

PRORENDA Slum-Upgrading Rio Grande do Sul:

From the Provision of Infrastructure to Strengthening the Self-Management Capacity of the Poor¹

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Abstract

The PRORENDA slum upgrading program, implemented in some of the major Brazilian city's with German Technical Assistance since the 80th concentrated itself in the first years on the provision of infrastructure and changed later to the strengthening of the self-managing capacity of neighbourhood organizations, the adaptation of bureaucratic procedures and planning and infrastructure standards. The advancements and limits of this process in creating new relations between the principal actors and the development of the neighbourhood organizations as participants in Urban Management and planning are discussed on the basis of the project executed since 1990 in Porto Alegre Brazil.

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Bibliography

¹ This paper is based on Matthaeus: „Urban Management, Participation and the Poor in Porto Alegre/Brazil“, 1995, unpublished PhