems affecting a locality and therefore operate locally, often limiting their intervention to a single area in a city. Even where they are part of a larger, even international organisation, each intervention is local. The participation of the affected community in these projects has been a pragmatic way to ensure their "involvement" and guarantee their "acceptance" of the project and thereby legitimise the

"The word dialogue comes from the Greek roots *dia* and *logos*—meaning flowing through—whereas the word debate means to beat down and discussion has the same root as concussion."

—Joseph Jaworski

NGO's intervention. But the emphasis on the participation of the community often excluded other actors. Indeed, many NGOs were seen to oppose government agencies and institutions.

NGO-led community participation and involvement clearly demonstrated its effectiveness and efficiency—and should have been attractive for governments and international agencies. Indeed, international agencies have had few problems in turning to NGOs to act as their implementing agents (often bypassing government agencies). But governments have often perceived NGO-led interventions as a tacit admission of failure and an abrogation of their natural functions. In many countries, there thus exists mistrust—if not animosity—between governments and NGOs.

The challenge for UNDP was to discern whether the positive experiences of NGOs and community groups could be capitalised on and consolidated into a programme that would have the support of local and national governments; of private, community and non-governmental organisations; and of international agencies. Such a programme could help resolve local prob-

lems and promote participatory local governance within the framework of the long-term goals of sustainable human development.

Those goals were echoed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, which endorsed Local Agenda 21, an action plan to put control of local issues and local resources into local hands for sustainable human development through decentralised, participatory local governance. In conjunction with the aims and objectives of the Summit, a series of consultative meetings—bringing together mayors, CBOs, NGOs, citizen action groups, regional and inter-regional cities' associations and UNDP and other bilateral and multilateral donor agencies—were used to formulate the LIFE Programme's three objectives:

- To demonstrate local solutions to urban environmental problems and strengthen institutional capacities and collaboration through small projects involving NGOs, CBOs and local authorities at the neighbourhood, city and country levels.
- To facilitate policy dialogue and scaling up based on local initiatives through national and local consultations involving NGOs, CBOs and local authorities at the neighbourhood, city and country levels.



Solid waste collection and disposal, Ein Helwan, Egypt

- To promote the exchange of successful approaches and innovations to local urban environmental improvement at the sub-regional, regional and inter-regional levels by NGO networks, cities' associations and international agencies.

Notes

1. This section draws upon Rasheda Selim, "An Approach to Participatory Local Governance: Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment" (UNDP 1996).

2. This section is based on *Cities, People & Poverty: Urban Development Cooperation for the 1990s* (UNDP 1991) and *Hugo Navajas, LIFE: Forward Looking Assessment of Phase 1* (1992–94), (UNDP 1995).



LIFE's Structure, Process and Method

The LIFE Programme's structure incorporates action at the country, regional and global levels. Within these tiers is a three-stage process at the country level that includes an initial "upstream" phase, a "downstream" phase and a final "upstream" phase. All phases of the programme use the LIFE method—essentially local-local dialogue within each community. But the method is also applied at country, regional and global levels. This method of local dialogue leading to local cooperation and local action underpins the philosophy of all LIFE projects.

A structure for increasing dialogue

The programme structure is designed to get the most from continuous dialogue and participation at six levels—local, municipal, national, regional, inter-regional and global—in every aspect of LIFE Programme development and implementation.

The "local, municipal and country" levels and the "regional, inter-regional and global" levels form natural triads in the programme structure and operations. The first triad is a springboard from which direct action, policy change and day-to-day development activity can come about through collaborative planning and action. The second triad is a framework that supports the efforts of development practitioners on the ground. This support comes in the form of documenting, disseminating and sharing the successful approaches and best practices of grass-roots efforts in communities.

When the two triads come together they work like a sextant to navigate through and around the many obstacles confronting development efforts today. Future analysis and documentation of the LIFE Programme should investigate what makes this confluence of efforts work well and how to apply the programme's structure to other development efforts.

Local, municipal and country levels

At the core of the LIFE Programme is a national consultation to determine an overall national strategy and the criteria for project selection. Integral to this process is a national coordinator who arranges and organises local-local dialogues to bring together communities, local authorities and the private sector to raise and resolve local issues. The process is elaborated, tested and validated through a series of "policy experiments" in the form of small projects aimed at improving the urban environment through activities by the local community. In supporting these local initiatives, LIFE seeks to share the lessons with a wider audience.

Local authorities, CBOs and NGOs discuss their environmental needs and priorities and develop and implement their own plans. LIFE national coordinators and national selection committees help them formulate strategies and secure the financial support for implementing the projects they design.

Regional and inter-regional levels

The LIFE Programme promotes country-level collaboration and interchange with regional and inter-regional NGOs and cities' associations addressing environmental degradation and poverty through participatory means. To broaden the LIFE Programme's impact regional and inter-regional conferences, workshops, research, newsletters and publications report on performance and disseminate methods and experience.

Criteria for the selection of regional and inter-regional activities include:

- Facilitating the testing of different urban-environmental development strategies.
- Providing a basis for comparison among NGOs and local authorities.
- Broadening the outreach of projects.
- Strengthening communications and networking among participating NGOs and local authorities.

Global level

A regular process of self-evaluation and planning ensures interaction and participation among country and regional actors with donors. In addition, third-party evaluations and assessments at all levels ensure objectivity regarding what is done and learned—both qualitatively and quantitatively.



Pre-LIFE solid waste treatment, Beirut, Lebanon

The Global Advisory Committee (GAC) meets annually, augmenting the continuous reporting and interchange among GAC members and the bilateral donors. Through dialogue and documentation, donors facilitate a global process for mainstreaming and institutionalising what is learned from the LIFE approach. UNDP technical support staff review and advise on the work of national coordinators. And annual meetings of national coordinators and periodic global work-

shops involving mayors, local practitioners and regional/inter-regional partners further contribute to a “learning culture” for local governance.

The LIFE initiative is testing approaches to providing technical support and guidance to local development initiatives. Through the LIFE Programme Office at UNDP Headquarters and the GAC workshops, it supports and advises the country, regional and inter-regional activities by practising participatory methods itself.

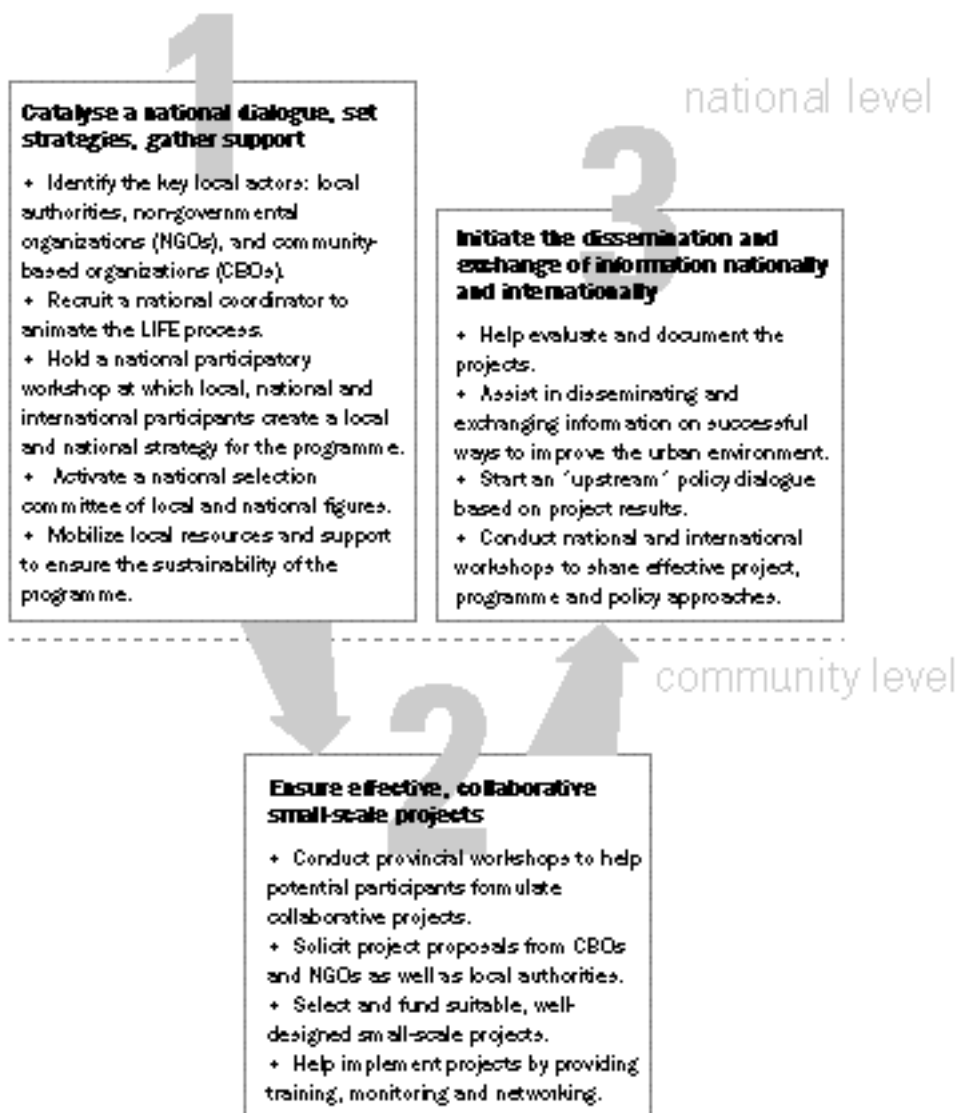
LIFE uses cost-sharing funding mechanisms through which UNDP contributions are combined with those of several bilateral donors to meet a basic programme budget. This is further leveraged by parallel financing and country inputs to expand project coverage and impact. Funding for the LIFE Programme from UNDP and a few industrialised countries is important, but more important is the credibility and strength that such support provides to the local initiatives.

A process for focussing a range of actors

The three-stage process for the LIFE Programme in each country may be unique in bringing together national, urban and community actors to focus on immediate local needs and on longer-term national policy issues (figure 2.1).

The stages can be thought of as a stream flowing through a community, nourishing it and bringing new “life”. The stream first flows with national assessments, strategies and pro-

Figure 2.1
Steps to a national programme: the LIFE process



grammes developed within each context. It next flows down with the selection and implementation of small projects that use participatory methods to test urban environmental policy options. It then flows up again with the dissemination and exchange of information nationally and internationally. Throughout all three stages, local-local dialogue and participatory methods encourage cooperative work.

Stage 1. Upstream—Catalysing a national dialogue, developing strategies, gathering support

- Set up a preparatory committee and identify key local actors: local authorities, private sector organisations, NGOs, and CBOs.
- Recruit a national coordinator to animate the LIFE process.
- Hold a national participatory workshop at which local, national and international participants develop a local and national strategy for the programme.
- Activate a national selection committee involving local and national figures.
- Mobilise local resources and support to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

Stage 2. Downstream—Ensuring effective and collaborative small projects

- Conduct provincial and municipal workshops to help potential participants formulate collaborative projects.
- Solicit project proposals from CBOs and NGOs as well as from local authorities.
- Select and fund relevant, well-designed small projects.
- Help implement projects by providing training, monitoring and networking.

Stage 3. Upstream—Disseminating and exchanging information nationally and internationally

- Assist in evaluating and documenting the projects.
- Assist in disseminating and exchanging information on successful ways to improve the urban environment.
- Conduct national and international workshops to share effective project, programme and policy approaches, and initiate an “upstream” policy dialogue based on project results.

These three stages are implemented in the context of the three global objectives of the LIFE Programme which guide

the overall strategic planning and implementation process within each country.

Stage 1. Setting up

The LIFE Programme starts with an *assessment* of the institutional arrangements, expectations and other conditions that determine the suitability of a country to participate. An *initiating mission*—carried out by a small team, usually including the global coordinator and the UNDP country office—helps to generate interest, analyse problems and identify supporting players. If the conditions are suitable for a LIFE Programme, a LIFE *preparatory committee* is established during the initiating mission, and the process of catalysing a national dialogue is put in motion. Of immediate concern is identifying and recruiting a national coordinator, followed by national consultations and the appointment of a national selection committee.

National coordinators, the chief animators of the programme process, are selected for their familiarity with the conditions in their country and their ability to manage small projects through motivating people to work together. Typically, they have been involved in other projects or organisations improving conditions in poorer sections of a city. The coordinators manage the daily activities; mobilise local resources; and help to support, document and evaluate projects. As the national focal point for the LIFE Programme, they liaise with the regional, inter-regional and other programmes.

National consultation takes the form of two-day or three-day participatory workshops including representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations, civic leaders, individuals from community-based organisations, and occasionally donors that may be willing to provide funds to supplement the LIFE grants. The workshops help rank local urban problems, establish criteria for project selection and in the larger countries determine which geographical areas should be the focus of the first group of projects. Most importantly, the workshops provide a trial run in stimulating a dialogue among the local actors, who may be coming together for the first time to seek collaborative approaches to problems.

Each local actor has a complementary role in developing the programme strategies specific to each site. Community-based organisations, given their direct experience with local problems, must be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating the

projects. Non-governmental organisations often act as the link between the community and outside resources—and provide training and support for projects. Local authorities offer their expertise, financial resources and coordination with other networks and government institutions. Working together, these local actors build a solid foundation of support for projects.

The national selection committees consist of 8 to 22 concerned and competent individuals invited to serve for two years. The primary task of the Committees is to review, select and approve local LIFE projects. They also promote the programme, mobilise human and financial resources, and act as an ongoing forum for policy dialogue on the urban environment. But they are not intended as a permanent body. Instead, they are ad hoc task forces for the participation of local actors in project selection.

Mobilising resources and support at all levels in each country ensures a broad and deep commitment to sustaining each project—from municipal, central and provincial governments, NGOs, CBOs, private firms and companies, research and training institutes, the mass media, UNDP country offices, and national coordinators and national selection committees. Together, these actors bring LIFE to life and ensure the programme's continuity.



Oil disposal and storage, Lebanon

Stage 2. Policy experiments

Municipal and provincial workshops are held for potential participants to collaborate on small projects. Provincial workshops involve local actors in planning and assist organisations in formulating proposals for small projects intended to make tangible improvements in the living environment of low-income settlements. Not an end in themselves, these small projects are evaluated—and their approaches documented—so that they can have a ripple effect as policy experiments influencing municipal and national practice.

The process of inviting project proposals has always been preceded by one or more workshops to explain the LIFE Programme's aims and objectives—and to elaborate on the project criteria and selection process. In Pakistan, provincial consultations followed a national consultation held in the capital—the kind of follow up essential for promoting a new method. Creating a better understanding of the projects that

LIFE is prepared to support, workshops have also been held on other aspects related to LIFE and its objectives—such as on squatters and on cultural heritage in Egypt and on identifying issues and building a city strategy for Cartagena, Colombia.

The project proposals received by the national coordinator are reviewed and discussed by the national selection committee, using criteria that reflect the LIFE Programme objectives, modified to reflect national or provincial objectives. In most cases, the LIFE grants are supplemented with local funds from public and private sources. Intended as seed money to attract larger contributions from local groups, LIFE grants fund pilot or demonstration projects that can be later duplicated by others. The ceiling for any one grant is \$50,000.

Stage 3. Evaluation, dissemination and policy

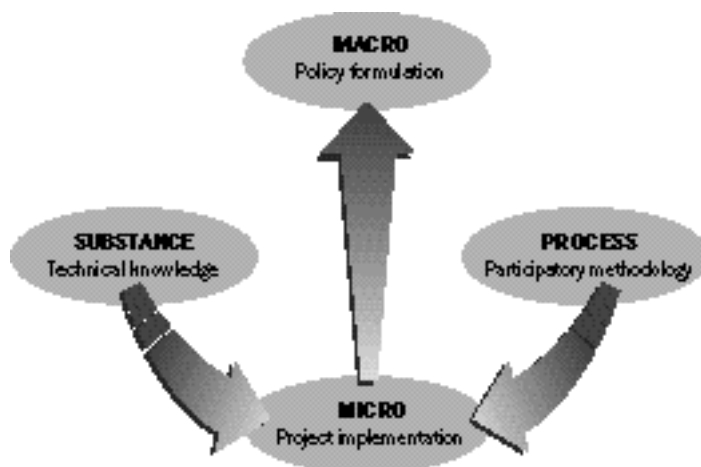
To maintain the achievements of each project and to enable the community to operate the programme without external inputs, a *plan for self-sufficiency* is developed and put in place. The LIFE process also includes an extensive *evaluation* that uses established criteria to assess the extent to which expectations have been fulfilled. This evaluation is followed by *documentation and dissemination* of the lessons from the project—lessons for other community and country programmes.

National and international workshops are held to share the lessons and foster *policy dialogues* with local and national governments, NGOs, CBOs, the private sector and international donors—all to explore ways to incorporate lessons into policy objectives and frameworks and to mainstream and institutionalise best practices.

A method for local-local dialogue

The LIFE Programme involves all stakeholders in an ongoing participatory process called local-local dialogue. This inclusive process creates links and communication among all actors involved in solving a community's environmental problems, encouraging representatives of local, national and international organisations to cooperate, coordinate and compromise on initiatives to improve the urban environment in low-income settlements. Used at all stages of the LIFE Programme, the local-local method is the most important feature ensuring the success and sustainability of LIFE projects.

Figure 2.2
The LIFE Programme dynamics



In the initial “upstream” stage of the programme in national workshops, consultations and task forces, local-local dialogue is used in setting up the national selection committees and in defining the roles and responsibilities of each country’s coordinator. In the “downstream” stage, the method promotes an active dialogue among the NGOs, CBOs, private sector entities and local government authorities to identify project ideas, to develop collaborative projects and to implement plans. In the final “upstream” stage, the method is used to exchange experiences and ideas and to share lessons at the national, global and international levels. The goal is to use the local-local dialogue to translate the lessons of successful and innovative micro-interventions into concrete policies at the macro level.

LIFE in the 12 Countries



LIFE incorporates a process of dialogue and participation at all its levels of involvement—from local to global—but the focus is at the country level. The programme is launched with the recruitment of a national coordinator, the introduction of national participatory workshops, and the formation of a national selection committee to identify and select small projects. Although project responsibility and management rest with local communities, support for LIFE's method must be strong and constant at the national level. This chapter explores the Programme's impact in specific countries; the next chapter broadens the view to look at LIFE's impact regionally and globally.

The LIFE Programme began in 1992–93 with initiating missions to eight countries—Egypt, Brazil, Pakistan, Jamaica, Thailand, Tanzania, Senegal and Morocco. Due to constraints, the programme in Morocco did not extend beyond the initiating mission and has since been put on hold. Phase II saw the addition of five countries in 1995–96—Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Colombia, South Africa and Bangladesh—bringing the total to 12 pilot countries as the programme entered phase III for 1997–2000 (table 3.1, annex 1). The programme is now active in more than 60 cities in these 12 countries. Senegal, Thailand, Jamaica and Lebanon have five or more cities participating—the other countries, one to four.

LIFE was launched in each country with the recruitment of the national coordinator and the national consultation (annex 4). National coordinators were identified through rec-

Table 3.1 Origins of LIFE

Year of initiating mission	Country
1992–93	Thailand
	Tanzania
	Brazil
	Pakistan
	Jamaica
	Egypt
	Senegal
1995	Kyrgyzstan
	Lebanon
	Colombia
	South Africa
	Bangladesh

Source: UNDP.

Table 3.2 Gender breakdown of national selection committees

Country	Men	Women
Brazil	4	4
Colombia	6	3
Egypt	7	9
Jamaica	9	10
Kyrgyzstan	8	3
Lebanon	8	4
Pakistan	5	5
Senegal	19	3
Tanzania	10	4
Thailand	11	6
Total	87	51
Percentage	63	37

Source: UNDP.

ommendations arising from the national consultation, the UNDP resident representative and such other UNDP programmes as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) small grants programme. The national coordinators also serve as coordinators of the GEF in Egypt and Pakistan and of Asia–Pacific 2000 in Pakistan and Thailand. The national coordinator in Kyrgyzstan also serves on the national selection committee for the UNDP Partners in Development Programme. Where national coordinators were not selected before the national consultation (Jamaica and Tanzania), there were delays in carrying the programme forward.

National selection committees (known in Thailand as the National Task Force) operate in 10 of the 12 countries. The committee members’ responsibilities include promoting local–local dialogue, reviewing and selecting projects, providing technical assistance in proposal writing, mobilising resources and monitoring projects.

The committee composition varies from country to country but generally includes representatives from local and national governments, CBOs, NGOs, the private sector, academic institutions, UNDP and other aid agencies, as well as the national coordinator. In most countries the committee meets three to four times a year, but when LIFE is starting out in a country, it may meet once a month or more.

The size of the national selection committee ranges from 8 members in Brazil to 22 in Senegal, with an average of 14. Representatives from NGOs, at 27 percent, make up the largest proportion of members, followed by representatives from national government (19 percent), local authorities (12 percent) and CBOs (10 percent)—and there is at least one representative from the private sector in all but two countries, Kyrgyzstan and Senegal (for more information see table 3.2 and annex 1). This is an encouraging sign of LIFE’s ability to bring the public sector, the private sector and civil society organisations together. Private sector representatives will contribute to LIFE’s ability to mobilise resources. And national government representatives will contribute to LIFE’s ability to enter into national policy dialogues. But the predominance of CBO, NGO and local authority representatives should be maintained because they are the grant recipients.

Each country, in its national consultation, establishes project selection criteria for providing grants to local initiatives. And

each country is allocated approximately \$100,000–\$150,000 for grants to small projects during each two-year phase—funds that are augmented through local resource mobilisation. In Thailand, LIFE has \$650,000 for grants due to collaboration with the German donor agency GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit) and DANCED (the Ministry of Environment, Denmark). And in Brazil the national coordinator solicited more than \$630,000 from country sources for grants.

So far, LIFE has approved 129 small policy experiments and transferred funds to 111. UNDP and bilateral cost-sharing allocations for the grants total \$2.3 million. These funds have leveraged another \$4.1 million from country resources and parallel financing for a total of \$6.4 million. Most countries that began the programme in earlier phases have implemented all projects initiated between 1992–96 and are concentrating their efforts on project evaluation for best practice and scaling up. Some of these countries are now beginning the LIFE cycle again with the selection of new projects. Others, such as Bangladesh and South Africa entered the programme later and are selecting projects for the first time.

Of the projects approved, 86 percent have received funding from UNDP–LIFE, and of the remaining 14 percent, many have been approved recently and have not yet received funding. Why are some projects approved but not funded? In Pakistan, one of the approved projects received its funding from another source. In Colombia, five projects are waiting to negotiate the budget with the Ministry of Environment before the project begins. In one case in Tanzania and another in Pakistan, LIFE withheld funding because the grant recipient lacked managerial capacity and credibility. LIFE–Tanzania chose to work directly with the community to build capacity before releasing funds.

Of the funded projects, 62 percent are ongoing and 38 percent have been completed, with 6 percent in the evaluation stage (annex 1).

An important development in the management system has been the establishment of Local Support Committees in Tanzania, Brazil, Lebanon, Colombia, Egypt and Jamaica. In Tanzania and Brazil these are city-based committees that iden-



Educating the community in environmental issues, Thailand

tify and screen proposals. In Lebanon the committees are project-based, and in Colombia neighbourhood-based. As the national coordinator in Lebanon explains, “the national selection committee has asked all project applicants to form a project committee to help to design the project before applying to LIFE”. These committees run the projects and raise resources for them. Egypt and Jamaica have established committees to pre-screen project proposals before they go to the full national selection committee.

To introduce eligible grant recipients to the programme and assist in proposal writing, LIFE has conducted 139 workshops (with 2,275 participants) in the 12 countries (annex 3). These workshops help to ensure that promising projects do not automatically get rejected due to a lack of capacity in proposal writing—important because many participants, especially citizens groups and community-based organisations, lack experience in submitting proposals. Often forming the basis for collaborative action, these proposal-writing workshops also offer an opportunity for local-local dialogue about solutions to urban environmental problems.

Local-local dialogue helps local actors create partnerships

The purpose of the local-local dialogue is to get local actors to work together to improve the conditions of the urban poor and to influence policy at the local, provincial, national and international levels. The dialogue is often the first time that CBOs, NGOs, local authorities and other actors have come together to discuss common issues, and it can be the first step in forming partnerships to address those issues.

LIFE has held 409 local-local dialogue meetings and workshops involving more than 6,686 participants at the community, municipal, provincial and national levels. In addition, LIFE has funded 11 regional and inter-regional projects to promote local-local dialogue through workshops, newsletters and networks.

The LIFE Programme has found that local-local dialogue creates awareness, develops communication and forges collaboration among local actors. In some cases it can be described as a forum for conflict resolution, providing an opportunity to forge partnerships where mistrust and conflict have prevailed and to focus community action on issues that directly affect everyone. People are more eager to get involved when there is

Figure 3.1
Orbits of local-local dialogue



a chance to share in the decision-making and when they feel empowered to act on the decisions made.

Local-local dialogue empowers, giving a voice to those often not heard. LIFE–Lebanon has found that local-local dialogue represents an opportunity for women to voice their opinions and exercise decision-making in areas where they are often overlooked. Community members are also empowered by the fact that with local-local dialogue they can talk directly to representatives of local authorities. Experience in Jamaica and Lebanon has shown that the LIFE Programme often provides the first opportunity that community residents have to participate in determining plans for their community. It is also often the first opportunity that local authorities have to deal directly with community residents.

The involvement of UNDP and the support of bilateral donors lends credibility to the local-local dialogue and, in most LIFE countries, this has helped to bring the actors together. LIFE–Tanzania invites local actors to participate in community meetings when a project is being considered—giving the residents, CBOs, NGOs and local authorities the chance to be involved from the beginning. Of course, the possibility of grant funds is an important incentive for these groups to get involved, but the small amount of grant funds prevents money from being the sole objective in contributing to community efforts.

Strengths and weaknesses of local actors

The success of local-local dialogue is due, in large part, to the fact that local actors can learn about their strengths and weaknesses and identify areas to learn from each other (table 3.3). They begin to view each other less as competitors and more as partners.

LIFE–Egypt found that the local authorities were originally sceptical about the benefits of participating in local-local dialogue with NGOs and CBOs—and about the potential impact of the LIFE Programme given its limited resources. Once they became involved, however, they recognised its advantages, and they now plan to include the process in more of their activities. Experience in Senegal indicates that CBOs are the most motivated partners in implementing projects to improve the urban environment. At the same time, financial participation from the CBOs is possible in projects once the population begins to see positive, effective and tangible changes in their environment. The local-local dialogue quells the suspicion that surrounded the programme at its onset.

As a result of the local-local dialogue of the Environmental Protection and Solid Waste Management Programme in Khuda ki Bustee, Hyderabad, Pakistan, “There is a clear understand-

Table 3.3
Strengths and weaknesses of local actors

	Non-governmental organisations	Community-based organisations	Local authorities
Strengths	Professional expertise. Good negotiation skills. Strong networks. Innovative solutions.	Strong participation by women. Willingness to improve. Credibility with community. Ability to mobilise community. Utilise low-cost solutions.	Established institution. Authority for decision-making. Implements project. Sustains projects. Support from national government.
Weaknesses	Poor financial basis. Poor links with private sector. Conflict with government. Lack of technical skills.	Lack participatory experience. Poor organisation skills. Poor networking. Lack of collective initiative. Lack of access to credit.	Poor financial basis. Lack technical capacity. Controlled by central government. Lack credibility with community. Bureaucratic, red tape. Under-utilised resources. Use high-cost solutions
LIFE responses	Capacity-building workshops. Encourage cooperation with local authorities.	Mobilise resources. Build networks. Build organisation skills. Capacity-building.	Initiate dialogues. Encourage cooperation with NGOs.

Source: Compiled from questionnaires to all national coordinators.

ing between the community, NGO and local authorities about their respective roles. Their perception about sharing the responsibility has undergone a complete change. . . . For example, previously the community thought that the entire development activity should be funded by the local authority. But now they are ready to partially fund it and also take up responsibility for maintaining the services.”¹

Dialogue and community partnerships

As a result of the LIFE dialogue process, community representatives became part of the working groups of the Dar-es-Salaam City Council under the Sustainable Dar Project. These working groups address issues such as solid waste management, air pollution and petty trading.

The consolidation of new partnerships linking government institutions, NGOs and community stakeholders is a fundamental objective of LIFE. Given the interaction of the many political, social, legal and cultural variables that condition the scope and modes of a given country’s participation, dialogue inevitably involves a gradual, incremental process with its own dynamics—dynamics that evolve, to a large extent, independent of project plans.

Dialogue in a variety of settings

Local-local dialogue occurs in varied settings in each LIFE country, as well as through the regional and inter-regional projects and the annual workshops of the Global Advisory Committee. The promotion of local-local dialogue involves heterogeneous—and often antagonistic—sectors of society coming together in an interactive, consensus-building process in which the LIFE Programme plays a catalytic, facilitating role. At the country level are small meetings and large workshops, priority-setting and strategy-setting workshops, project formulation meetings and workshops, information-sharing workshops and seminars and priority-specific lessons learned from workshops. All this makes it somewhat difficult to track the local-local dialogue activities of the LIFE Programme, but it also demonstrates that local-local dialogue has become an integral part of almost everything the LIFE Programme does.



New community water supply, Jamaica

LIFE is therefore fostering communication, collaboration and mutual understanding—and continually demonstrating the benefits of the process with every activity it undertakes. This is one of the aspects that makes LIFE much more than simply a small grants programme.

For local-local dialogue to be useful and productive, it is important to appreciate where an actor’s effectiveness is greatest. As experience in Egypt demonstrates, stronger parties are less likely to want to enter into dialogue than the weaker ones.² Parties that have little or nothing in common are also less likely to be interested in dialogue and interaction. Thus, while it is

Table 3.4
Making effective use of local-local dialogue

Project stage	Problems, contradictions	Local-local dialogue use
Programme formulation	Defining problems and defining needs. Competing claims within and between sectors.	Collective national consultation allows for exchange of views and establishment of criteria.
Problem identification	Local versus regional needs. Short-term versus long-term needs.	Collective problem identification allows for better understanding of community context and municipal needs.
Design	Accountability for project design. Lack of innovative design.	Collective design incorporates plan to implement.
Implementation	Ensuring progress. Ensuring adherence and compliance to project goal.	Collective negotiations identify bottlenecks and create alternatives that can be implemented quickly.
Monitoring	Allowing adequate and timely feed-back. Managing, not just policing, project.	Collective discussion permits faster agreement to and incorporation of variation in monitoring mechanisms.
Evaluation	Involving stakeholders.	On-going evaluations involve project beneficiaries and project implementors.
Informing policy	Incorporating lessons from experience. Distinguishing between short-term and longer-term impacts.	Sharing experiences and lessons learned affects policy formation at local, regional, national and global levels.

Source: UNDP.

possible to bring a range of actors together in a forum, meaningful dialogue may not take place unless there is a common interest. The dialogue between national and provincial actors is more likely to be productive than that between national and community actors (table 3.4).

Dialogue: not always easy

Because the dialogue among actors too dissimilar in their concerns and areas of operation may not be productive, the role and purpose of the dialogue need to be clearly established. In addition, not all meetings and confrontations are or can be turned into a useful dialogue. A dialogue is most effective when the actors are in a position to exchange rather than to receive views. Local-local dialogue can be effective in resolving some of the more common problems that beset conventional project design and execution.

The local-local dialogue has the greatest impact on the thinking of those directly involved. For this reason, it may be advisable for the LIFE country programmes to increase the involvement of provincial and national government representatives, as well as the private sector in the dialogue process, including their participation in the national selection committees. Most countries already have one or two national selection committee members who are not from CBOs, NGOs or local authorities, and this can foster advocacy for the process in preparation for policy dialogue. In addition, it would be very effective to hold annual national consultations such as those held at the initiation of the Programme in each country. The national consultations are frequently described as providing an important opportunity for local-local dialogue at the national level and as a first opportunity for people from different sectors to get together to discuss urban environmental priorities. The very positive response of participants indicates that this may be an effective mechanism for fostering national local-local dialogue.

The key challenges to an effective local-local dialogue are overcoming the resistance of many existing institutions to operate differently and institutionalising a process that is new to the participants. Many organisations see dialogue and collaboration as a time- and resource-intensive process that they cannot



National participatory workshop, Senegal

afford. If this process is to change the way organisations work, it will have to prove itself through experience: the end solution achieved by local-local dialogue and the participatory and collaborative process must be more appropriate, more efficient and therefore more sustainable than the solutions achieved by the current decision-making processes. This change in thinking will require continual reinforcement of the benefits of local-local dialogue.

Project impact is wide ranging

Given the interconnected nature of the priority areas, all but one of the 129 approved small projects address multiple objectives, and most projects meet more than two criteria (figure 3.2 and annex 2). Frequently, projects include environmental education as one of their objectives. Environmental education is essential to prepare communities for the project and to ensure the management, maintenance and sustainability of the project once it has been implemented.

Many projects address the whole range of priority areas because of their interconnectedness and because this reflects

the concerns of the communities themselves. Access to safe water and adequate sanitation are seen as much more important than, say, the improvement of air quality. It is therefore easier to motivate and mobilise communities around the issues of water supply and sanitation. And since the LIFE Programme is set up to deal with these priority areas, it naturally attracts proposals that relate directly to them. Communities and organisations concerned with other problems are

not likely to approach the LIFE Programme for funding or assistance—and if they do, they are unlikely to be selected.



Cans sorted for recycling, Lebanon

Water supply and sanitation. Most of the 12 countries have LIFE projects that address water supply and sanitation. One of many water supply and sanitation projects, implemented by a CBO, is the provision of water to the Yombo Dovyva community in the Temeke District of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). The only source of water for the community was a highly polluted river some distance away. The project constructed 10 shallow wells and trained women and youths in maintenance and upkeep. Another, in Mominabad, Gujranwala (Pakistan), provides mod-

ern sanitation to low-income families through the construction of a low-cost sewerage system, self-financed and self-managed. The project funds the organisation of social mobilisation, technical guidance and training and, based on the experience of the implementing agency, opens avenues for health education and credit programmes for women.

In Jamaica the S-Corner Metered Standpipe Project was planned through local-local dialogue between the city and a community development council and implemented with community participation. The facility now provides potable water to 109 homes and costs the city very little (box 3.1).

Solid and liquid waste management. The most common problem addressed by LIFE is inadequate solid and liquid waste management, a component in at least 46 projects. A project in Beherri, Lebanon has had success in solving problems of solid waste management through a combined recycling and income-generating project. The Minister of the Environment is currently looking to replicate the LIFE project in various provinces in Lebanon. Another project in Beni Suef, Egypt—considered major and replicable—includes educating the local population on environmental and health issues and having the community contribute funds. Senegal, too, has several waste management projects in various stages of development. One in Thiés—just outside of Dakar and set up in partnership with a women’s CBO, an NGO, and the Thiés Municipal and Public Health Services—combats health and environmental hazards posed by inadequate garbage collection. Project activities include training locals in financial management and technical skills, educating local and district groups in garbage collection and making sustainable environmental improvements such as planting trees on compost sites. Another project in Senegal—the Drain Traps and

BOX 3.1 Standpipes for low-income communities in Kingston, Jamaica

In an inner-city community in Kingston, about 17,000 people had been sharing two standpipes. The water shortage created not only dependence on public water and land degradation, but theft, violence and corruption. The Community Development Council (CDC), an affiliate of the grass-roots organisation S-Corner, responded to the crisis by initiating a standpipe project that was then funded by the LIFE national selection committee.

With strong community involvement, CDC carried out a survey of water needs and mobilised support for a new metered standpipe in the area. When the CDC reached an impasse with the National Water Commission, LIFE used local-local dialogue to help broker an agreement.

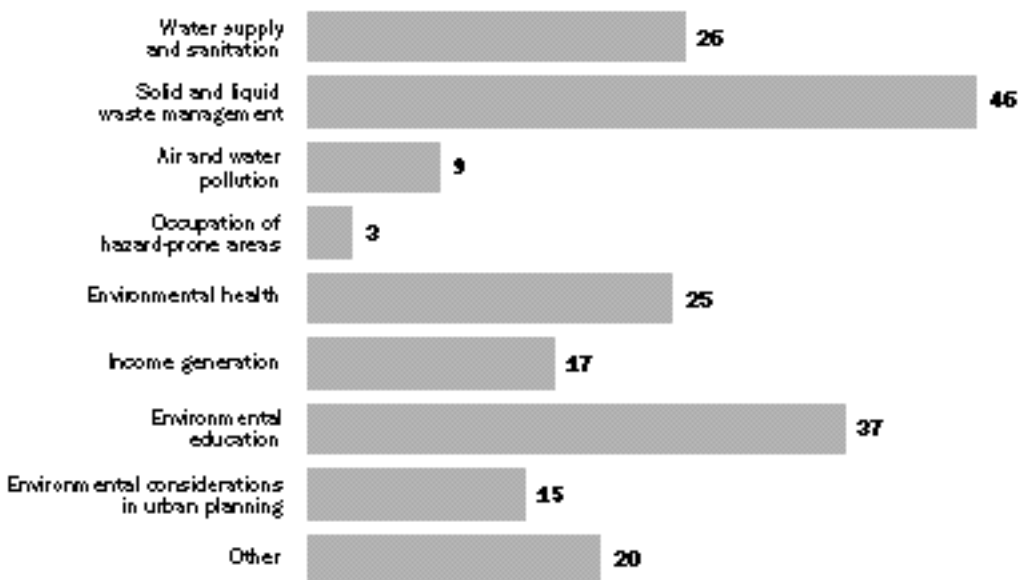
The LIFE method also helped keep dialogue flowing among S-Corner, CDC and the community. Now five lanes and 109 houses have running water. The project also succeeded in conflict resolution and in improving health, cleanliness and timesaving. Perhaps most importantly, the community has confidence in its ability to change its environment: the National Water Commission has since revised its policy on water provision to low-income communities based on the LIFE-brokered agreement.

Sanitation Counsellor Training Project in Yeumbeul—combines education and training with construction activities to promote sustainable sanitary conditions.

Air and water pollution. Only nine LIFE projects address the problems of air and water pollution, perhaps because the results of such projects are not always immediately evident. In Thailand the canal and river improvement projects serve as a focus for community mobilisation. In Tanzania—where traditional methods of dumping fish waste pollute Lake Victoria, which serves 20 million people—the Fish-Smoking Kilns Project focuses on environmental improvements and on income-generation opportunities for women.

Hazard-prone areas. Hazard-prone areas are the least addressed problem by the LIFE Programme, presumably because the conventional solution is likely to involve resettlement and few communities would opt for such a solution. In Brazil, where deforestation of the hill slopes has increased the hazard of landslides and erosion, projects call for reforestation.

Figure 3.2
Projects addressing priority areas



Source: UNDP.

And both the Adopt-a-Tree Project in Rio de Janeiro and the CEVAE/TAQUARIL Project in Belo Horizonte include hazard mitigation as part of their environmental education and upgrading proposals. Other projects have the occupancy of hazard-prone areas only as a marginal component—such as the Socio-Economic and Physical Survey of Squatter Settlements in Islamabad, Pakistan, aimed at producing a complete baseline survey of squatters and their living conditions.

Environmental health. Environmental health is usually included as one of the problems being addressed by water and sanitation projects. For example, the improvement of Mwaloni Market in Mwanza, Tanzania primarily addresses inadequate water supplies—the market serves some 40,000 people a day. Since inadequate water is the main cause of unsanitary conditions, it is hoped that improving water supply and constructing latrines will also alleviate environmental health problems. Because poor environmental management and environmental health problems have hurt trade in the Fresh Market in Nonthaburi, Thailand, a project, implemented by the Folk Doctors Association, is improving environmental health to boost income-generation possibilities. The May Pen and Port Maria Sanitation Projects in Jamaica provide public toilet facilities and are thereby aimed at reducing environmental health problems from the pollution of local water sources. The Latrine Installation Project in Cairo, Egypt has improved environmental health in the affected communities. And the Healthy Cities Project, a component of LIFE implemented in five countries by WHO, is working to improve environmental health.

Income generation. Although the entry point is always environmental, LIFE projects provide income-generation opportunities, mainly in two ways. The first is when the environmental and area upgrading facilities lead to better earning opportunities, either by improving health or by making an area more attractive for trade. The second is when the environmental improvement itself generates income-earning possibilities, as with various recycling and composting projects in Tanzania, Pakistan and Jamaica. The Rio-Mexilhão project in Niterói, Brazil, aims to stop the depletion of shellfish stocks in Guanabara Bay as well as to mainstream the income-generating activities for traditional and local shellfish collectors and



S-Corner water supply project, St. Joseph Road, Jamaica

fishermen. The project, filmed by CNN for broadcasting in 1997, includes commercial marketing of shellfish under the brand name Mexilhão Rio.

Environmental education. A component of 37 projects, environmental education is seen as a first step in conscious-

ness-raising to reduce environmental degradation and to mobilise communities to undertake environmental improvements. Some entire projects are specifically aimed at environmental education, particularly for school children and educational establishments. Targeting students attending state schools on hillside slums, the Lupa-Zona Project in Rio de Janeiro is raising environmental awareness through an educational programme on the theme of water. The Science Learning Centre Project in Kingston,



Cleaning up and planting greenery on the Sulieman Mountain, Osh, Kyrgyzstan

Jamaica, is establishing an environmental science learning laboratory for children living in the Tel Aviv/Southside areas of downtown Kingston, targeting the age groups of 3–5, 6–12 and 13–17. The Green Patrol in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, supports environmental education of youths through Agat, a children's club. The Book Group project in Karachi, Pakistan, is producing a primary school book and teacher's guide on environmental training—and providing training to five project schools in low-income areas.

Environmentally conscious urban planning. This area is addressed more with physical improvements or construction works, such as the brick-lining of sewage drains in Lahore, Pakistan, or the provision of potable water to the Sikilo Quarters in Kolda, Senegal. But some projects, such as the Environmental Seminar in St. Mary, Jamaica, have brought together community groups, public sector agencies and government bodies to discuss environmental issues affecting the parish and to prepare an action plan. In Tanzania a tree planting project is providing shaded pedestrian pathways as an alternative to motorised transport. On a more systemic level is the work in Thailand to assist municipalities in the production of local environmental plans. And Egypt has a notable overall environmental development effort in Cairo.

Quantitative impact assessment is needed

The short span of most LIFE projects poses a constraint on collecting the data for quantitative assessments. But the lack of data is also a result of the emphasis on process and method. Most evaluations concentrate more on whether projects are indeed participatory and include local-local dialogue—less on whether projects are efficient or effective by numerical measure. For example, it is unclear whether, in the absence of marketing plans and figures, the recycling and composting projects are economically justified—or whether the public toilets being provided in Zanzibar will generate enough revenue to provide sustainable employment for the youth trained to maintain them. Why? Some methods of analysis common in the development field—such as cost-benefit analysis, input-output relations, rigidly segmented workplans and other quantitative measures—can run counter to the emergence and maturation of a “dialogue culture” that links public administration with local stakeholders.

Quantitative assessments of the LIFE process do not capture the full costs and benefits. In Egypt the Hekr Abu Hashim Project aims to improve the poor living conditions, health and hygiene by upgrading sanitation, directly benefiting 250 households at a cost of \$37,000, or about \$150 a head. In contrast, the Ein Helwan Project in Cairo aims to benefit 22,500 inhabitants by upgrading the environment and improving living conditions. The project includes street cleaning, solid waste collection and disposal, the covering of drains, planting 10,000 trees, creating a park/playing area and conducting regular public seminars on environmental and hygiene issues, especially for housewives and mothers—at a cost of \$50,000, or \$2.20 a head. Such a marked contrast points to the need to be more critical in accepting the costs of one or the claimed benefits of the other. The reasons for accepting a project are likely to go beyond the purely economic, but there is the need to be more precise and to request more detailed evaluations than most local groups are used to providing. Without such evaluation, much of the hard work and effort that has gone into many of the LIFE projects is unlikely to be replicated. Each pilot country is evaluating small projects with a common format and method during phase III (1997–2000). These evaluations will be analysed, synthesised, documented and disseminated.

Notes

1. Small Project Summary, Response to Questionnaire, National Coordinator, LIFE–Pakistan, August 1996.

2. *Elements of The Egyptian Partnership Experience in Urban Development, LIFE–Egypt*, June 1996.

LIFE Around the World



While the focus of LIFE activities is at the country level, LIFE is reinforced and sustained by regional, inter-regional and global partnerships and alliances. Coordination and cooperation with a network of regional and global organisations brings rich variety to LIFE and bolsters the overall programme.

Regional and inter-regional programmes

The regional and inter-regional programmes of support and collaboration with networks have spread the message and image of LIFE faster and more extensively than would have been possible with the national programmes alone (tables 4.1 and 4.2). The majority of the regional and inter-regional organisations were already committed to approaches similar to LIFE's, making collaboration possible to further the objectives and impact of a programme focused on the local level but with national and international implications.

The funding provided by the LIFE Programme for documentation, transfers and information dissemination—usually between \$30,000 and \$90,000 per grant—has been well spent in furthering the LIFE message. By involving the national coordinators in these programmes, there has been genuine learning and appreciation at the national level. Such collaborative work is essential to develop a consistent, mutually reinforcing approach to local area and community development. The workshops, discussions and exchanges of information and documentation through meetings and the media have further spread the

Table 4.1
Inter-regional and global partners

Regions	Network	Project
Asia, Latin America and Africa	Habitat International Coalition (HIC)	Promotion of Successful Technologies in Drinking Water and Sanitation Services in Urban Settings
	International Council for Local Environment Initiatives (ICLEI)	Local Agenda 21 Initiative
Asia and Arab States	MegaCities Project	Transfer of Solid Waste Management Innovations from Cairo to Manila and Bombay
Asia and Africa	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights	Bombay–South Africa Poor Peoples’ Exchange
Global	World Health Organisation	Healthy Cities Project

Source: UNDP.

message and the impact of LIFE. These exchanges reduce transaction costs because each successful initiative makes it easier for subsequent activities to get support and gain acceptance as a new way of approaching community issues.

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), an international environmental agency for local governments, was established in September 1990 after an extensive consultation with 200 local governments from 43 countries. Its main objective is to strengthen the institutional capacity of local governments to address local and global environmental problems. It does this by facilitating the exchange of information and technical assistance among municipalities in its network. Municipal project consortiums develop new solutions and approaches to environmental problems, and local government implementation capabilities are integrated with international strategies for environmental protection.

ICLEI is conducting the Local Agenda 21 Model Communities Programme in Latin America, Asia and Africa, selecting municipalities in these regions to develop their Local Agenda 21 for sustainable development. LIFE, in its first phase, supported ICLEI in conducting regional workshops in Colombia, Thailand and South Africa to initiate the process in selected cities in each region. One innovative tool of this effort,

the Strategic Services Planning Framework, addresses many of the organisational and institutional problems related to governance and public service delivery. The three guiding principles are participation, empowerment and partnerships. In its second phase, LIFE supported ICLEI in conducting a workshop in Mwanza, Tanzania, and in producing “Local Agenda 21 Network News”, a newsletter to disseminate the lessons in the local agenda programme.

The Habitat International Coalition, with 300 CBOs and NGOs as members, has worked with LIFE in the investigation of alternative solutions to community problems. The joint project identified 15 participatory projects in safe drinking water and sanitation—four in Africa, four in Asia and seven in Latin America. All the projects involved at least three actors from NGOs, CBOs, local government and international agencies. Whether the technology was conventional or alternative did not matter. Mechanical, technical inputs were not as important as sociological relationships, which were key to the effective management and operation of water supply and san-

Table 4.2
Regional partners

Region	Network	Project
Africa	CASSAD	“Africa NGO Network” Workshop
	Environmental Development Action in the Third World (enda-TM)	Documentation and Dissemination of Community-based Approaches in West Africa
Asia	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights	“People’s Plan for the 21st Century”
	CITYNET	Regional Training Workshop on Waste Water Management
Latin America	Habitat International Coalition (HIC)	Training and Exchange in Latin America
Arab States	Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)	Information and Exchange Newsletter
	International Union of Local Authorities/ Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East (IULA/EMME)	Documentation and Exchange of Information on Successful Projects and Institutions

Source: UNDP.

itation. Job creation and time and money savings had an important impact. Sanitation was seen to be a function of power, even in decentralised situations, and the experiences gained in each of the projects contributed to the understanding of political relationships. And water was perceived to be not merely a necessity or a right but a symbol—a major step in the development process. The coalition is now conducting a second LIFE project in the Latin American region on water and sanitation.

Environmental Development Action (enda) and other African NGOs are conducting a regional research-action programme on local initiatives in eight urban areas in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger and Senegal. Despite harsh conditions, thousands of families manage to eke out a living, and some families prosper. How are these cities sustained? Largely by the efforts and initiatives of local communities, and enda is committed to understanding how these initiatives are organised and managed.

In most African cities NGOs are relatively new. One means of strengthening them is through exchanging information and adopting local-local dialogues to pave the way for negotiation and cooperation. Recent initiatives include: setting up cooperatives to reduce the prices of materials in Dakar, Senegal; improving the workplaces of market women in Cotonou, Benin; improving methods of waste collection by women in Ouagadougou, Burkino Faso; and upgrading a settlement in Bamako, Mali.

These case studies indicate a very important relationship between the traditional and the modern. Most communities are ethnic or clan-based, and groups are formed and kept together by long-held traditions. For communities to be sustainable, they need to be broader based in their concerns. NGOs are regarded as an integral

part of society, and their staff work as facilitators in discussions with the community.

One of several regional programmes focusing on the role of NGOs, the enda/LIFE Programme produced three videos and held several workshops, including one on community development in Guinea Bissau. The Habitat II Conference provided an opportunity for networks of NGOs to exchange valuable information and resources.



LIFE national consultation, Senegal

The International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), operating through regional divisions on each continent, is involved in a wide range of activities, but its main goal is the promotion of local government and democracy. It defines decentralisation as a process from the municipalities to the people, not to the municipalities from the people. IULA has long advocated the enabling role of local governments, and the LIFE Programme provided IULA with an opportunity to also collaborate with NGOs in the Arab States region and in Turkey.

The project supported by LIFE, having emerged from a roundtable discussion on new methods of collaboration, consisted of surveying and documenting the significant extent and strength of NGOs active in environmental work. The results were published, and a symposium was held in Istanbul to disseminate the findings. The project's intent was to assist NGOs, but IULA and LIFE benefited greatly from lessons about alternative forms of operation. IULA is continuing its cooperation with the LIFE Programme in a new regional project with RAED (see below).

The MegaCities Project is an international network aimed at finding out what works, providing an information exchange for cities, replicating and transferring experiences and bringing them to bear on policy formulation.

The inter-regional project funded by LIFE focused on the Zabaleen, the rubbish collectors of Cairo, who took three problems (poverty, garbage and dumping places) and developed a solution to tackle them. They introduced a recycling system whereby the garbage was collected, sorted, cleaned and transformed by backyard industries into paper products, metal objects and other such items. By adding value to the recyclable material, they generated an income to build schools and other infrastructure. A literacy programme was an integral part of the project.

This experience is being transferred through a LIFE project to Manila and Bombay. MegaCities Project coordinators visited Cairo and later returned with a 12-person team from Manila to study the process. They conducted a feasibility study, mobilised and trained a team to study the composition of garbage and the possible products that could be produced from it, and ended up with six community guilds for recycling paper, glass, metals and



Members of an environmental awareness group give instruction on household waste treatment, Pakistan

so on. The local government was initially against the project, but the regional government managed to fund it through a debt-swapping arrangement, and the project has now been replicated in other communities. Bombay has no real system or organisation of garbage collection. Rag pickers sift through the garbage, select anything useful and leave the rest strewn around the street. The Municipal Corporation is now keen for the MegaCities Project to help replicate the Zabaleen experience in Bombay, to see if it can work there.

The MegaCities Project provides five valuable lessons:

- Flexibility is a good thing, although NGOs don't change as governments do after each election.
- Ideas can't be imposed—they work only if they can be adopted.
- There is no exact replication. Teachers and participants must learn together as each city has different challenges. There needs to be local-local dialogue since most communities do not trust "outsiders".
- Seeing is believing. Although reading about a project is helpful, it is better to see it.
- Transfers within neighbourhoods and across cities encourage collaboration since many issues are common.

The *Healthy Cities* programme was designed to introduce health awareness and education to people at work, in their

homes, at schools and in the market-place. Since April 1995 the World Health Organisation (WHO) and LIFE, with the support of the Dutch Government, have collaborated to illustrate this concept in five cities. In Quetta, Pakistan, the process has been introduced in work groups around specific issues in workplaces and in schools, and the university is identifying health-housing links. In Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh, the focus is on tourism. In Managua, Nicaragua, 40 NGOs are involved. In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,

the focus is on consciousness-raising. In Fayoum, Egypt, the programme includes activities in both urban and rural communities.

The regional and global impact of the Healthy Cities programme is felt in the way health issues—particularly the administration of health programmes—are viewed by the World Health Organisation and by national governments.



Cleaning drainage system
Osh, Kyrgyzstan

CITYNET, the Regional Network of Local Authorities for the management of human settlements, is a network of local urban governments, development authorities, and non-governmental organisations in the Asia-Pacific region. Its mission is to act as a facilitator at the regional level to promote the exchange of expertise, information and experience among its 90 members. The objectives of *CITYNET* are to strengthen the capacities of local governments to manage the urban development process and to develop partnerships among the various actors at the local level, specifically among local authorities and NGOs. The goal is to create people friendly cities that are socially just, ecologically sustainable, politically participatory, economically productive and culturally vibrant.

In its first collaborative venture with LIFE, *CITYNET* organised a regional training workshop in Sri Lanka on wastewater management, aimed at an exchange of knowledge and information between localities in the region and targeted towards personnel in charge of city sewerage departments. Under a two-year collaboration programme, other workshops are planned on Community-based Housing Finance (Metro-Manila), Community-based Infrastructure Development (Orangi, Karachi), Gender-aware Planning, NGO-local authority cooperation, and the media in urban environment projects.

The Asia Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR)—a regional NGO network, in cooperation with two national NGOs, SPARC in India and People's Dialogue in South Africa, is collaborating with LIFE on the South Africa–India Poor People's Exchange Programme. Legal and financial arrangements are coordinated by ACHR in Bangkok, with project implementation by all four organisations. The target cities are Bombay, India and Johannesburg, South Africa. The primary objectives are to document and disseminate information on the three-year experimental dialogue and training exchanges between two community shelter projects on different continents. This exchange and cross-fertilisation of ideas and solutions provides a learning environment to generate new and creative solutions. The main goal of the programme is to share at all levels—local, national and international—the ways in which poor communities undertake successful development on their own and to encourage community members to exchange ideas. The documentation of the exchanges is being published for distribution—and produced for radio in India, South Africa, the United

Kingdom (BBC), the United States (public radio) and several other developing countries. Earlier, LIFE provided support for a regional conference—“People’s Plan for the 21st Century”—organised by ACHR.

The Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), founded in 1991 in Cairo and now a network of more than 100 NGOs from all over the Middle East, gathers, disseminates and exchanges regional and inter-regional data on environmental and development problems. It also mobilises grass-roots efforts and ensures equitable information sharing and participatory planning methods. With LIFE Programme support, RAED cooperated with IULA to prepare a regional workshop in Istanbul on 27–28 June 1995 that focused on urban environmental projects involving the joint efforts of communities, NGOs and local governments.



Solid waste collection, Rio, Brazil

RAED joined IULA–EMME for phase II of the LIFE Programme in the Middle East to implement several new elements of the programme as outlined in the *Global Advisory Committee Report, Cairo 1995*, including systemic monitoring and assessment of small projects and documentation and dissemination of lessons. The organisations will also strengthen collaboration with other programmes of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, NGO networks and cities’ associations. RAED’s involvement in this collaboration greatly extends the outreach of phase II activities to include the many NGOs affiliated with RAED throughout the Arab world. RAED is managing the publication of a quarterly newsletter covering LIFE activities, promoting the LIFE methodology and sharing and exchanging experience in the region. IULA–EMME is promoting the LIFE method and the exchange of experience and information in the region by organising a second regional workshop.

RAED in collaboration with IULA is managing the publication and distribution of quarterly reports on LIFE Programme activities in Arabic and English in six countries—Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. IULA then translates these newsletters into Turkish for distribution in Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. IULA has also published the *Middle East Local Environment Monitor* in collaboration with LIFE as an inventory of the Urban Environmental NGOs in the six Middle Eastern countries. This widely used directory helps promote NGO collaboration with local authorities and governments.

The Centre for African Settlement Studies and Development (CASSAD) is a regional NGO engaged in the development of environmental indicators (criteria for measurement) through a joint effort involving researchers, policymakers and grassroots NGOs and CBOs. CASSAD recently hosted with LIFE support a post-Habitat II workshop in Nigeria, bringing together African NGOs, NGO networks, donors and development agencies (all from Sub-Saharan Africa) and LIFE Programme coordinators (Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania) to discuss strategies for implementing the recommendations from Habitat II.

The global learning culture

The global impact of the LIFE Programme reflects the power of dialogue and participation in project planning, evaluation and assessments and of collaborative approaches among the many players engaged in its implementation. Through the Global Advisory Committee meetings, the LIFE national coordinators' annual meetings and regional and inter-regional workshops, the ongoing programme is guided by a continuous participatory process of planning, implementation and evaluation involving its global partners. Through this participatory approach, the LIFE Programme has developed a built-in learning culture. The numerous informal exchanges of information and experience between the global players build new alliances and coalitions to support the LIFE method.

The many meetings and exchanges of information between LIFE's global players are documented in published materials, which are building a significant bibliography of experience. With the dissemination of these documents, programme participants and others concerned with LIFE's purposes and results will be able to promote and encourage dialogue and learning in other communities.

While quantitative accomplishments may be impressive, even more critical is what is being learned about the LIFE approach and how the programme is implemented within each country. How do countries learn from each others' successes and mistakes? What aspects of LIFE should be institutionalised at the country level? How can UNDP and the larger development community benefit from the mainstreaming of LIFE's partici-



LIFE National Coordinators at an international workshop, United Nations, New York, January 1996

patory local-local dialogue method? Four mechanisms for sustaining a continuous learning process have been used so far.

External evaluations. The first independent evaluation of the LIFE Programme from September 1992–September 1994, conducted in April 1995, concluded that “LIFE offers a state of the art response to urban environmental management needs”. The report also stated that the “first two years of implementation have validated the programme’s rationale and established



LIFE National Coordinators at an international workshop, United Nations, New York, January 1996

conditions for the expansion and consolidation of activities”. The evaluation highlighted LIFE’s potential in “integrating policy dialogue, advocacy and participatory implementation dynamics” and “disseminating substantive impacts and methodologies to a wide range of users”. It recommended steps to establish the link between micro-level initiatives and macro-level policy, including stronger monitoring and evaluation of small projects. In addition, the report suggested that resources be earmarked for capacity-build-

ing in the areas of project design, budget management, negotiation and monitoring and evaluation. The main findings and recommendations were incorporated into the phase II strategies and the phase III design.

National consultants have completed evaluations of LIFE in Brazil, Egypt, Jamaica, Pakistan and Thailand. An external assessment of LIFE Thailand by Sida has also contributed to the learning process. And in September 1996 an analytical report, completed at the request of Sida and DGIS, provided major insights into how to implement phase III. It also served as the basis for this publication.

Annual internal reviews by LIFE national coordinators. Four global internal reviews have been held—August 1994, January 1996, June 1996 and January 1997. In these meetings the national coordinators report on the status of their country-level activities, including projects, local-local dialogues, policy dialogues, resource mobilisation and institutionalisation. Each coordinator shares lessons and keys to success. The national coordinators, along with the global coordinator and the project management officer for UNOPS, discuss strategies for the future of the LIFE Programme, incorporating them into mid-

course corrections for phase II and the preparations for phase III. These reviews are supplemented by quarterly and annual progress reports by each national coordinator.

Annual global advisory committee (GAC) workshops. Three GAC workshops have been held, the first in Stockholm in 1994, hosted by Sida, and the second in Cairo in 1995. The third was held in June 1996 in Istanbul as an aspect of LIFE Programme participation in Habitat II. The workshops document lessons and strategic plans of action, and the recommendations arising from each of them are incorporated into the planning for the next phase. The 1997 meeting will be held in Tanzania.

International workshop on participatory local governance. In February 1996 at the UN in New York, 43 representatives of regional and inter-regional NGOs and city associations, related UN agencies, mayors and central government representatives, and LIFE national coordinators and global technical advisory staff exchanged experiences and explored strategies for extending and transferring their successes in participatory environmental initiatives that address urban poverty. Relevant recommendations from that workshop were incorporated into phase III.

The financing strategy and results

UNDP has worked with four bilateral donor agencies to use cost-sharing, trust funds and parallel financing modalities as strategies to finance the LIFE Programme:

- The Netherlands, DGIS (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)—cost-sharing
- Sweden, Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency)—cost-sharing
- Denmark, DANCED (Ministry of the Environment and Energy)—trust fund
- Germany, GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit)—parallel financing

This strategy, when first employed five years ago to initiate the LIFE Programme, had little track record at UNDP Headquarters and was still considered an emerging strategy to compensate for diminishing core resources. LIFE has thus been a laboratory for demonstrating the potential for building effective and efficient development partnerships at the global,

regional and country levels—and for attracting local governments and UNDP country offices in cost-shared development efforts. The *LIFE Finance Report*—prepared for the bilateral cost-sharing partners and UNDP—summarises bilateral partner and UNDP contributions and expenditures, documenting the significant levels of funds leveraged through parallel financing and country-level inputs.

In each of the 12 countries where LIFE currently operates, project expenditures do not exceed allocated budgets. Some \$3.6 million—or 64 percent of the total—have been directly allocated to the 12 countries. Of the UNDP/cost-sharing funds allocated at the country level, 71 percent is for grants to local actors. Ten international NGO networks and cities’ associations have received LIFE regional and inter-regional grants for documentation, transfers and interchange of local initiatives that complement or directly support LIFE country initiatives. For this, some \$993,000—17 percent of the total—have been allocated. Combined with direct country-level allocations, this

means that 81 percent of all UNDP/cost-sharing funds have been allocated to country, regional and inter-regional programme activities. To cover global technical support costs, \$1 million has been allocated for all aspects of substantive and operational support of the LIFE Programme—less than 19 percent of total cost-sharing allocations of \$7 million.

The amount of parallel financing and country-level inputs LIFE has leveraged is large. An additional \$4.1 million of non-UNDP core/cost-

sharing funds have gone directly into country grants with a total of \$11.2 million allocated to LIFE Programme activities. This means that the \$2.3 million of grant funds from UNDP and the bilateral cost-sharing partners for small projects has leveraged 183 percent of additional funds, for a grand total of \$6.4 million for the small projects.

Leveraging funds

Several fiscal accomplishments show the tremendous potential that LIFE Programme activities have for leveraging funds through its financing strategy. In Brazil an input of \$220,000 leveraged an additional \$660,000—or more than 300 percent above the initial input. These funds came from government and



Replenishing fish stock through marine education, Mexilhão Rio project, Brazil

private sources in response to the urban environmental project proposals. In Thailand parallel financing from GTZ (\$365,000), the Asia Pacific 2000 (\$60,000) and DANCED (\$400,000) more than tripled the core resource/cost-sharing inputs. In Colombia \$90,000 in community contributions in manpower, tools and payment have been directed towards 13 urban environment projects. In Pakistan the UNDP country office committed \$3 million for development of the programme for Livelihood Improvements in Urban Settlements (PLUS) to build on the LIFE method and small project success. Also in Pakistan a proposal to the Japanese government is being considered to take the initial LIFE environmental projects to scale, demonstrating how successful small ventures can, if closely monitored and evaluated, significantly influence the policy dialogue and planning for sustainable human development. When the results of a successful venture are disseminated throughout a country, as they were in Pakistan, the record of success can be a basis for scaling up an approach and attracting significant inputs to country-level development.



LIFE's Participatory Process

The most obvious strength of the LIFE Programme is the participatory processes it introduces and supports at every level of operation. The notions of participation and inclusiveness are built in from the very earliest stages, starting with the national consultations and extending to the processes of project design, implementation and evaluation. Since the initiation of the LIFE method, other strengths have emerged, and the programme has successfully capitalised upon them. But some constraints to the method will pose a challenge to LIFE participants in the last phase of the programme.

Strengths of the method

Participation. In many ways, participation is the main distinguishing feature of the LIFE Programme. Other programmes and methods share the objectives of urban environmental upgrading through community-based action, and many promote participatory processes. But few incorporate participatory processes that are vertically as well as horizontally integrating. In many other programmes to improve local conditions, “participation” is limited—seen only as a mechanism for involving the “beneficiaries” of the project. This limitation is due to the policies of the organisations and agencies that initiate the programme and the overarching implementation process.

One notable achievement of the LIFE Programme has been its ability to develop and demonstrate a method that overcomes such limitation. The programme aims to build positive, mutu-

ally beneficial relationships by providing the opportunity for government, civil society organisations, the private sector and community members to work together in a non-confrontational setting.

Partnership. Although it may be easier to encourage a weaker party to seek dialogue and accommodation with a stronger party, the LIFE process has been successful in overcoming the reluctance of those in power to negotiate. This has been achieved by identifying and working with each local actor's strengths and weaknesses. By capitalising on each entity's strengths, an effective partnership can develop in which both parties gain.

The notion of partnerships is built into the programme at every step, even in the funding structure. Funding a project becomes virtually impossible without collaboration and partnership with other local, provincial or regional sources of funding and support.

Local-local dialogue. The method of "local-local dialogue" used by the programme to bring together the various stakeholders is a powerful tool for project identification, problem-solving, monitoring and implementation. It provides an efficient channel of communication and decision-making—and is an effective means for instilling a sense of "ownership" in the project. Local-local dialogue also provides an opportunity for understanding the needs and limitations of each party by bringing the users and providers of urban services together. And it fosters long-term relationships that are useful beyond the LIFE projects. But there is a minor risk within the programme that every meeting or workshop will be treated as if it were a "local-local dialogue". This could weaken what is currently the most powerful and effective tool. It could also lessen the impact of the process if organisations and agencies feel that local-local dialogue is merely a different name for a meeting.

The upstream-downstream-upstream approach. The three-step upstream-downstream-upstream process contributes to the greater influence and impact of the projects beyond the communities they serve. The projects have been rightly termed "policy experiments" through which the participatory process of tackling local environmental improvement and participatory

local governance can be tested and demonstrated. The upstream-downstream-upstream cycle ensures that project impact is not simply measured in visible environmental terms. The dynamism of the programme lies with a process that begins with “upstream” initiatives and continues “downstream” with project implementation, then resumes “upstream” through policy dialogues with government, the private sector, NGOs and CBOs.



Planting trees in Senegal

By involving representatives from CBOs, NGOs, the private sector and local, provincial and central government in all phases of project development—from the national consultation workshops and the national selection committees to final policy formulation—a whole range of actors is brought together to work towards a common goal. Working together in the non-hostile context of a workshop (particularly one that is based on interactive participatory methods) allows for the development of better understanding and appreciation

of alternative points of view and the possibility of better working relationships and alliances beyond the workshop itself.

Replicating and sustaining LIFE at the local level. The small amounts that the programme allocates for each project (an average of about \$20,000, with a maximum of \$50,000) is an incentive for the national selection committee and the national coordinator to seek collaborative partnerships. The size of the grants keeps the focus of the projects firmly on the process—since the money is not sufficient to seduce the participation of the larger (international) NGOs. This also allows smaller, local NGOs to participate—and gives CBOs the chance to take on the management and administrative roles. The financial commitments are also within the capacity of most local governments and therefore amenable to incorporation in future development budgets. In demonstrating what is possible with relatively small funds and a decentralised, participatory process of local governance, the funding role of UNDP and other external donors in the LIFE Programme could very easily be replicated and taken over by local agencies and governments to enlarge or extend the programme.

Donor participation and experimental learning. Unlike many other development assistance programmes that come

with pre-designed, ready-to-assemble projects, the LIFE method has been designed to elicit local responses to local problems. While the programme has its own methods and guidelines on a number of issues and actions, the actual projects are seen as the “policy experiments” to demonstrate, test and elaborate on the methodological framework. In such an approach, the donors become genuine participants too—learning from the feedback of the design and implementation of the projects within the LIFE Programme. The idea of starting with a “pilot” programme, initiated in seven countries and then extended to five more through “learning by doing” is also an integral part of this participatory learning process.

The LIFE Programme is further strengthened by having multiple donor participation, and the donors (including Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden) contribute to and learn from the LIFE experiences. Through regional and inter-regional partnerships, other development agencies and institutions also learn from the policy experiments of the LIFE Programme. The programme is thus enriched and reaches out further than if it had the participation of only one donor or did not involve other development institutions.

Combining process with solutions. The introduction of the LIFE method and process to the participating countries and institutions has been coupled with designing responses to local issues.

Within the overall ambit of environmental upgrading and improvement, each project is proposed by a community to respond to one or more issues including waste management, water and sanitation, primary health care and environmental education. In developing projects that solve local problems, the community and other partners in the LIFE Programme become acquainted with the process as well. Feedback from the policy experiments informs policy within and between countries. Exposure to the LIFE process as it applies to environmental issues enables communities to extend the scope of their activities and to apply the lessons of participation, partnership and local-local dialogue to other areas and issues.



Affordable urban sanitation project, Quetta, Pakistan

Holistic, multi-sectoral approach. The LIFE Programme deliberately chose environmental issues as its point of entry to

deal with visible and tangible problems that affected whole communities and that could best be tackled through collective rather than individual action. Poverty, one of the underlying causes of environmental degradation, is simultaneously tackled—either directly through the creation of employment and income-earning opportunities or indirectly through reductions in the costs of infrastructure and health care brought about by safer environmental conditions. Concern for gender equity and promoting the role of women is also an integral part of the LIFE Programme. The programme uses an inclusive method so that whole communities can participate in identifying a community's development needs.

Visible results through local projects. The LIFE process and methodology uses the local environment as its entry point for action on issues that can be tackled visibly and resolved tangibly. Improved drainage, sanitation or refuse collection have an immediate impact on the environment of a locality, and finding successful solutions to these fundamental problems builds the community's confidence in effecting further change.

Local problems demand local solutions: the LIFE Programme empowers everyone with a stake in the community to get involved and accept responsibility for a part of the project. At the same time, the partner organisations and institutions

participating in the process can see an immediate return on their investment and can use the lessons of these local projects to extend the approach to other localities.



Women clearing new community drainage system, Hanna Nassif, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Decentralised structure. The decentralised structure of the LIFE Programme allows for work to be undertaken simultaneously in a number of localities within a settlement or in different settlements in the country. The process does not get bogged down in constraints and bottlenecks from a lack of decision-making personnel. It also permits different localities and communities to use variations that are best suited to their circumstances. This is incorporated in the LIFE method at all stages from the initial problem identification through implementation.

LIFE operations are decentralised within UNDP as well. In fact, the programme as a whole is decentralised to the country

and local levels, with UNDP Headquarters playing an enabling rather than a decision-making role. Over 75 percent of total LIFE allocations are given to country- and local-level activities; global technical support costs represent only 19 percent of total allocations. The straightforward and effective division of operations is at the core of LIFE's success. The country office is responsible for implementation at the country level, backstopped by the global coordinator in the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) and by UNOPS. The responsibility for day-to-day project management and monitoring is shared by the LIFE national coordinator and the country office, with technical support provided by the national coordinator and the national selection committee within the country of implementation.

Reliance on local expertise. By focusing on local issues relating to the environment and using a decentralised participatory process, the LIFE methodology encourages the use of local solutions to local problems. The project planning and preparation strategies of LIFE make concerted efforts to involve a broad-based group of stakeholders with a view to designing a project to be implemented at the community level. As an inter-regional project, LIFE has been successful in devising from the onset a practical implementation framework to adapt to countries that differ greatly in their political, socio-cultural and economic circumstances. This flexible approach results in the almost exclusive reliance on local and national expertise—rather than international consultants—to develop and devise solutions. This keeps costs down, builds local capacity and capability and increases the confidence and self-reliance of the community—with obvious implications for replicating and sustaining the process over time.

Regular exchanges and discussions between the national coordinators and others involved in the programme creates a constant flow of information and knowledge about lessons from local to national and international participants. These contacts also help identify needs for training and expertise that can be filled by limited international technical assistance or consultancies that may be required to fill gaps locally. LIFE has built a set of mechanisms into the core of its operations to link all actors through ongoing consultations and participation. LIFE demonstrates the way in which globally based programmes can build a foundation at the level of local communities and com-



Teaching about recyclable waste materials, Pakistan

munity organisations while also establishing two-way linkages to the national and global levels—in a participatory and cost-effective way.

Constraints of the method

There are limitations in the LIFE Programme method that need to be analysed and addressed. Many constraints are a result of operating in an environment still engaged in more conventional projects and approaches. The stage of the development of the local authorities and of the NGO sector and the readiness of the CBOs to get involved, the status of the socio-political situation, the shape of the private sector and established institutions—all profoundly affect the ability to introduce the programme through local-local dialogue. LIFE provides a mechanism for internalisation of a style of inter-institutional behaviour of participation and partnership, but each country uses the process differently.

In some cases, the effective participation of CBOs and private sector entities in national selection committees and in project implementation has been rather limited. Interaction with CBOs is likely to be restricted by the short time-lines of LIFE projects (most do not exceed one year), which do not allow adequate time to develop the appropriate resources or institutional infrastructure to implement the method optimally. In other situations, the LIFE Programme is helping to sustain struggling CBOs and even helping to create new CBOs and NGOs. Where CBOs and NGOs are independent of the local power structures, they may have difficulties in continuing after their direct involvement with the LIFE Programme comes to an end. But they may also be able to demonstrate their utility and effectiveness so that communities will want to continue to operate with them, regardless of, or even in despite of, the local power structures.

Governmental and non-governmental organisations

While the LIFE methodology requires the involvement of national and local governments to operate in partnership with NGOs and CBOs, the relative involvement of these organisations varies from country to country. In some countries, such as Pakistan, the local government structure is fairly weak. In others local government officials tend to be unsympathetic towards the LIFE methodology and approach. The result is that part-

nerships are often led and dominated by the NGOs and, to a lesser extent, by the CBOs.

In some instances, the local government component may be dormant or merely nominal. In others, government departments are still understaffed and do not have the capacity to get involved in what are seen as “additional” duties and responsibilities. Often, their training and experience does not encourage them to engage in dialogue with communities, especially if the communities are made up of poor or “illegal” settlements. The LIFE Programme could thus end up becoming a NGO/CBO programme rather than a partnership involving all sectors, as intended. In many instances, however, as in Tanzania, the results from implementing and operating the LIFE method are helping to convince governments that a government-community partnership can be more productive and more effective, gradually converting them to support partnerships.

Geographic spread and focus

Just as the LIFE Programme was introduced to seven selected pilot countries and then extended to another five, selective introduction and expansion has been part of the LIFE method. While this has advantages in focusing efforts and concentrating resources in a few countries and a few cities rather than dispersing the limited funds in a greater geographic area, there are problems in this approach. Limiting the programme geographically poses problems of both testing and demonstration, especially for larger countries such as Egypt and Pakistan. Given large variations across countries, a limited geographic concentration does not permit nationally applicable conclusions. Nor does it mean the message “doing by seeing” will be applicable to many participants.

But if the programme is spread too thinly in too many locations, it is more difficult to control quality or even to provide support. The establishment of the programme in 28 towns and cities across Thailand, and the logistics of setting up and monitoring those sites, have put stress on the national coordinator. There must be a balance between limiting the number of projects to allow for adequate management and encouraging enough projects to use the experience and lessons to tailor the



Group discussion and slide show of LIFE community projects, Pakistan

programme to fit national needs. Countries must be able to adapt the programme to respond to specific problems without eliminating or weakening the method and its backstopping and support measures.

Scaling up

Although the LIFE Programme and method was introduced as a pilot in a small number of countries and cities, it was always envisaged that, if successful, it would be scaled up and used throughout entire countries and extended to many others. Guidelines and procedures to map this course of expansion are not in place but will be developed as more is learned about the strengths and constraints of the LIFE method in each country. As the LIFE Programme is scaled up, the process and method will be put to new tests. As a limited programme, it was “protected” from some of the pressures that inevitably arise in countries where not as much time or attention is paid to how and with whom LIFE operates. In places where the people who benefit from the status quo are challenged and their power base is threatened, the programme is bound to meet resistance.

Ironically, the success of the LIFE Programme is creating pressure to extend and scale up the programme nationally and internationally. If these pressures are not addressed, the scaling up process may be initiated before the programme is ready for it. But if the programme does not respond fast enough, it may be “hijacked”, and hybrid models may emerge that do not adequately reflect LIFE’s objectives or profit from its experiences.

LIFE's Long-term Impact



The goal of the LIFE Programme—the criterion for its success—is for its process and method to be mainstreamed by the donor community and institutionalised in developing country policies and structures. LIFE starts as a process to address local urban environmental improvements through participatory local governance. But it is adapted to address other issues, such as access to health services, education, the role of women in communities and the development of income-generating activities. In seeking to mainstream and institutionalise LIFE, the concern is to have its objectives and intentions be part of development strategies—not to merely use the nomenclature and administrative structures to meet very different objectives.

This is ambitious, since the proposition is to change *what* is done for local urban environmental improvements, the *way* it is done and *who* is involved in doing it. Furthermore, once the approaches promoted by LIFE are incorporated, they leave little room for carrying on business as before: in other words, it is unlikely that traditional ways of approaching local urban improvement can coexist with LIFE methodologies.

It is not an impossible task to generate new ideas and introduce new governance structures while keeping aspects of the old system intact. A good example of this is the “sites and services” approach advocated by the World Bank in the 1970s. The essence of the approach—which provided plots of serviced land instead of ready-built housing units—was neither invented by nor unique to the World Bank. But by coining a name for it and

associating itself almost exclusively with the approach, as opposed to any other housing approach (such as pre-fabrication, core-housing, multi-storey flats or mass-housing), the Bank popularised and spread the sites and services approach across the developing world. This was done to such an extent that it sometimes appeared that any other form of housing pro-

vision undertaken by other aid agencies, as well as by national governments and housing agencies, required an explanation if not an apology. Though the Bank has stopped advocating sites and services for more than a decade, the term and the process are still current and dominant.

At its height, the sites and services approach was backed by millions of dollars in project finance, which in turn leveraged more than 10 times as much from national governments and private financial sources. Can the LIFE

Programme achieve anything like the dominance of the sites and services approach through a pilot programme with very limited project funds and a method that requires considerable accommodation by vested interests? On the implications for mainstreaming, it is essentially local and national government actions and reactions that will be critical.

Governance

For governments and their agencies the implications of a switch from conventional to LIFE-like approaches can be summarised in four inter-related issues, each concerned with “who governs”:

Control. The LIFE approach often leads to a reduction in control over policy and decision-making by government, and a corresponding increase in control by civil society. This is likely to affect centralised governments since it implies allowing a wider audience to play an active role in governance processes. As long as LIFE is seen to be a minor and marginal operation, this may not be an issue. But as the programme becomes institutionalised, its method could be seen as a direct threat and challenge to government authority. To limit hostile reactions, it is important that the process be presented as sharing responsibilities and reducing the workload and burden for government, rather than as a loss of power or prestige. Indeed, it might help to show that in sharing responsibilities, LIFE partners share in



Community participation in project design and management, Pakistan

accepting blame and criticism for problems with the programme, relieving the government of its constituent complaints.

Agenda. The LIFE approach shifts problem-solving from an agency-centric definition of problems towards a community-based definition. Agencies traditionally have prescribed mandates—specified areas of operations and imposed budgets—and are reluctant to initiate action in areas outside their immediate concern. Collaborative work with outside organisations is seen as more work because it means going beyond the prescribed agency mandate. LIFE's incremental approach—where dialogue and interaction gradually lead to collaborative problem-solving—is an antidote to government reluctance to work in partnership with other organisations (table 6.1).

Returns. A LIFE approach leads to a reduction of quick-fix projects in favour of longer term programmes. Development projects traditionally have been neatly packaged to allow for easier control, and they were often timed to evolve within the time frames of incumbent administrations. With a more programme-oriented approach that at its core is a *process* of project management, it is not as easy to determine how specific inputs affect a project. Nor is it clear when “results” of the programme are evident. This makes it more difficult to claim credit for, and thereby “own”, a particular project or series of projects. This change in metaphorical “ownership” will require all parties involved—from the politicians, to the electorate, to the development agencies—to shift their ideas of governance and recast their roles in the community.

Empowerment. The LIFE approach is likely to reduce reliance on government and increase self-sufficiency—moving from enablement to empowerment. This may be viewed by local and national government bureaucrats as a loss of power if governance is seen as a zero sum game. Dialogue is needed to assure vested interests that, through sharing responsibilities and encouraging participatory intervention, much more can be achieved by all parties, for all parties.

A good illustration of the sorts of problems faced by a programme like LIFE is in the national consultant's report commissioned after the Moroccan Exploratory Mission. The national

Participatory Local Governance

Table 6.1
Agency approach versus LIFE approach

Aspect	Conventional, agency approach ^a	LIFE approach and method	Considerations and implications
Programme formulation	Agency uses consultants to shape agency's mandate and formulate programme recommendations.	National Consultation includes dialogue and open-forum exchange of ideas.	Brings public-private-NGO sectors together to formulate "government" policy and programme
Problem identification	Agency uses "information" from community surveys to determine problems.	Community, with CBO or NGO assistance, uses local-local dialogue to identify problems.	Community determines terms of reference and the resulting project may not be restricted to the originating agency's remit.
Project formulation	Agency, using consultants and other professionals, sets project parameters.	Community members, using CBO or NGO assistance, dialogues with local, municipal, provincial groups.	Community becomes the client/owner of project and the judge of its success.
Project implementation	Agency, using contractor.	Coordinated action by multiple actors, sectors.	Complex coordination and management requirements.
Project monitoring and evaluation	Agency evaluates contractor's performance.	Community evaluates project and determines future action.	Standardisation across projects becomes difficult.
Role of project	Finite set of actions, culminating in an end product.	Actions aimed at initiating policy dialogue and change.	Projects become less important, agencies unable to claim successes.
Project-policy links	Rarely built into project design. Usually policy formulation and project design and implementation done by separate bodies.	Projects seen as "policy experiments", used to inform and support policy change.	Need for an on-going debate to use feedback from projects to formulate policy.

a. AGENCY is used as a synonym for government ministry, municipality, public or private institution, non-governmental organisation and the like.
Source: UNDP.

consultant was not able to meet with any representatives of NGOs, CBOs or local government and found it "difficult to make any definite conclusion about the necessary conditions for the operation of the LIFE Programme in Morocco". The consultant wrote: "The local authorities are reluctant to cooperate with any association that would seem to create an interface with the people. Similarly they do not seem to be in favour of the institutionalisation of such groups formed for a particular project. Further, local authorities do not usually consider close cooperation with the community as an efficient development service but rather as a sign of under-development. . . . In fact, the cooperation

between NGOs and the local authorities is almost non-existent . . . Rather than the planned partnerships, more vertical organisation is favoured. The 'immaturity' of the population is the more recurrent remark about the implementation of the (LIFE) Programme." As a result of the report, the initiation of the LIFE Programme in Morocco has been delayed. The UNDP Field Office in Morocco believes that there is a role for LIFE in Morocco, and in 1997 it began efforts to reintroduce it.

The first step in confronting these attitudes and resolving these issues, as LIFE recognises, is to increase dialogue and interaction. LIFE needs to continue to use its fora—especially the national consultations—to begin to prepare the ground more actively for the shift in public opinion required in many countries. The small projects should be used more explicitly as "policy experiments" to build confidence through demonstrating the efficacy of using the LIFE approach and method and to extend the dialogue and debate towards more inclusive, participatory governance and human resource development.

Country stories

So, how far has LIFE come in mainstreaming and institutionalising the programme in the countries in which it operates? Much remains to be done in carrying forward the innovative approaches and cooperative processes gained at the micro level into policy formulation and institutional building at the meso and macro levels. It must be stressed that mainstreaming and institutionalising the LIFE method requires a long time. Enlarging the programme must be viewed as a progression contingent upon the successes and dissemination of best practices of a series of local initiatives—the emphasis of phase III for 1997–2000.

Although it is too soon to expect LIFE to have been institutionalised at the national level, there are indications that LIFE has moved the process of participatory local governance in the right direction, even if much of the programme's impact is limited to the organisations and institutions with which it has had direct contact. This is evident in the collective ideas and collaboration on improving the urban environment. Still, most of the impact has been limited to UNDP field offices, the grant-receiving NGOs and CBOs and some local authorities.



Sanitation and water project, Senegal

The following country profiles show how the challenges of mainstreaming and institutionalising LIFE differ in each region and yet many of the problems and issues surrounding scaling up the programme are shared by countries—regardless of cultural and institutional differences. All quotations are from responses of national coordinators to a programme questionnaire.

Brazil. In the words of the Brazilian national coordinator: “My impression is that LIFE really makes a difference when it highlights the crucial importance of participatory process (partnership is the buzz word here). Also I believe that the concept of ‘community enterprise’ as an evolution of the traditional project vision is really innovative. However, I think that we still have to reach a more mature phase so that we can claim that we have something really tangible working. Having completed the pilot cases, we can start discussing in-depth, larger partnerships, including those with the mainstream private sector.” Currently LIFE in Brazil has leveraged some \$630,000 from private sector sources emphasising its enterprise concept, and the government and UNDP in Brazil are considering making LIFE an ongoing country programme.



New pipe provides low-cost sewerage system for the community, Pakistan

Colombia. “LIFE has been successful in providing technical assistance and training activities which resulted in the selection of 13 small projects. Three of these projects have been funded, and some 70 workshops and policy dialogues have been held involving 1,050 participants from public sector ministries, universities and the private sector. There are plans for a policy dialogue workshop in Cartagena, a partnership with local authorities in Riohacha and an information and shared-experience session with the mayor of Barranquilla.”

Continuing the education workshops and introducing an education campaign to enlist the private sector in the programme are important to mainstreaming and institutionalising the LIFE process. LIFE–Colombia is hoping to put in place a new citizen culture, which must include consciousness-raising of the rights and responsibilities of community members. With these rights come obligations, and LIFE must design a consultative plan to introduce the concept of shared responsibility for the projects identified as community initiatives. To date LIFE–Colombia has committed funding of \$110,000 towards LIFE small projects.

Egypt. “When LIFE was launched in Egypt, most of the government officials said that this programme will not add anything to Egypt because it has very little money. After they listened to the process they felt that the methodology of LIFE is different from other UNDP programmes and also that of other donors. They were sceptical about the role of NGOs and CBOs in this process. NGOs also felt that government will inhibit the process. During the National Consultation they all felt that the methodology is very much needed because it helps in providing the communities with what they really need.”

On the other hand, “local authorities are very happy with the programme because [they realise that] at the end of the day, it serves their needs”. However, though they “like the methodology and have even said on many occasions that they should use it in all their activities with communities”, they do not see why they should always have to work through NGOs and CBOs.

Since that time, LIFE–Egypt has taken the lead in building partnerships among government, civil society organisations and the private sector. A recent document titled “Elements of the Egyptian Partnership Experience in Urban Development” presented at the Habitat II Conference in June 1996 shows significant progress in disseminating the LIFE methodology and approach among local urban authorities. In June 1995 a regional workshop in Istanbul, organised by IULA and RAED, presented and discussed three LIFE projects in Egypt as part of a regional discussion of issues and innovative responses throughout the Arab region. LIFE–Egypt has also leveraged some \$833,000 from GTZ in parallel financing support for small projects during phase III.



Solid waste management project separates household waste, recyclable materials and compost biodegradables, Lebanon

Jamaica. In Jamaica the government is formulating a \$60 million island-wide infrastructure reconstruction project. Sustaining the project depends on two primary factors drawn from the successful experience of the LIFE Programme's small community projects in municipalities across Jamaica:

- Decentralisation of governance to the parish level with the authority, resources and responsibility for long-term infrastructure maintenance, planning and development.
- Collaborative participation of NGOs, CBOs and local

authorities in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating infrastructure projects affecting their communities.

Jamaica's infrastructure project plan proposes using the LIFE Programme's national and international experience and method in the several hundred communities involved in the project over a period of four years, further decentralising infrastructure care and responsibility to the community level.

Kyrgyzstan. Since its initiating mission in August 1995, LIFE has facilitated 19 meetings and workshops, which included 280 participants from the community, municipal, provincial and national levels. There are currently six projects being implemented in Kyrgyzstan: three in Bishkek and three in Osh. Most projects involve tree planting, solid waste management and environmental monitoring. The future goals of LIFE-Kyrgyzstan include building networks and partnerships to develop NGO ties to local governance, training local participants in group skills and developing local education activities. Recently, a member of the national selection committee was elected mayor of Osh.



Clearing the ground for a new irrigation system and recently planted trees, Osh, Kyrgyzstan

participants in group skills and developing local education activities. Recently, a member of the national selection committee was elected mayor of Osh.

The main problems of LIFE-Kyrgyzstan concern the slow development of the local-local dialogue. Often, the mayors do not recognise local, community-led action, and many of the NGOs are not willing to cooperate with the municipalities. As a result of these tensions, there is weak support for the projects. The private sector is small, weak and inexperienced because it is emerging from the buckles of a centralised state-controlled economy. Perhaps most significant, there is no clear understanding of the concepts of urban environmental protection and what exactly constitutes an environmental hazard.

Lebanon. "In Lebanon LIFE has had the effect of changing the way local authorities view NGOs and CBOs. When working together, the municipalities are appreciating the role of the NGOs as active and dedicated elements in their community, which is creating an atmosphere of trust. During the national consultations, [participants representing] local authorities began the actual dialogue with NGO and CBO members on matters of concern and interest, and local authorities are starting to realise that these organisations are not the threat they had imagined."

As a result, “the local authority is now ready to help the reforestation efforts that the NGOs and CBOs had been working on for several years”. Interestingly, as a consequence of the local-local dialogues, “the NGOs and CBOs, besides working together, now are starting to perceive the municipality as a partner working on their side”. The minister of the environment is currently looking to replicate LIFE projects in other provinces. The NGOs and CBOs that were involved in project activities are now looking to develop similar projects in the communities they serve. In addition, the donors that witnessed the success of the Bcherri project are enthusiastic about funding similar initiatives.

Pakistan. The quality and effectiveness of interaction among local actors participating in LIFE has resulted in local authorities and community members gaining confidence to pursue joint solutions to local urban environmental problems. It is now recommended that LIFE methods be used on a large scale to introduce UNDP interventions in urban areas, building on the successes of LIFE in the Urban Sustainable Livelihood Programme, to which the UNDP country office has committed some \$3 million.

Senegal. LIFE is monitoring the implementation of its six on-going projects. With the passage of a law to transfer traditionally central government responsibilities to the region, communes and rural communities in January 1997, LIFE–Senegal’s strategy for the implementation of phase III will directly support local authorities in the elaboration of a national strategy. The national coordinator will be organising discussion workshops to promote harmonious partnerships among all levels.

South Africa. LIFE was initiated in late 1995, and the project document is scheduled for completion in April 1997 following the formation of the national selection committee and the first national consultation in which every province is represented. For its proposed country plan and projects, LIFE has received support of \$550,000 from the UNDP country office.



The Kedougou Youth Association and community volunteers planted trees and organised a maintenance system, Senegal

Tanzania. According to Tanzania's national coordinator: "Institutionalisation has not taken place, LIFE methodology is yet to be rooted in many communities. The programme is still being looked upon as a UNDP Programme." Although the widespread success of the programme has evoked requests from a number of municipalities to participate, "due to limited resources, especially finance, LIFE is yet to be expanded".

On the other hand, LIFE "is an ambitious programme. The experience gained at the micro level is expected to influence the macro level (policy-making level). Influencing policy needs more time. However with LIFE there is no such time, one is expected to show vivid examples or efforts towards achieving this goal within two years or so. Probably it will be wise to give ourselves more time to create enough impact at the micro level, which will be used to influence policy-making. Policy-making differs from country to country, thus, depending on the circumstances specific to a country policy, dialogue may require more time and more efforts."

Nevertheless, the impact of the programme to alter the way people work is already being felt. As the result of a workshop reviewing the first year of operations in Mwanza, a five-person committee was elected, "representing NGOs, CBOs, women's groups, the media and the local authority". Among their responsibilities is "forming an umbrella CBO representing other CBOs at Mwaloni, which will work with the Municipal Council on issues affecting this community. The umbrella CBO will be invited to attend some meetings of the Municipal Council and likewise the Municipal Council will be invited to the CBO's meetings." The "committee started its work immediately and managed to convince the Regional Authorities to consider the participation of the community groups on the Regional Development Committee (RDC). This was accepted and two members were invited to the RDC meetings. However, due to recent changes in the country there are no more RDCs. We hope that another body which will be undertaking the responsibilities of the former RDCs will accommodate the CBO representatives."

The journey in Tanzania may be typical of what to expect in many countries and is indicative of the time, resources and effort involved before institutionalising and mainstreaming may begin to take place. Recently the UNDP country office committed \$50,000 to the Tanzania LIFE Programme.

Thailand. With a growing history of successful small projects and collaborative working relations with local authorities, much current activity is focused on follow up with assistance to local groups for partnership building. LIFE established its presence and credibility as a facilitator for urban development projects through integration with other development works in urban areas. LIFE also participated in the process to draft the national urban environment and urban development plans as a part of Thailand's Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1996–2000). And it helped create an urban environment consortium by coordinating with the League of Municipalities, NGO Coordinating Committee on Development, urban activity groups, businesses and slum community development organisations. This process was carried out by sustained dialogue and participatory planning across sectors.

In a spring 1996 visit to project sites, a representative from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) congratulated the LIFE team on local partnership building and networking. The success of LIFE is promoted through a public relations project implemented by Lok Bai Mai (The New World) Magazine. The chairman of the LIFE National Task Force was recently elected governor of Bangkok, and policy is being formulated to develop a partnership between LIFE–Thailand and the urban authority. Plans for forming the Thai–LIFE Foundation are also being discussed.

Although LIFE–Thailand does not have active country level sources of funds, the programme has been very successful in leveraging funds from GTZ (\$365,000), Asia Pacific 2000 (\$60,000) and DANCED (\$400,000) for additional small grants. The success of LIFE projects is leading to adoption of its method as a basis for development planning and implementation within several Thai government agencies, by the UNDP country office and within the UN system-wide Capacity Development Programme.



LIFE's Lessons

At the country level, the lessons may best be viewed through two primary categories—the implementation of small projects and the beginnings of policy dialogue and scaling up, both of which are essential to long-term institutionalising and mainstreaming of the LIFE cycle. At the regional and inter-regional levels, the lessons must be viewed in terms of how they influence country-level effectiveness and bilateral and multilateral donor co-financing strategies.

Implementing small projects

Through the successful implementation of small projects, LIFE has learned many lessons for future application of the programme.

Strengthening institutional capacities of NGOs, CBOs and local authorities. NGOs and CBOs, as well as local authorities, require technical assistance in proposal writing, financial reporting, project development, project management, fundraising, group dynamics (especially conflict resolution), negotiation, and governance issues. The most common reasons why a proposed project was rejected include:

- The project was not technically feasible.
- The group was not strong enough.
- The community was not involved enough.
- No other funding sources were involved.
- The project was too big for LIFE.

LIFE provides technical assistance to NGOs and CBOs for pro-

posals writing in Egypt, Lebanon and Tanzania; planning for self-financing in Pakistan; and conflict-resolution training in Jamaica and Tanzania. It needs to expand these aspects of the programme and incorporate more technical assistance into project development.

Extending the reach. Successful small environmental projects are often part of larger projects that address related issues. As intended through the design of the LIFE method, communities can use the opportunity presented by their involvement in urban environmental issues to begin to tackle other issues, such as health education or employment. Project implementation also provides opportunities to build community problem-solving skills and develop group dynamics, as evidenced in the Chamazi project in Tanzania, where a community youth group and experts from the Ministry of Water solved a water problem by constructing a water distribution network from the river to the community centre. Water for domestic use was taken from the roofs of houses. The Chamazi project also included tree planting to help preserve the uplands and the river bank and to sustain the project over time. The youth group acquired basic skills in group dynamics and project management and learned the principles of sustainable environmental management.

Another project in Tanzania, the Mwaloni project, addressed inadequate water supply, lack of latrines, improper waste collection, pollution and a dangerous marketplace. Under LIFE support, a CBO and the Mwanza municipal council joined forces to install a water tap, public latrines, better lighting, a security fence and a rubbish collection system for the market. To sustain the project, the municipality council will leave part of the levy and tax funds to the CBOs at Mwaloni for maintenance and repair of the marketplace.

Sustaining projects over time. As promoted by the LIFE coordinator in Colombia, collective pride in one's environment is the foundation of sustainable human development. The costs involved and the commitments necessary to sustain environmental improvements cannot be discounted in assessing the long-term success of the project. Recognising this, a number of LIFE projects have incorporated a fee collection to keep the project going. In the Solid Waste Collection and Recycling project in Peshawar, Pakistan, and in a similar project in Tanzania,

LIFE requires the community to contribute 10 percent of the cost of the project, ensuring that they are serious about doing it and making clear that the costs are real. This commitment enhances their sense of pride and ownership in the project. The Mwaloni project in Tanzania is proposing that the fees the CBO needs for maintenance come from the taxes collected by the municipality. At the same time, LIFE has learned that it can be difficult to collect in-kind or cash contributions promised by local authorities or communities.

The Cesspit Emptying Project in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, is demonstrating that a LIFE project can lead to a feasibility study that demonstrates to the local authority that a service can be provided at a recoverable cost. The initial project involved repairing a cesspit emptying truck for community use in an area servicing 168,000 people. A small increase in fees covered its costs. The successful collaboration of city government with the local community to accomplish this led to a feasibility study to extend this collaborative approach to other areas of the city (box 7.1).

Attracting expanded support. Many LIFE projects will have an impact much larger than just the local project site because the programme deals with environmental problems. For exam-

BOX 7.1 Dar es Salaam community finds solution to poor sanitation

Sinza Block B is among the areas of Dar es Salaam City not connected to the central sewage system, so it must rely on pit latrines and septic tanks. Because the City Council had too few emptying tanks, wastewater was overflowing around residential areas and nearby streams, increasing the spread of malaria, dysentery, and diarrhea. A high water table exacerbated the problem. Community members formed a group to address the overflow, and the LIFE national selection committee recommended their project to the City Council's Sustainable Dar Project, which allows for design and implementation collaboration with CBOs and NGOs.

The result? "The Cesspit Emptying Services" project in Sinza Block B improved sanitation using environmental education and community mobilisation. Monthly awareness

meetings and health education campaigns empowered the community. With support from LIFE and the City Council, a cesspit emptying truck was repaired for the community's use. A proposal has been submitted to the Councilor's Board to increase citywide service charges to cover the costs of repairing the truck. This is important: if implemented, quality of service will greatly improve for 168,000 people.

The community of Sinza Block B now has the experience to influence the planning of short and long term solutions to sewerage overflow problems in other areas of the city. Stakeholders have documented the current demand for the cesspit emptying services, data that will strengthen the case for privatizing these services in other areas, a topic under discussion with city authorities.

ple, the Lake Victoria Project in Tanzania reduces pollution in its local fisheries and has a positive impact on the communities directly involved, but its influence extends to thousands of other people in East Africa who also depend on the lake for their livelihood.

Another positive consequence of local initiatives that have a broader impact is increased financial support for scaling up the LIFE process and transferring the approach to other non-LIFE related efforts in a given country. Participation by governments, donors and private sector firms who have the capacity to provide financial support to small projects in each country is key to leveraging parallel funding and country-level support beyond the cost-sharing inputs by UNDP and its bilateral donor partners. Approximately \$7.1 million has been leveraged by UNDP through cost-sharing from local, national and international sources. In 1996 UNDP–Pakistan announced a \$3.25 million budget allocation for 1997–99 for the Programme for Livelihood Improvements in Urban Settlements (PLUS), based on the LIFE method. In some countries UNDP field offices are providing additional support. The field office in South Africa has committed \$550,000 for country-level activities, and the field office in Tanzania \$50,000.

In each country, the national coordinators, along with the resident representatives of UNDP, work to mobilise local resources to complement the global resources of the LIFE Programme. Many of the LIFE countries have had success in accessing funds from the government. LIFE–Colombia has raised \$150,000 from the Ministry of Environment. LIFE–Brazil has raised \$85,000 from the local government of Niterói, the state government of Rio de Janeiro and Unibanco to fund the Shellfish Project. Support has also come from private sector sources. The National Consultation in Lebanon was sponsored by Byblos Bank, now funding the production of Lebanon LIFE pamphlets.



LIFE workshop with non-governmental organisations, Pakistan

Sparkling interest in projects through the media and private sector participation. Media coverage has been a cost-free form of promotion for the LIFE Programme and an effective way to share the LIFE method. In Brazil numerous newspaper articles and TV news events have led to increased interest from new communities and support for LIFE.

LIFE–Brazil is also seeking private sector support by helping to shift the view of small development efforts from inefficient, unproductive projects that depend on continual support from outside sources to the view that self-sufficient enterprises with broad support and a long-term commitment offer investment opportunities. Community-based organisations are introduced as collective entrepreneurs developing solutions to environmental problems, while also achieving economic success by cutting costs and creating jobs.

Increasing community benefits through technology. Technology can address social priorities through collaborative efforts. In Brazil a broad range of technologies used for sanitary toilets, impermeable cesspools, selective collection of household and public solid waste and recovery of collapsed water reservoirs have improved health and sanitation. In Jamaica a negotiated water supply agreement, which provided technology to deliver safe drinking water to 109 households, has led to measurable time-savings in water acquisition, improved infant health and cleanliness and increased confidence in the community that through their own efforts they can assess their infrastructure needs and develop plans to meet those needs. Another community that dug its own trenches and laid its own pipe cited how this enabled children to have more time to study because they did not have to fetch water. The same community is now working together to resolve other problems concerning their roads and electricity.

Scaling up the dialogue

In addition to selecting and approving proposals for small projects, the LIFE national coordinators and the national selection committees have conducted 199 city, national and provincial workshops with 3,996 representatives of CBOs, NGOs, local authorities, national governments and the private sector. There is ample evidence that LIFE has had a profound influence on local and national dialogue and collaboration and that its results have improved urban environmental conditions in almost every community where the method has been used.

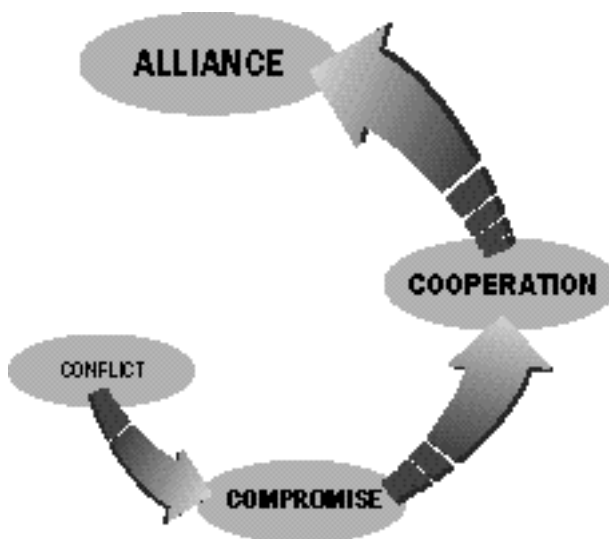
Opening avenues. When CBOs, NGOs, governments and international agencies first attempt to work together with the poor, women and other marginalised persons, conflict is virtually

inevitable due to differing positions and perceptions. Carefully facilitated dialogue (sometimes long term) can open the avenues of understanding to make compromise possible. Once cooperative work begins, alliances and partnerships can emerge to help stave off new conflicts that inevitably arise throughout the process. LIFE calls this the “LIFE cycle—from Conflict to Compromise to Cooperation to Alliance” (figure 7.1).¹

Building trust. Local-local dialogue is not only the key to the successful implementation and sustainability of small projects, it also builds the trust and collaboration essential to initiating policy dialogues and scaling up successful efforts. In one municipality in Jamaica, the mayor was the chief opponent to initial CBO project efforts, but he has since become the chief proponent for the approach and is adjusting policies to promote and support CBO initiatives. What brought about the mayor's transformation? The local-local dialogue.

Disseminating lessons. Lessons and examples from small projects can be shared by their participants through local-local dialogues at community, municipal and country levels and through participation in larger projects focused on related poverty and environment issues.

Figure 7.1
LIFE's cycle



The actors involved in dialogues play unique and complementary roles. Their relations to each other are an important factor in the effectiveness of the dialogue that unfolds. In Egypt too great a gap existed between the various parties involved in dialogue, and this imbalance stifled cooperation and inhibited peoples' willingness to talk. Sometimes CBOs can more effectively hold a dialogue with their local municipal officials than they can with central government officials on the same subject without the municipal officials' presence and participation. But CBOs cannot speak for municipal officials, and municipal officials cannot speak for CBOs. All must speak for themselves, be heard and exchange views. Inclusive dialogue may start from mistrust and conflict, but it can lead to compromise, cooperation and alliances. Thrashing out mistrusts and apprehensions among partners is crucial for creating an environment of trust.

Drawing in the private sector: In some countries it is difficult to enlist the participation of the private sector because its business people see themselves as separate from the community. That merely underscores why the business sector needs to be oriented to the local-local dialogue, made aware of community concerns and initiatives and engaged in social investment. But there is also much work the community can do to reach out to the private sector. LIFE participants must help dissolve the resistance from citizen groups and community organisations thinking that the private sector exploits its workers and is interested only in profit. Successful partnerships between the private sector and the community—such as two LIFE projects in Jamaica co-funded by the Jamaican Chamber of Commerce—must be documented and disseminated at national and international workshops and meetings.

Exchanging regional and global lessons

Significant progress has been made in working with NGO networks and cities' associations to exchange successful approaches and innovations. Concern for the urban poor and for finding practical approaches with broad applicability has characterised the working relationship of LIFE with its regional and inter-regional partners.

- Regional and inter-regional workshops and conferences provide opportunities for sharing LIFE methods and reaching more institutions, cities and countries than LIFE's country-

based approaches could hope to do alone. An estimated 60 countries have regional and global gatherings and exchanges for ensuring inclusive participation and ownership by all stakeholders in the process. Dissemination of lessons among LIFE country programmes and regional partners deepens insights into the local-local dialogue and how people have benefited from these activities.

- The technologies that various NGOs and associations use are secondary to the social relations forged in formulating partnerships among local and regional actors. Through new personal alliances and partnerships, new technologies can be explored and shared—as in the ACHR project between India and South Africa.

- Transfers of methods and technologies are never exact replications. They require adaptation, moulding, modification and internalisation by the “importing agent” through its own local-local dialogues. This was the experience of the MegaCities Project transfer between Cairo and Manila.

- LIFE national coordinators observe that they benefit and learn from their regional and inter-regional partners through interchange of materials and reports and participation in each other's activities. Presentations led by LIFE national coordinators at international conferences and workshops, such as the Habitat II Conference in Istanbul, are interactive participatory events that draw on the experiences of all conference attendees to evaluate programmatic structure and processes. During Habitat II more than 60 people were involved in a full review of LIFE's design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. No papers were presented at the workshop: the emphasis was on discussing issues and listening, in the form of a local-local dialogue. National coordinators gave short presentations on lessons from the programme, and discussions of the LIFE method followed. LIFE coordinators have led similar discussions at other international workshops in Canada, Jordan, Mauritius, Nigeria, the Netherlands and Sweden, to name a few.

Funding implications for UNDP

Mainstreaming of the LIFE Programme in UNDP has already begun. A concept paper, based on the LIFE method and experience, has recently been produced by UNDP at the request of the administrator. The paper proposes to increase support for local

initiatives by improving the access of local actors, both local government and civil society organisations (CSOs), to bilateral donor and UNDP core resources at the country level through a country-based trust fund. The proposal is to establish country trust funds for local governance innovations, especially those dealing with issues of gender equality and other sustainable human development objectives. The recommendation is that local, global and donor country resources be incorporated in the trust funds and that UNDP country offices be the fund managers and administrators.



New carts aid the collection and sorting of solid waste, Senegal

The LIFE experience would serve as the basis for defining the country-based trust fund. The trust-fund mechanism would provide integrated support at two levels: first in financially supporting innovations in local governance and management, and second in providing support for the institutionalisation of such innovations through networking, complementary financing and administrative and operational support to locally designed projects. It has been suggested that the 12 pilot countries of the LIFE Programme could be appropriate places to test the establishment of a country-based trust fund.

Programming implications for UNDP

As new LIFE cycles begin and the local-local method is adopted in other countries, UNDP must remain flexible and adaptive to the changing needs of member countries (table 7.1). And as participatory local governance shifts the balance of power in communities, UNDP must encourage local and municipal governments to recognise that, while participation leads to changes in responsibility and ownership, the changes do not have to be threatening.

The LIFE global learning network can, in a substantive capacity, help other countries set up programmes. And as interest in LIFE grows, UNDP should help identify entry points for participatory development projects that focus on other priority areas for sustainable human development, such as gender equality and income generation. Algeria, Malawi, Mauritius, Mongolia and Uganda have expressed interest in starting their own LIFE Programmes.

In Mongolia the UNDP country office is using the LIFE method in an urban renewal programme. The country office has

Table 7.1
The meaning of LIFE for UNDP

UNDP focal areas	LIFE Programme variables	Implications for UNDP
Sustainable human development priorities	Environment is strategic point of entry. Improved environment and quality of life promotes economic development. Participation of the poor, women and marginalised is essential.	UNDP should encourage identification of entry points for participatory development projects in which the poor can co-operate with local authorities to determine their development priorities.
Decentralisation and local governance	Participation leads to ownership and responsibility. Dialogue is key to participation and leads to alliances. Local participatory governance empowers community to work with local authorities and the private sector.	UNDP should encourage governments to recognise that although participation shifts the balance of power in favour of the governed, it does not have to be confrontational if based on the "local-local" dialogue approach.
Policy-making	Capacity-building empowers local actors. Policy dialogue can be based on replicating successful projects. Policy changes can support winning participatory approaches.	UNDP should accelerate the National Execution approach with its priorities for inclusive participation as a basis for vertical and horizontal policy-making.
The programme approach	Document and disseminate successful methods and technologies used in regional and inter-regional projects. Transfer best practices of NGOs, CBOs and municipal authorities through cities associations. Shift focus of global technical support from management and evaluation to teaching and interchange.	UNDP should involve its bilateral donor partners in more regional and cross-cultural participatory programming to encourage networking and disseminate findings.
Co-financing	Donor participation in leveraged funding can multiply the impact of funds. Local actors are effective and efficient when provided with capacity.	UNDP should publish its lessons learned on co-financing and policy reforms needed to increase the use of parallel financing and trust fund modalities.

Source: UNDP.

mobilised more than a million dollars to cover programme costs, with an initiating mission in June 1997. The national coordinators of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan will assist Mongolia in the start-up phase and continue in a regional partnership throughout the programme.

In Uganda the UNDP country office is reviewing LIFE methods and guidelines, and an initiating mission is scheduled for late 1997. The national coordinator of Tanzania will be working with Uganda on programme implementation.

Note

1. The LIFE Cycle was originally articulated by the LIFE Coordinator in Thailand, Sompong Patpui.



LIFE's Tasks Ahead

LIFE is a small pilot programme with modest funding for an extensive effort. By almost any criterion, the programme has been very efficient and delivered good value for the money invested. National selection committees have been established in each of the participating countries, and through a process of national consultations and workshops, the programme has initiated a series of dialogues at various levels and provided funds to numerous small projects.

The programme has demonstrated how participatory local governance leads to successful community-based initiatives for improving urban environmental conditions. Its success has prompted requests from other countries, communities and NGOs to participate in the programme. While most of the impact of the programme has been limited to the “host” institutions with which it has been working most closely, signs of institutionalisation and mainstreaming have emerged within UNDP offices, the grant-receiving NGOs and CBOs, bilateral donors, other UN agencies and—to a lesser extent—in local and regional governments.

The challenges

LIFE was set up as a “pilot” initiative to test the validity of the process of participatory local governance in tackling development issues. Given the success of the programme, the LIFE method and process should be scaled up by UNDP and other international agencies and adopted by local and national governments. Although it is still too soon for complete institution-

alisation, the results show a level of success that suggests that governments and donors ought to be internalising the process. The final “upstream” stage of the method is designed to encourage governments and donors to do just that. But several questions must be addressed before mainstreaming and institutionalisation can be fully achieved. To successfully complete phase III and establish the LIFE Global Laboratory, six challenges need to be analysed and responded to.

How to turn micro interventions into macro-policy impact. National coordinators and national selection committees must formulate effective strategies to influence the policy thinking in each country. Although the method indicates that the national selection committee will be responsible for propagating and publicising the LIFE process, the exact procedures for how to disseminate the method have been left open for each country to develop. The difficulty with this is that the members of the committees, and indeed the national coordinators, were chosen largely for their ability to intervene and act on local projects.

Although the committees usually have government representation, there is generally a lack of policy-making experience and expertise in each of the country organisations.

How to move from a globally independent programme to appropriate national legal forms. Though each country programme has had the acceptance and participation of local and national governments, LIFE should not be introduced as a “government” programme, since this would

make some actors reluctant to participate. For the same reason, LIFE cannot be instituted as a private sector or NGO programme. The programme is therefore designed independently but under the umbrella of UNDP to give it credibility to get off the ground. Although this has worked, it can only be a temporary state and the programme must become genuinely nationalised. True, there are the beginnings of a trust fund in some countries, but more work needs to be done to get the programme funded at the national level. In the longer term, it will be the process rather than the programme that will be internalised by governments, donors and implementing agencies. But given the current time frame of the programme, steps to



Teamwork and cooperative efforts sow the seeds for the next generation, Osh, Kyrgyzstan

internalise the process must be taken now. The national consultations seem to have been designed as one-time events to introduce and initiate the programme: clearly, they could also serve as vehicles to transfer the lessons and to develop policy.

How to translate community-based initiatives into effective forms of governance. An important objective of the programme is to empower the urban poor by giving them a greater say in identifying issues, resolving problems and managing their affairs. As long as the programme is operating in a few communities, the impact and implications for the city and the country at large remain marginal. But as the LIFE local-local method expands and influences policy-making in hundreds of communities, empowerment will become a major issue, particularly for local government authorities. Although local governments are represented on the national selection committee, the programme needs to address the issue of governance from the beginning and stress the strategic links that will make the jobs of local authorities easier in partnership—for example, shared financing, augmented technology, better communication networks and shared responsibility for monitoring and repair of projects. The challenge remains to introduce LIFE as a new cooperative process rather than a replacement or substitute for local government authorities.



Community workshop,
Pakistan

How to ensure quality leadership within local NGOs and CBOs. The LIFE method and process depend heavily on local CBOs and NGOs for the selection and implementation of projects in partnership with local governments. As such, the nature and direction of the projects—and therefore the viability and success of the LIFE Programme—are to a large extent a function of the character, strength and leadership of the local NGOs and CBOs. Inevitably, the leadership of these organisations is related to the local power structures, from which they draw support and often legitimacy. In situations where the leadership of local CBOs and NGOs is dominated by autocratic leaders, there is a negative impact on some aspects of the LIFE projects, even though they may be “successfully” completed. The challenge remains to buoy the support and active participation of CBOs and NGOs while ensuring that their influence and leadership is in keeping with the goals and spirit of LIFE.

How to transform random micro “policy experiments” into systematised geographical extension. The process of expanding the programme needs to be more systematic. At present there appears to be no consensus or criteria for selecting regions, cities or even localities for the national programmes. Nor are there guidelines that could help national coordinators discern the advantages and the disadvantages of concentrating the programme versus spreading it out nationally—each of them appears to be exploring and setting its own criteria. LIFE’s decentralised structure encourages each national selection committee to design a system for expanding the programme that works best given each country’s particular needs. But there must be more data and documentation on expansion strategies that have succeeded or failed. The challenge of establishing country-level monitoring and documentation remains.

How to enlarge the focus from “what to do” to “how to do it.” Mainstreaming and expanding the programme involves striking a balance between what is feasible nationally, in terms of political and social constraints, and what is required to meet global guidelines that ensure that the projects are in keeping with the true spirit of the LIFE Programme. To that end, the

guidelines may need to focus more on “how to” rather than “what to” do. Guidelines should indicate how each country must develop criteria—and have a system to evaluate those criteria—for deciding how the programme evolves and expands within national borders. Guidelines should show how to identify key proponents in the many institutions of each country to act as entry points for promoting inclusive consultations. The challenge here is to provide enough

specific information and guidance to steer national coordinators and their teams through the LIFE process, while simultaneously allowing latitude for country-specific adaptation and interpretation.



Clearing service road,
Pakistan

How to shift from methodological review to rigorous evaluation of impact analysis. An important challenge to the programme is to develop a more rigorous system for evaluating projects. This means getting a better understanding of the baseline conditions in the communities. Assessments need to be

made of the relative status of a project in a community. Are LIFE projects given priority, and how are they evaluated by the community? LIFE is a programme based on human interaction and participatory local governance, and the measure of its success is more qualitative than quantitative. But it is still essential to have data as a base-line measure of a project's impact and an indicator to assess whether the programme achieved its objectives.

These are significant challenges to be answered by the LIFE cycle as it unfolds in phase III. But the LIFE Programme, which heralds a sea-change in policy thinking and in methods of local governance by enlisting all members of a community in a participatory process, is designed to meet them.

Recommendations for the method

- Increase the emphasis on the LIFE process and approach as objectives in themselves for NGOs, CBOs and local governments rather than as a means to obtaining LIFE grants.
- Broaden the involvement of local and national government and private sector representatives in consultations, selection committees and reviews.
- Increase the dissemination of method and programme results, both within and beyond the pilot countries and participating institutions.
- Scale up activities that influence donor and bilateral agencies to adopt LIFE-like approaches as a vehicle for leveraging increased parallel financing and country inputs.
- Mainstream the programme by promoting national and international policy dialogue workshops based on LIFE experiences.

Recommendations for project impact

- Continue the existing programme to maintain momentum and to increase credibility in the 12 pilot countries and at the regional and inter-regional levels.
- Make more judicious and inventive use of the small grants component to encourage more organisations and institutions to adopt and institutionalise LIFE-like approaches and processes.
- Increase the emphasis by national and local government on decentralisation of local governance functions to communities.
- Increase the empowerment and self-sufficiency of selected CBOs by helping them become legal entities.

- Strengthen the emphasis on human resource development and capacity building, especially within CBOs and local governments, to enable community members to perform their new tasks and fulfill their responsibilities.
- Ensure objective evaluations, ample documentation, reliable dissemination and adequate access to the results of small projects by using publicity mechanisms to educate people about the programme.

Phase III: 1997–2000

As a pioneer for an approach to sustainable human development that is effective, close-to-the-ground, inclusive and participatory, the LIFE Programme sees three primary tasks for phase III: institutionalising, mainstreaming and scaling up.

Institutionalising. To increase the credibility and sustainability of the projects, the LIFE Programme at the municipal and country levels must identify the appropriate legal forms for the programme in each country. NGOs and CBOs need help with fiscal management and capacity building to augment their involvement with LIFE. Small projects can also be made sustainable, and the local-local dialogue can be institutionalised.

Mainstreaming. The LIFE method of local-local dialogue must be showcased at national, regional, inter-regional and international gatherings for donors, governments, NGOs and others engaged in development. To do this, LIFE must apply creative, user-friendly methods for evaluating and documenting its projects. And to improve opportunities for the transfer of successful case studies, the programme needs to operationalise feedback at the national and regional levels, linking local activities with national policy-making and regional networks. Increased public relations, environmental awareness campaigns that draw on the LIFE experiences, visits by government and donor representatives to project sites, and exchanges among national coordinators, implementors, or project recipients should all be considered.

Scaling up. The long-term goal of the LIFE Programme is to bring about fundamental reform in the social and economic systems of developing countries through a new vision of partnership between government and civil society. By replicating

successful small projects and institutionalising the dialogue and collaborative process, LIFE can affect change in local governance and influence macro-policy formulation. By increasing private sector participation in local-local dialogue and representation on the national selection committees, combined public-private commitments to environmental initiatives will foster a stronger and more resilient community.

Phase III objectives and activities

Over the next three years the LIFE Programme in each pilot country will focus on consolidating local, national, regional and inter-regional efforts to support dialogue and action to improve the urban environment and will oversee the evaluation of the small projects using a participatory evaluation method (a Methodological Note on Participatory Evaluation is available). The lessons from all these projects will support policy dialogue, scaling up of projects, replication of successful models and transferring of successful approaches to finding local solutions to local problems. In addition, each LIFE country programme will document country-level experiences in preparation for sharing the LIFE methodology and experience with CBOs, NGOs and local authorities in other countries to expand the impact.

The regional and inter-regional emphasis will be on disseminating lessons and mainstreaming the process. NGO networks, cities associations and international agencies will share information on projects. There will be regional and inter-regional workshops for UNDP offices and donors—and other workshops for local and national actors in countries beyond those originally involved in the LIFE Programme.

The emphasis for global technical support will be to ensure rigorous analysis and evaluation efforts—and to oversee production of quality documentation (videos, slide shows, transparencies, CD-ROMs, global internet website) and published materials such as manuals on “Conducting Local-Local Dialogue” and on how to set up training events in the “Technologies of Participation”. The LIFE approach will be disseminated and mainstreamed throughout UNDP and the bilateral and multilateral donor organisations—and at the Global Advisory Committee workshops.



Teaching the next generation about community-led environmental projects, Senegal

A global learning laboratory

The success of the LIFE Programme will be measured by the extent to which the method and projects take on appropriate institutional forms in the countries where LIFE operates—and by its influence on policy at the community, municipal, national, regional, inter-regional and global levels. This ambitious task proposes to change what is done, who does it, and how it is done when addressing urban environmental improvements. This will require intensive follow-through on mainstreaming efforts within UNDP. Bilateral donors also must encourage others in the development community to use the LIFE Programme approach.

In 2000 the LIFE Programme as conceived will be completed, and the methods and materials essential to its continuation will be accessible by every country—so that local authorities, CBOs, NGOs, cities' associations and bilateral and multilateral donors can develop the LIFE process in a community. In the 12 pilot countries, the LIFE Programme will continue to serve as a global laboratory for future development efforts—a practical repository for both method and practice to be applied to any community enterprise.



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Participatory Local Governance

Bangladesh

After a highly successful initiating mission, the LIFE Programme was delayed due to instabilities within Bangladesh. Following negotiations with the Bangladeshi government in 1996, the LIFE Programme selected a national coordinator and will begin reviewing project proposals by late spring 1997. LIFE is collaborating on health-related projects with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Healthy Cities Programme. Bangladesh's population is expected to grow 6.6 percent by 2020, increasing to 245 million from the current 123 million. The city of Dhaka alone is expected to grow to 11 million by 2020. With poverty rates and population density among the world's highest, Bangladesh will face extensive urban environmental challenges in the next decade.

LIFE initiating mission	April 1995
National coordinator	Ms. Tanzina Haque Hossain

brazil

The LIFE Programme has been operating in Brazil since its national consultation in 1993. Since then LIFE has funded nine projects in four cities, choosing those from a pool of 57 proposals submitted by joint ventures of NGOs, CBOs and local governments.

Four of the approved projects were funded by investors, rather than by donors. This is partly because LIFE-Brazil adopts an entrepreneurial style towards its projects, which it defines as community enterprises. Many new cities are interested in the programme, and private sector support is growing because the CBOs engaged in LIFE are seen as social entrepreneurs who are reinventing development. Investment in their efforts is thus considered venture capital.

LIFE-Brazil now needs to learn the techniques to rigorously evaluate its projects, to package and advertise its assessments and to disseminate its results. To date, four projects have been documented using audio-visual presentations and computer slide shows. And a number of workshops with NGOs, CBOs and local authorities have been held to share lessons learned. But the programme would also like to develop maps, spreadsheets, internet web sites, video and CD-ROM presentations to further disseminate lessons learned and best practices.

LIFE initiating mission	December 1993
National coordinator	Mr. Ricardo Neves
Recruited	January 1993
Background	NGO
Location	Institute of Technology for the Citizen in Rio (NGO)
National consultation	March 1993
Participants	60
Priorities	Strengthen civil society organisations (NGOs, CBOs)
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO-2; CBO-1; LA-1; private sector-0; national government-2; UNDP-1; academic-1 Men-4; women-4
Local support committees	Yes. In two cities, for project identification.
Subcommittees	No.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Greater Rio metropolitan area and three other cities
Number of cities	4
Selection criteria	Proposals must represent a joint venture of at least one civil society organisation (NGO, CBO) and a local government. Local governments are not eligible to receive grants.
Proposals/Approved/Funded	57 / 9 / 9
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	3 / 4 / 4
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Municipal-8; national-1
Participants	12 to 40 for each municipal; 60 in national
Subjects	LIFE methodology; LIFE participatory process
Publicity	
Mentions	100+ in TV, radio, newspaper
Videos	Mussels Community Centre Association

Participatory Local Governance

colombia

LIFE-Colombia decided during its national consultation to concentrate operations initially in Cartagena City. The National Selection Committee reviewed thirteen projects and selected five. The mayor of Cartagena has now included LIFE in his 1997 budget.

Introducing the LIFE process and the concept of sustainable human development has been more important than the actual projects in some instances because poverty, criminal activity and civil unrest have created vast imbalances in communities. LIFE introduces a culture of participation, consultation, collaboration and trust which have been desperately lacking for many Colombians. LIFE projects focus on environmental education as a means for social participation with particular attention to involving women, the poor and marginalised members of communities.

A campaign to educate the private sector about LIFE projects is also under way. The principal challenge remains to strengthen local capacities for partnership, for example, giving CBOs the legal status necessary to receive government funds. The programme also needs additional educational workshops on capacity-building, database configuration and project evaluation.

LIFE initiating mission	March 1995
National coordinator	Ms. Zaida Salas Franco
Recruited	December 1995
Background	NGO
Location	NGO, Cartagena
National consultation	March 1996, Cartagena
Participants	30
Priorities	Water and sanitation; waste management; environmental education; construction and rehabilitation of roads; channels
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO-3; CBO-3; LA-1; private sector-1; national government-1; UNDP-0; academic-0 Men-6; women-3
Local support committees	Yes. In neighbourhoods of the city.
Subcommittees	No.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Cartagena City
Number of cities	1
Selection criteria	Coverage (number of people); sustainability
Proposals/Approved/Funded	13 / 10 / 4 (the non-funded are being negotiated)
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	5 / 0 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community-48; municipal-14; national-4
Participants	1,000 community; 42 municipal; 8 national
Subjects	LIFE Programme; methodology; process; environmental problems; SHD
Publicity	
Mentions	TV-0; radio-2; newspaper-6
Videos	Opinions and experiences of communities

egypt

LIFE-Egypt has successfully initiated three projects: public latrines in suburban Cairo, earthquake refugee aid in Ein Helwan, and solid-waste recycling in Beni Suef. LIFE and MegaCities have collaborated to transfer from Cairo to Manila an income-generating recycling system for the solid waste project. Another major accomplishment is the collaboration with IULA/RAED on a newsletter that reaches 13 countries in the Arab States and North Africa and collaboration on a major regional workshop in the Near East called Developing Environmental Leadership (DELTA). LIFE-Egypt has participated in two global workshops and is looking for new ways to coordinate with international environmental organisations.

The main challenges are lack of funds and a great need for capacity-building of the relatively weak NGOs and CBOs. Another key issue is that dialogue between the municipalities and the government has been difficult: dialogue can be used as a tool, but it does not necessarily lead to partnerships. Access to power is necessary in order to enter a partnership but partnerships are usually temporary alliances in Egypt—and temporary arrangements hinder many projects from creating lasting institutional change.

LIFE initiating mission	March/April 1993
National coordinator	Dr. Emad Adly
Recruited	March 1992
Background	NGO
Location	Arab Office of Youth for Environment (NGO), Cairo
National consultation	October 1993, Suez
Participants	93
Priorities	Waste management; environmental education; community mobilisation; enforcing regulatory measures
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO-4; CBO-1; LA-3; private sector-1; national government-3; UNDP-2; academic-2; donors-1 Men-7; women-9
Local support committees	Yes. For project preparation.
Subcommittees	Ad-hoc technical committee to review projects.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Four governorates: Cairo, Alexandria, Beni Suef, Suez
Number of cities	2 (Cairo & Beni Suef)
Selection criteria	Capabilities of the organisation; project framework; inputs; implementation mechanisms; outputs
Proposals/Approved/Funded	34 / 4 / 4
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	4 / 3 / 2
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community-91; municipal-2; provincial-42; national-4
Participants	800 community; 40 municipal; 389 provincial; 224 national
Subjects	LIFE Programme, process; project preparation; technical assistance; participatory experience
Publicity	
Mentions	TV-2; radio-0; newspaper-6
Videos	"The Egyptian Partnership in Urban Development" (Brochure)

Participatory Local Governance

jamaica

LIFE-Jamaica has funded 19 projects located in 10 of its 14 parishes. Projects focus on potable water, sanitation, recycling and playground construction. Five LIFE seminars have been held to educate the government and the general public on the value and use of double-vented pit latrines, sanitation, recycling and other environmental issues. LIFE is currently working with 15 community groups to facilitate dialogue, promote partnerships and address the legal and fiscal status of CBOs. Through local-local dialogue, wary and doubtful participants have become strong advocates and partners in solving problems and accomplishing objectives.

The principal challenge is sustaining the gains made through project accomplishments. Tension between participants arises in disputes over the legal system and how it helps sustain the projects. Communities have major concerns about land tenure and access to services. Another big challenge is using the methodology in new areas with new institutions. At the moment, most Jamaican institutions are not used to meeting the needs of the poor, let alone taking them into their confidence and listening to them. A strategy is needed to facilitate cooperation with local government without threatening the existing power structures.

LIFE initiating mission	November 1992
National coordinator	Ms. Marcia Hextal
Recruited	March 1994
Background	NGO
Location	United Way of Jamaica (NGO), Kingston
National consultation	April 1993
Participants	80
Priorities	Waste management; hazard-prone areas; environment in urban planning
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO-7; CBO-1; LA-1; private sector-1; national government-3; UNDP-1; academic-0; donors-3 Men-9; women-10
Local support committees	No.
Subcommittees	Yes. Project review (same as executive committee).
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Falmouth, St. Ann's Bay, May Pen, Spanish Town, Kingston
Number of cities	9
Selection criteria	Sustainability; organisational support; financial contribution; participation
Proposals/Approved/Funded	60/ 19 / 19
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	16 / 0 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community-18; municipal-2; national-2; + parish
Participants	980 combined (not including parish workshops)
Subjects	Community development; information on LIFE; double-vented pit latrines
Publicity	
Mentions	TV-3; radio-4; newspaper-3
Videos	Spring cleaning; Water is LIFE; St. Mary environmental seminar—A Cleaner Port Maria

kyrgyzstan

LIFE–Kyrgyzstan began in 1995 and is currently working in two cities—Bishkek and Osh. The mayor of Osh has been involved in LIFE and two National Selection Committee members are on the Kyrgyzstan Official Commission for Sustainable Human Development. LIFE received over 50 proposals for projects. Six projects have been funded. Many letters have been sent to state officials to make them aware of the LIFE Programme and to focus their attention on environmental and SHD issues. It is difficult to involve the private sector because it is too small and undeveloped, having just emerged from a highly centralised state-controlled economy.

There is a startling absence of dialogue at the community level among NGOs, CBOs and local authorities. Support for the projects is often weak because many NGOs are reluctant to work with municipalities. Also, there is no clear understanding of the concept of urban environmental protection. The national coordinator is networking to promote LIFE methods and make them part of Kyrgyzstan’s long-term objectives. This programme needs funds to publicize successful project examples based on local-local dialogue and the partnership approach. Such publicity would motivate the NSC and stimulate public interest and commitment to the projects.

LIFE initiating mission	August 1995
National coordinator	Mr. Bakyt Besimov
Recruited	September 1995
Background	University Dean
Location	Osh State University, Osh
National consultation	October 1995
Participants	80
Priorities	Water and sanitation; waste management—air, water, pollution; hazard-prone areas; environmental health; income generation; environmental education; environment in urban planning
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO–4; CBO–2; LA–4; private-sector–0; national government–1; UNDP–1; academic–1; donors–0 Men–8; women–3
Local support committees	No.
Subcommittees	Yes. Project selection.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Bishkek and Osh
Number of cities	2
Selection criteria	Sustainability; organisational support; financial contribution; participation
Proposals/Approved/Funded	26 / 6 / 6
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	6 / 0 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community–5; municipal–7; provincial–6; national–1
Participants	60 community; 100 municipal; 43 provincial; 80 national
Subjects	LIFE objectives, process, project criteria
Publicity	
Mentions	TV; radio; newspaper

Participatory Local Governance

Lebanon

Since LIFE–Lebanon began in October 1995, there has been a national workshop and 15 project proposals submitted to the National Selection Committee. Two were chosen—one each in Becharre and Hammana. The two projects have been successful beyond all expectations, and scaling-up and replication have begun ahead of schedule. Both projects deal with solid waste management through a process that starts with the sorting of household waste and ends with the sale of recycled materials. The sales generate income for the community.

Solid waste management has reached crisis proportions in Lebanon and is one of the government's top priorities. The National Selection Committee meets biweekly and is very active in all phases of project implementation. Each project has a committee to mobilise funds for sustaining and maintaining the project. LIFE has been particularly welcomed by local authorities who have little means of delivering services or meeting the needs of their communities after years of invasion, war and devastation.

There is an interest in direct donor funding for LIFE overhead costs, but no mechanism exists for this under the current Lebanese legal structure. There are also many communities in great need that would like to utilise the LIFE Programme, but cannot find matching funds. LIFE–Lebanon must explore institutional forms for long-term commitments that circumvent the problem of securing funds for overhead costs; it must also start to receive project proposals at the rate of five per month and become more productive in the project selection process.

LIFE initiating mission	1995
National coordinator	Ms. Brigitte Kheir Keirouz
Recruited	September 1995
Background	NGO
Location	UNDP Office, Beirut
National consultation	November 1995
Participants	110
Priorities	Water and sanitation; waste management—air, water pollution; environmental education; city greening
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO–2; CBO–0; LA–2; private sector–2; national government–2; UNDP–2; academic–2 Men–8; women–4
Local support committees	Yes. To design and run each project.
Subcommittees	No.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Whole country
Number of cities	2
Selection criteria	Matching funds; inclusion of local authority; committee of actors
Proposals/Approved/Funded	15 / 2 / 1
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	2 / 0 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Only national consultation
Participants	110
Subjects	LIFE priorities
Publicity	
Mentions	TV–7; radio–1; newspaper–5
Videos	LIFE in Lebanon

pakistan

LIFE is well established in Pakistan with 21 small-scale projects funded and under way. Projects address urban sanitation, recycling, solid waste management and environmental education issues and include innovative initiatives such as giving a grant to an Urdu newsletter to publicise LIFE's activities and leaders. LIFE-Pakistan is being scaled up as a result of a US\$3.25 million commitment for the Programme for Livelihood Improvement in Urban Settlements (PLUS), which will expand the mandate beyond the environment to include many problems confronting the urban poor. PLUS will comprise three medium-sized cities (up to 3 million population). The LIFE-PLUS partnership raises mainstreaming issues of whether LIFE should be absorbed by or independent from emerging programmes. NGOs play a significant role in managing projects: although they do not conduct project evaluations, NGOs are responsible for overseeing documentation and evaluation costs (by line-item expense). Concerns have arisen over how to coordinate activities between LIFE, PLUS and GEF, a small grants programme.

LIFE initiating mission	May 1993
National coordinator	Mr. Fayyaz Baquir
Recruited	August 1993
Background	NGO
Location	UNDP Islamabad
National consultation	September 1993
Participants	43
Priorities	Not discussed
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO-3; CBO-2; LA-0; private sector-1; national government-2; UNDP-1; academic-1 Men-5; women-5
Local support committees	No.
Subcommittees	No.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Not discussed at national consultation
Number of cities	10
Selection criteria	Track record; community trust; professional capacity; well-defined objectives; target group; community involvement; monitoring and evaluation
Proposals/Approved/Funded	70 / 23 / 21
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	14 / 7 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	10 provincial; 2 national
Participants	295 provincial; 113 national
Subjects	Environmental Who's Who; introduce LIFE; identify project proposals; areas for future collaboration
Publicity	
Mentions	TV; radio-11; newspaper-various
Videos	"Effective Urban Waste Management"; "Social Waste Management"

Participatory Local Governance

senegal

LIFE–Senegal has six projects underway and is mobilising resources for project support. The National Selection Committee approved sanitation, aqueduct, potable water and waste management projects. The Programme also provides courses on horse medical care for the waste-cart horses. LIFE–Senegal learned that CBOs are the more motivated partners in LIFE activities—compared with NGOs—because they are directly impacted by the projects. Other significant lessons learned are that community financial participation is possible, even in the poorest communities, and that the suspicion and mistrust that community members held towards local authorities was assuaged through local-local dialogue and the partnership approach.

CBOs need increased technical assistance, especially in project formulation. Efforts to strengthen CBO capacity are constrained by lack of funds and the relative absence of NGOs that can work with CBOs out of Dakar. For the future a national strategy must be developed to guide local authorities involved in LIFE projects and to ensure successful implementation of the projects already funded.

LIFE initiating mission	January 1993
National coordinator	Mr. Bachir Gaye
Recruited	July 1994
Background	Central government
Location	CONGAD (NGO) in Dakar
National consultation	November 1994
Participants	100
Priorities	Water and sanitation; water management—air, water, pollution; hazard-prone areas; environmental health; income generation; environmental education; environment in urban planning
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO–3; CBO–3; LA–3; private sector; national government–6; UNDP–2; academic–1; association of engineers–1 Men–19; women–3
Local support committees	No.
Subcommittees	No.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	All cities
Number of cities	7
Selection criteria	Sustainability; organisational support; financial contribution; participation
Proposals/Approved/Funded	16 / 8 / 4
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	6 / 0 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community–9; municipal–11; provincial–5; national–5
Participants	270 community; 220 municipal; 75 provincial; 150 national
Subjects	LIFE objectives and process; identification of environmental problems and priorities; roles of actors
Publicity	
Mentions	TV; radio; newspaper–4
Videos	LIFE projects (under preparation)

south africa

LIFE–South Africa is in its initial stage: it is organising its National Selection Committee following its first national workshop. Due to a long gap between the first initiating mission and the recruitment of the national coordinator, the programme was delayed. A national consultation involving representatives from all the provinces was held in February 1997 as a means to establish connections.

The issue of the programme's legal status under South Africa's laws must be resolved, as banks will only open accounts for legally constituted organisations. LIFE–South Africa will have to do some institutionalising before it can put its methodologies to practice.

LIFE initiating mission	November 1995
National coordinator	Mr. Solomon Gumbi
Recruited	August 1996
Background	NGO
Location	Mvula Trust, Pretoria
National consultation	February 1997

Participatory Local Governance

tanzania

LIFE-Tanzania has funded 16 projects, 7 of which have been completed. Projects are located in Dar es Salaam, Mwanza and Zanzibar. In working with on-going projects, LIFE-Tanzania learned that it is important to monitor project progress, train groups in management and participatory skills and help groups to continuously reassess their strategies and priorities to focus on programme objectives. It is critical to mobilise resources by getting local authorities to contribute expertise and to encourage donor visits to project sites. The programme is refining its process for project selection and its methods of project evaluation to ensure that projects meet community needs.

LIFE-Tanzania's main challenges are resource mobilisation and the low capacity of local actors. The urban poor need to build skills and be trained in management. The next phase of LIFE must empower local civic groups to keep their environmental development plans as local initiatives when they form partnerships with local authorities.

LIFE initiating mission	January 1993
National coordinator	Ms. Mary Kibogoya
Recruited	1994
Background	Central government
Location	Office with Africa 2000, Dar es Salaam
National consultation	May 1993
Participants	80
Priorities	Water and sanitation; waste management; hazard-prone areas; income generation; environment in urban planning
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO-4; CBO-2; LA-1; private sector-1; national government-2; UNDP-1; academic-2; Africa 2000-1 Men-10; women-4
Local support committees	No.
Subcommittees	Yes, in Mwanza and Zanzibar.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	3 municipalities—Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Mwanza.
Number of cities	3
Selection criteria	Focus on unplanned settlements and informal sector; LIFE priorities; self-help and multi-actor
Proposals/Approved/Funded	64 / 17 / 16
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	9 / 7 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community-10; municipal-3; national-2
Participants	10–50 community; 20–40 municipal; 30–80 national
Subjects	Briefing on LIFE; community participation; partnerships; project formulation; group dynamics.
Publicity	
Mentions	TV-3; radio-4; newspaper-2
Videos	"LIFE-supported Activities"; brochures on activities and case studies

thailand

LIFE–Thailand has 29 projects in 21 cities. The LIFE methodology has been accepted by communities and local authorities and is used extensively in municipalities. Phase II used the outstanding successful projects from phase I as models to disseminate throughout the country. At the end of phase II, the replication of these successes generated a demand for political reform to support an extensive scaling up and expansion process. The new governor of Bangkok was the former chairman of the LIFE National Selection Committee and he plans to transfer LIFE methodologies to every community in Bangkok. In addition, the UN Collaborative Action Plan for Thailand (UNCAP) is in place and represents the major component of mainstreaming LIFE methodologies in the development community.

The rapid adoption of the LIFE process by actors in major urban centres and in the UN development community makes its future somewhat unclear. Questions of the future role of LIFE and its institutionalisation are currently being discussed and debated. One significant problem has been that LIFE has gone beyond its original mandate, taken on new responsibilities and created a work overload. Regionalising its operations may ease LIFE's overburdened programme.

LIFE initiating mission	April 1993
National coordinator	Mr. Sompong Patpui
Recruited	1993
Background	NGO
Location	The Grassroots Development Institute (NGO), Bangkok
National consultation	May 1993
Participants	45
Priorities	Water and sanitation; waste management—air, water pollution; environmental health and education; environment in urban planning; conservation
National selection committee	
Composition	NGO–6; CBO–1; LA–1; private sector–1; national government–5; UNDP–1; academic–1; DANCED–1 Men–11; women–6
Local support committees	Yes. In regions.
Subcommittees	No.
Small-scale projects	
Geographic focus	Country-wide
Number of cities	21
Selection criteria	Seriousness; water resources; project impact; sustainability
Proposals/Approved/Funded	0 / 35 / 29
Ongoing/Completed/Evaluation	29 / 11 / 0
Dialogue workshops	
Number	Community–2 per month; municipal–3 per month; provincial–2 per year; national–3 per year
Participants	20 community; 10 municipal; 30 provincial; 12 national
Subjects	Work solutions; facilitate support; coordination; policy
Publicity	
Mentions	TV; radio; newspaper

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
SENEGAL...SENEGAL...SENEGAL...					
Kedougou Clean Up and Tree Planting Project	Youth Association, Kedougou Volunteers, GAVD-NGO, Kedougou Community	Environmental preservation and community development	3 years	\$10,000 (total project cost of \$30,000)	Kedougou community effort to plant trees, clean up the environment and develop an infrastructure maintenance system.
Waste Management Project in Cité Lamy, Diamaguène, Médina Falls to Thiès	Women's Committee on Health from Cité Lamy, NGO Rodale International and the Community of Thiès	Waste management	2 years	\$28,000 (total project cost of \$50,000)	Establish waste management system in three communities.
Clean Up Project water drainage system	NGO-CAMCUD of Dakar, Urban Community and African Institute of Urban Management	Waste management and sewerage clean up	1 year	\$50,000 (total project cost of \$68,035)	Clean and maintain the water and sewerage systems.
Sikolo Quarters Sanitation and Potable Water Project	NGOs, CBOs, Local Authority of Kolda	Sanitation and water project	2 years	\$41,318	Set up sanitation facility and potable water system.
Yeumbeul Sanitation and Drainage System Project	NGOs, CBOs, Local Authority of Pikine, Yeumbeul, Dakar	Sanitation and drainage project	1 year	\$18,100	Construct 50 drainage and waste water facilities. Form a sanitation committee.
Public Waste System Support Programme for Mbeubeuss to Malika, Pikine	CAMCUD, Ministry of Health, local community	Public waste system	2 years	\$7,856	Establish public waste system support programme.
TANZANIA...TANZANIA...TANZANIA...TANZANIA...					
Street Kids Vocation Training Centre in Mbezi-Luise, Dar es Salaam	The Catholic Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam	Community development	1 year	\$13,520	Vocational training centre for street kids with two underground deep water wells and a solar panel to heat kitchen and laundry. Increases water supply and minimizes environmentally unfriendly heating technologies.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
T A N Z A N I A T A N Z A N I A T A N Z A N I A					
Pilot fish smoking kilns sanitation improvement project for women in the Mwanza municipality	The Tanzania Institute of Life (TIL) with support from the Mwanza Municipal Council	Environmental conservation and income generation	1 year	\$6,000	Construct five fish smoking kilns to reduce wood burning, provide income-generating opportunities for women, eliminate harmful hydrocarbons in fish, and prevent dumping of harmful fish processing waste.
Yomba Doyva Community Water Supply Project in Temeke district, Dar es Salaam	Yomba Doyva Community CBO	Environmental conservation and community development		\$9,464	Construct 10 shallow wells; train women and youth in well maintenance, technology and services.
Mwaloni Market Project in Mwanza municipality	Mwanzi Municipal Council	Environmental conservation and community development	2 years	\$43,000	Construct stand pipes and improve drainage to increase water supply. Construct waste storage bays for easy municipal-truck access. Provide electricity to market; build security fencing at market.
Kwahani Environmental Conservation Project in Shehia of Kwahani in Zanzibar	Baja Social Group	Environmental conservation and community development	1 years	\$4,705	Employ youth to collect garbage and waste. Extract biodegradable material for manure. Plant flower and vegetable gardens to sell produce.
Public Services Toilet Project in Zanzibar municipality	Drainage and Sewerage, Division of Zanzibar Municipal Council	Environmental conservation and community development	2 years	\$8,253	Renovate toilets (66% need repair) and train youth to maintain toilets and collect user fees.
Tree Seedling Nursery at Liala Vity Botanical Garden, Dar es Salaam	Dar es Salaam City Council and Tanzania Youth Development Association (NGO)	Environmental conservation	2 years	\$7,000	Plant trees to shade streets and promote use of non-motorised transport to minimise noxious vehicular emissions. Employ youth to implement project.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
TANZANIA...TANZANIA...TANZANIA...					
Cesspit Emptying Pilot Project in Sinza Block B Area	Dar es Salaam City Council and Sinza B Community	Improving environmental sanitation	8 months	\$3,844	Improve drainage of flood prone area. Raise community awareness of environmental sanitation and obtain baseline data on privatizing maintenance of sanitation facility.
Davis Corner Storm Water Drainage System Construction	Davis Corner Community and the Research Planning and Project Write-up Association (NGO)	Environmental conservation and community development	1 year	\$35,252	Improve storm water drainage and empower the community to take charge of maintenance of the water drainage service.
Chamazi Water Management and Environmental Conservation	Uvikiuta (Youth) Community and Ministry of Water Experts	Environmental conservation and community development	1 year	\$25,000	Youth group owns 1,000 acres used for agriculture and livestock. Project diverts water from river for commercial use, and collects rooftop water for domestic uses.
Environmental Sanitation in Sinza D, Dar es Salaam,	Sinza D Committee for Environmental Sanitation	Environmental sanitation	1 year	\$7,407	Raise community awareness of impact of sewerage discharged into the Ngombe River. Plant trees and grass along river bank. Construct footbridge across river to increase safety during rainy season.
Upgrading Community Settlement in Hanna Nassif, Kinondoni district, Dar es Salaam	Hanna Nassif Community Development Committee	Improving storm water drainage system	1 year	\$18,000	Complete solid waste management and drainage system for this unplanned community.
Mavurunza Village Water Supply	Mavurunza Community Water Supply Committee	Environmental conservation and community development	1 year	\$6,041	Construct shallow wells to eliminate 3–5 kilometer walk for fresh water in Mavurunza community.
Hanna Nassif Solid Waste management (GBO) Project, Kinondoni District-DSM	Women's Development Association	Environmental conservation	1 year	\$5,714	Collect solid and biodegradable waste. Sort waste to sell for recycling and composting.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
E G Y P T E G Y P T E G Y P T E G Y P T E G Y P T					
Garbage Removal in New Beni Seuf	Local Community Development Association of Beni Seuf, the Environment Protection Association of Beni Seuf and the Muslim Youth Association	Environmental conservation and community awareness	2 years	\$48,961	Test six-wheeled motorized vehicles for household garbage collection in narrow streets. Implement neighbourhood programme on health and hygiene.
Environmental Development based in the Ein Helwan area of Cairo	The Arab Office for Youth and Environment, the Association for the Protection of the Environment, the Egyptian Red Cross Society, Central Association for Integrated Cairo	Environmental conservation and community development	1 year	\$49,911	Implement street cleaning, cover water drains, improve solid waste collection and disposal and plant 10,000 trees.
Latrine Installation based in the Hekr Abu Hashim area in suburban Cairo	Coptic Evangelical Society for Social Services (GEOS)	Environmental conservation and community development	1 year	\$37,092	Install latrines and connect them to the public sewage system.
N A M I B I A N A M I B I A N A M I B I A N A M I B I A					
L E B A N O N L E B A N O N L E B A N O N L E B A N O N					
Bcherri Solid Waste Management	Council for Tourist Development, Council for the Protection of the Environment	Solid waste management, income generation	1 year	\$25,000	Bcherri pioneered in setting up an income-generating waste management facility to sort household waste, sell recyclables and compost biodegradables.
Nabatiyeh Solid Waste Management, south Lebanon	Council for the Protection of Environment and Patrimony in Nabatiyeh Municipality of Nabatiyeh	Solid waste management	1 year	\$25,000	Sort store, school, household and restaurant waste; sell recyclables and compost organic waste. Money generated covers operating costs.
Environmental Information Centre (EIC), Beirut	Society for Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL)	Education, training, teachers resource centre	2 years	\$25,000	Trains teachers and provides environmental information to NGOs, schools and researchers. The project has received funds from the private sector and donor embassies.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...					
Low-Cost Sanitation	Gujranwala	Urban management	2 years	\$14,427	Improve urban management through community participatory development.
Model Town for Solid Waste Management	Tarzeem Falah or Babbood in Geophila	Solid waste management	1 year	\$9,949	Improve solid waste management in Tanzeem Falah area.
Urban Waste Management Project	Human resources management, Peshawar	Solid waste management	1 year	\$10,197	Improve solid waste management in Peshawar.
Solid Waste Management	Saiban, Karachi	Solid waste management	2 years	\$8,376	Improve solid waste management.
Environmental Education through Participatory Action Learning	Piedar, Islamabad	Environmental education	2 years	\$9,554	Improve participatory action learning through environmental education.
Solid Waste Management Project	DEWS, Rawalpindi	Solid waste management	1 year	\$3,185	Improve solid waste management in DEWS Educational and Welfare Society in Rawalpindi.
Socio-Economic and Physical Survey of Squatter Settlements	Piedar, Islamabad	Elimination of hazardous-prone areas	1 year	\$7,293	Eliminate hazardous-prone areas from squatter settlements.
Low Cost Sanitation Project, based on Morainabad, Gujranwala	Organisation for Participatory Development, Orangi Pilot Project, Morainabad Community	Sanitation and community development	1 year	\$13,000	Construct low-cost sewerage system for low-income families. Provide technical guidance and training; community health education and women's credit programme.
Recycling of Black Polyethylene Bags Experimental Project in Karachi	Society for Conservation and Protection of the Environment (SCOPE)	Recycling and research	10 months	\$9,868	Research to find practical cost-effective methods for recycling biodegradable black polyethylene bags. A demonstration recycling unit will be built as a result of this experimental project.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
P A K I S T A N . . . P A K I S T A N . . . P A K I S T A N . . . P A K I S T A N . . . P A K I S T A N . . .					
Improvement of Sanitary Conditions Project in Baloch Nagar, Muzaffargarh	Bee Ali Seena Welfare Society (BAWS)	Waste collection and community awareness	1 year	\$6,842	Community-implemented solid waste collection project; environmental awareness campaign; community identification of problems, solutions and income-generating opportunities.
Improvement of Solid Waste Management Project in Multan	Pakistan Teacher's Forum (PTF)	Waste management and community awareness	2 years	\$10,066	Improve solid waste management through school environmental awareness campaign; provide special drums to contain wastes separated for recycling.
Taraqee Project, based in Nawam Killi, Quetta	Taraqee	Sanitation and research	1 year	\$9,211	Introduce affordable urban sanitation projects; research to develop alternative sanitation technologies.
The Book Group Project in Karachi	The Book Group	Environmental education	1 year	\$11,382	Produce 30,000 primary-level books and a teacher's guide to environmental training for five schools in low-income areas.
Saaf Mahoule (A Clean Environment) in Multan	Awani Committee Multan	Waste disposal and community awareness	1 year	\$6,609	Introduce steel drums for waste disposal; hire bullock cart to remove waste and sweeper to clean streets; increase community awareness of recycling.
Elimination and Substitution of Plastic Bags Project	Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad	Solid waste management	6 months	\$11,116	Research to find a sustainable solution for eliminating plastic bag use in Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta and Karachi.
Environmental Improvement, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management	Mohib-o-Walan Welfare Organisation, Sadiqabad, Rawalpindi	Solid waste management	1 year	\$3,701	Mobilise community and create awareness of solid waste and recycling procedures; organise women's committees on sanitation and waste management.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...PAKISTAN...					
Effective Waste Management Project in Peshawar	Human Resources Management and Development Centre	Waste management and community awareness	1 year	\$8,322	Improve solid waste management, collection and recycling. Utilise non-formal education for juvenile scavengers; lease and develop suburban composting and recycling sites; initiate departmental training workshops.
Pre-Project Training of NGOs and CBOs	Select NGOs and CBOs	Training	1 year	\$9,740	Provide technical assistance, training and backstopping to enable CBOs to identify and develop self-help urban environmental improvement projects.
THAILAND...THAILAND...THAILAND...THAILAND...THAILAND...					
Canal-Community Environmental Improvement, based in Bob Wa and Samrong Communities in Songkhis	Human Settlement Foundation, Community Council	Canal rehabilitation and community awareness	2 years	\$17,660 (with a matching fund facility)	Organise environmental groups to improve conditions in Songkhla and mobilise local people and resources to rehabilitate 5 km of the Samrong canal and initiate a canal cleaning system.
Slum Communities Garbage Collection, based in Teeprarak slum in Khon Kaen Municipality	NGO-Cord in northeastern Thailand	Waste collection and community participation	2 years	\$20,000	Collect garbage in cooperation with the municipality and other garbage management organisations. Create income-generating work.
Promotion of Environmental Management in Khon Kaen City	Government-Private Coordinating Centre for Life Quality Development, Northeastern Public Health Office with the participation of 16 organisations and communities	Environmental awareness and community participation	2 years	\$20,000	Use local-local dialogue among Khon Kaen organisations and communities to address environmental problems. Project activities include coordinating programme plans and documenting and disseminating environmental information.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
THAILAND...THAILAND...THAILAND...					
People's Organisation for Surat Thani Environment Development Project, based in Surat Thani	People's Organisation Support Project (POSP), local community organisation, Surat Thani municipality	Environmental conservation and community awareness	2 years	\$20,000	Use the polluted Khun Thale reservoir as the campaign issue to present environmental problems to community organisations. Target campaign for action towards slum communities and sub-districts around the reservoir.
Love Tapee River Project in Surat Thani City	Rung Arun Association, community organisations	Environmental conservation and community awareness	2 years	\$20,000 (total project cost \$26,440)	Use the polluted Tapee River as a campaign issue to rally the community and draw attention to environmental problems. The campaign is initiated and carried out by local residents.
The Fresh Market for Health and Environment Project in Nonthaburi	Folk Doctors Association	Market sanitation and community development	2 years	\$20,000 (total project cost \$27,440)	Use the marketplace to educate the community about health and the environment; train women vendors in good environmental practices.
Waste Recycling	Phanataikhom municipality	Waste management	1 year	\$12,800	Formulate a model for managing waste hazards through re-use, recycling and landfill maintenance.
Environment Campaign and Waste Management	Churnporn municipality	Environment and waste management	1 year	\$12,000	Educate the community on environmental hazards and waste project management.
Klong Toey Resettlement for Better Environment	Klong Toey area, Bangkok	Environment and slum development	1-1/2 years	\$20,000	Support environmental improvement and housing development plans for Klong Toey slums.
Women Traders in Fresh Market for Environment, Nonthaburi	Nonthaburi municipality	Business, health and environment	2 years	\$14,000 (total project cost is \$24,000)	Support environmental initiatives of a women traders group.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
Protect Musang Udora	Udora municipality	Environmental awareness and preservation	1-1/2 years	\$20,000	Raise public awareness of environmental conservation.
Development and Restoration of Chiangmai's Historical Ruins	Chiangmai district	Historical and environmental preservation	1 year	\$16,800	Preserve Chiangmai's cultural heritage through ecological improvements and preservation of ancient sites.
The Sadat Land Use Plan for Environmental Improvement: A Community-Based Approach	Musang district, Khonkaem	Community participation and environmental preservation	1 year	\$19,200	Involve the community in environmental preservation designs.
Urban Poor Community Environment Improvement: Management from Below	Bangkok metropolitan area	Community participation and environmental preservation	1 year	\$19,200	Educate the community on environmental management.
A City without Date	Bangkok metropolitan area	Anti-air pollution and environmental protection	1-1/2 years		Mobilise resources and identify appropriate actions to reduce Bangkok air pollution.
Garbage Management	Sawanphum Integrated Farming Promotion Project (SIFP)	Waste management	1 year 5 months	\$11,040	Training in waste collection, sorting, recycling and land fill management.
Sanitation and Canal Improvement	Southern Thailand Environment Recovery (STEP)	Canal rehabilitation and community development	2 years	\$18,960	Organise community groups to protect and preserve the Samrong canal.
Katoo Local Heritage Conservation Centre, Phanket	Phanket municipality	Environmental conservation and community development	1 year	\$16,800	Establish a learning site for future development of historical mining quarter.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
THAILAND...	THAILAND...	THAILAND...	THAILAND...	THAILAND...	THAILAND...
Development and Maintenance of Mae Tarn Canal	Phayao municipality	Canal and waste management	1 year	\$12,146	Improve Mae Tarn Canal and implement community waste management system.
Management of the Urban Environment	Nongkhai municipality	Urban environment management	1 year 9 months	\$18,219	Raise community awareness and organise volunteers for environment projects.
Development and Improvement of Hua Fai Community	Chiangmai municipality	Canal rehabilitation	1 year	\$14,980	Rehabilitate the Mae Kha Canal and set up the Hua Fai community environment program.
Raising of Public Consciousness and Participation in Environmental Management	Paek Praek municipality	Environment management and community involvement	1 year	\$12,000	Raise awareness and educate the community on environmental issues.
Local Partnership for Environmental Improvement	Khon Kai municipality	Waste management and community development	1 year	\$18,600	Educate the community about recycling.
Children and Sustainable Eco-tourism	Children and environment group	Eco-tourism and youth awareness	10 months	\$16,480	Organise a youth group oriented towards long-term commitment to environmental projects.
Water Resource Management	Chaseemsao municipality	Waste management		\$18,826	Waste management initiative to protect the Bang Pakong River.
Thangprang Canal Conservation	Nakorn Sri Thammarat municipality	Water management	1 year	\$12,080	Install water management system for slums and for Thangprang Canal.
Waste Recycling and Re-use	Pak Phraek municipality	Waste management	1 year	\$12,000	Use Local Agenda 21 as a model for environment and waste management.
Public Awareness on Environment Management	Narathiwat municipality	Waste management and public participation	1 year	\$19,200	Manage waste problems through community recycling.



Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
T H A I L A N D . . . T H A I L A N D . . . T H A I L A N D . . . T H A I L A N D . . .					
Waste Recycling and Re-use	Sri Phanommas municipality	Waste management	1 year	\$4,049	Coordinate activities to raise community awareness about environmental re-use and recycling.
Campaigns for Urban Environmental Conservation	Samut Prakarn municipality	Environmental conservation	1 year	\$10,800	Develop campaigns and training packages for environmental awareness.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
Green Patrol	Agat Children Club, Bishkek	Youth environmental education; environmental improvements	6 months	\$1,872	Environmental programs for children.
Tash Jol	Orok Ecological Club, Bishkek	Environmental conservation; community development	1 year	\$11,180	Environmental education; tree planting.
Bishkek and Osh cities monitoring system reconstruction	Tabiyat NGO, Bishkek	Nature protection strategies	1 year	\$14,950	Environmental improvements.
Ak Bura River	Southern department of Tabiyat NGO and Department of Employment Assistance, Osh	Environmental conservation; community development	1 year	\$15,000 (total project cost of \$16,000)	Clearing land and planting trees.
Tahti-Suleyman	Department of Employment Assistance, Osh	Environmental improvements	1 year	\$12,110	Planting greenery; mountain irrigation; creating jobs.
Our Task	Osh State University (OSU) Students Union, Osh	Environmental improvements	1 year	\$4,000 (total project cost of \$6,750)	Environmental education and training.

Participatory Local Governance

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
B R A Z I L B R A Z I L B R A Z I L B R A Z I L B R A Z I L The Mexilhão Rio Project, based in Niterói	Juruja Cooperation of Shellfish Farmers, Municipal Government of Niterói, Fishing Institute (Rio), Urban Studies Institute (Rio), Planning and Administrative Secretary of Rio State, and others	Environmental conservation and income generation	2 years	\$30,000 (total project cost of \$100,000)	Stop depletion of shellfish stocks in Guanabara Bay; mainstream the income-generation activities of traditional local shellfish collectors and fisherman; market the Mexilhão Rio fish brand. Bring together fish experts with low-income groups.
Strengthening the Environmental Capabilities of Communities in the Favela Holanda Neighborhood, Rio	MULTICOOP, the Cooperative for the Production and Consumption of the Nova Holanda Dweller's Association	Waste management and community awareness	7 months	\$29,365	Implement a solid waste collection project. Strengthen capacity of community leadership by raising community awareness of environmental projects.
Project Lupa-Zona Sul, Rio	The Roda Viva Association, Environment Secretary of Municipal Government of Rio, Municipal Education Secretary of Rio, State Education Secretary of Rio, State University of Rio	Environmental education	1 year	\$20,000 (total project cost of \$48,230)	Introduce water education programme to state schools located on hill-side slums.
Adopt a Tree Project (Campanha adote uma arvore)	Advocates of the Earth, local community, Municipal Government of Rio, State University of Rio, Forest Engineers Association of Rio State, Vital Brazil Institute	Reforestation and environmental education		\$15,000	Community involvement in reforestation of the Vital Brazil Hills.
Environmental Wholeness Project	GRUDE (Environmental Defense Group), CEAC (Center for Studies and Community Action), and the Municipal Environmental Secretary of Rio	Environmental conservation and education		\$21,521	Teach general ecology and selective solid waste collection; offer training courses, seminars and pamphlet production courses.
Citizen Bay project in Duque de Caxias municipality in Greater Rio.	The Greens (grassroots NGO), the Residents Association of Jardim Guanabara, and the Municipal Environmental Secretary of Duque de Caxias	Environmental conservation and education		\$18,500 (total project cost of \$85,933)	Monitor the billion-dollar loan for Guanabara Bay programmes to treat severe raw sewerage pollution and industrial waste; present findings to general public.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
B R A Z I L . . . B R A Z I L . . . B R A Z I L . . . B R A Z I L . . . B R A Z I L . . .					
Lina de Deus	ARRUAR (Recife)	Sanitation and environmental education	1 year	\$30,798 (total project cost of \$68,097)	Construct toilets and septic tanks in low-income communities. Provide environmental education on how to balance needs of low-income communities with mangrove rehabilitation.
Catadores Papel (Scavengers Cooperative)	ASMARA (BH) in Belo Horizonte	Recycling, selection, collection	1 year	\$30,000 (total project cost \$299,004)	Increase membership of ASMARA Scavengers Cooperative for selective waste collection and recycled materials marketing. Increase tonnage of paper products for recycling. Research market potential for recycled metal and plastic products.
CEVAE/Taquari	REDE (BH)	Environment, education, reforestation	1 year	\$30,000 (total project cost of \$91,000)	Use environmental education and income-generating projects to rehabilitate and reforest hazard-prone areas.
N A M E & L O C A T I O N O R G A N I S A T I O N S I N V O L V E D F O C U S D U R A T I O N L I F E G R A N T D E S C R I P T I O N					
C O L O M B I A . . . C O L O M B I A . . . C O L O M B I A . . . C O L O M B I A . . .					
Bellavista Environmental Education, Cartagena	Junta de Accion	Education, recycling	1 year	\$17,500	Bellavista's environmental concerns are unsuitable garbage handling and lack of sewer systems and waste water drains. Projects include recycling, sowing trees, clearing drains and environmental education.
San Francisco, Cartagena	Comite Ambiente San Francisco	Solid and liquid waste management; construction of sidewalks, curbs, ditches	3 months	\$30,000	Alleviate drain obstruction and sedimentation problems by paving a major street and setting up a garbage collection schedule.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
C O L O M B I A . . . C O L O M B I A . . . C O L O M B I A . . . C O L O M B I A . . .					
Paraiso II, Cartagena	Junta de Accion Paraiso II	Drinking water	3 months	\$30,000	Build an aqueduct for potable water, to improve the sewage system and to halt erosion.
2 de Abril	Felicitas Campo	Solid and liquid waste management	3 months	\$30,000	The community constructed a sewage system to stop waste water from flowing into the streets.
3D Paper Recycling Project in Morant Bay	3Ds Parent Group	Recycling and income generation	1 year	\$11,515	Income-generating project that makes stationery and greeting cards from recycled paper. The project also involves waste material collection and community training programmes.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
J A M A I C A . . . J A M A I C A . . . J A M A I C A . . . J A M A I C A . . . J A M A I C A . . .					
Playgrounds from Waste	CERC	Recycling and education	1 year	\$34,848	Construct playgrounds using recycled waste materials. Conduct community training programmes and workshops on use of waste materials for building.
Environmental Awareness Seminars	Environmental Foundation of Jamaica, Green Fund	Environmental education	6 months	\$3,076	Conduct an education workshop for private sector, NGOs and government and make it open to all island participants.
Portmore Drain Project, Portmore, St. Catherine Parish	Portmore Gardens Citizens Association; the Parish Council; private developer (WIHCON).	Environmental education and community development	1 year	\$26,153	Pave and grade a main drain and replace a box culvert. Educate the community on sanitation practices and environmental care. Encourage community involvement with government and private-sector businesses.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A					
Majesty Gardens Sanitiation Project	Habitat of the Humanities in Majesty Garden Group	Sanitation and community development	1 year	\$12,795	Build 76 homes with sewer systems for low-income families.
Maxfield Water Supplies Project, Maxfield, Irelawny	Maxfield Citizen Association, Trelawny Parish Council, National Water Commission	Water supply and community development	6 months	\$22,221	Restore water supply to community. National Water Commission conducts public education seminars on water usage.
St. Ann's Bay Development Association	St. Ann's Bay Development, Parish Council, Public Parks Department	Sanitation and community development	1 year	\$21,084	Build sanitation facilities. Provide community education and training in maintenance and environmental practice.
St. Mary Chamber of Commerce Sanitiation Project	St. Mary Chamber of Commerce	Sanitation and public awareness	2 years	\$26,461	Build three latrines for the town of Port Maria in St. Mary; educate the community in latrine use and maintenance.
St. Thomas Paper Making Project	Morant Bay, St. Thomas	Paper recycling	2 years	\$9,620	Train disabled persons and their families to produce recycled note paper, envelopes and other paper products as income-generating support.
Playgrounds from Waste (CERC)	Neptune Road Park, East Laws Street Harbour View, Kingston	Recycling, recreation and community development	2 years	\$28,237	Equip CERC with a workshop facility to build playgrounds from recycled waste products. Build playgrounds in Harbour View and Law Street; train residents in construction and maintenance; provide environmental education.
St. Mary Environmental Seminar	St. Mary Public Education	Public education	1 day	\$1,261	Use local-dialogue between community groups, public agencies and government bodies to discuss environmental issues affecting parishes and prepare action plans.

Participatory Local Governance

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A					
Joint Environmental Seminars	Parishes of Hanover, Manchester and Clarendon, the Green Fund, Environmental Foundation of Jamaica	Environmental seminar	6 months	\$2,532	Hold parish-based seminars to discuss environmental issues and assess parish environmental status.
Maxfield Water Supplies Project, Maxfield, Trelawny	Organisations group in Falmouth, Trelawny	Water supply	1 year	\$18,284	Pipe new water supply to Maxfield. Community members provide sweat equity and provide the right of way for pipelines across private land.
Portmore Drain Project, Portmore, St. Catherine Parish	Portmore Gardens	Drainage, public education	2 years	\$21,519	Pave and grade a main drain and replace a box culvert; educate the community on sanitation practices and environmental care.
Jeffrey Town Water Supplies	Jeffrey Town	Water supply and community development	2 years	\$17,671	Provide two pumps for rehabilitated water system and 2.5 miles of piping, switching gears and other equipment: community provides sweat equity laying pipes. National Water Commission and member of Parliament secure additional needed funds.
Port Maria Sanitation Project	Port Maria, St. Mary	Health and sanitation	1 year	\$21,772	Build 20 double-vented dry pit latrines. Provide maintenance training to households that provided sweat equity construction.
S-Corner Water Supply Project	St. Joseph Road	Water supply and community development	1 year	\$8,861	Supply water to homes. Monitor collections for water supplied to 100 households.
Majesty Gardens Sanitation Project	Majesty Gardens, Kingston	Sanitation	1 year	\$10,380	Link Habitat for Humanities Housing in Majesty Gardens to sanitation and sewerage system.
Oracabessa Plant Nursery	Oracabessa Secondary School, St. Mary	Tree nursery	2 years	\$17,215	Establish a tree nursery at Oracabessa School and a vermiculture project for organic fertilizer for the nursery and community. Sell trees on the north-coast watershed.

Name & location	Organisations involved	Focus	Duration	LIFE grant	Description
Kingston Restoration Company Science Learning Centre Project	Kingston J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A	Environmental awareness	2 years	\$22,025	Establish a science learning laboratory for children living in the Tel Aviv Southside area of downtown Kingston: target ages 3–5, 6–12, 14–17.
May Pen Sanitation Project	May Pen J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A J A M A I C A	Public sanitation	6 months	\$17,722	Provide public sanitation facilities in May Pen through joint initiative of Kiwanis Club, the Parish Council and community members.

Sample grant application

LIFE

Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment

INT/92/O17/A/O1/31

Country: _____

Project Proposal and Summary

Project No.: _____
(To be assigned by UNDP)

Project Summary

Name of organisation seeking award: _____

Mailing address: _____

Street address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Fax number: _____

Principal officer(s): _____

Contact for this application: _____

(Name and position)

Previous awards received under the LIFE Programme (if any):

Project no.: _____

Name or title of project: _____

Amount received: _____

(Local currency)

(US\$ equivalent)

Description

Name or title of proposed project: _____

Location of project: _____

Starting date: _____ Duration: _____

Project goals or objectives: _____

Activities to be carried out under project: _____

Project participants and/or beneficiaries: _____

Anticipated results of project: _____

Finances

Estimated total project cost: _____
(Local currency) (US\$ equivalent)

Amount requested from the LIFE Programme: _____
(Local currency) (US\$ equivalent)

Recipient contribution (in cash or in kind): _____

Amount(s) expected from other sources: _____
(Local currency) (US\$ equivalent)

Other forms of support requested from the LIFE Programme:

- Consultants (specify):

- Other technical assistance (specify):

- Training (specify):

Approximate cost of other support (if known): _____

Proposed payment schedule for the award:

Date	Amount	Date	Amount
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Details of bank account in which the LIFE Programme award would be deposited:

Account title: _____
 Account number: _____
 Bank name and address: _____

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____
(Name and position)

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Good governance is widely recognised as the key to human development. Yet few things are more sensitive—or challenging—than improving governance and helping countries manage development in a changing world.

This UNDP technical advisory paper analyzes processes, methods and experience of participatory local governance as demonstrated by the Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE), a global programme launched at the Earth Summit in 1992. It shares lessons and insights concerning the “local-local” dialogue of the local actors—the local authorities, the non-governmental organisations and the community-based organisations—in improving the living conditions in low-income urban communities in developing countries around the world.

UNDP—at the request of governments and in support of its areas of focus—assists in building capacity for good governance, popular participation, private and public sector development and growth with equity. It stresses that national plans and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for the national programming of operational activities for development within the United Nations system.

UNDP also plays a leading role in coordinating the human development efforts of the United Nations system. UNDP forges alliances with the people and governments of developing countries, with the donor community, with United Nations agencies, and with private institutions and non-governmental organisations.



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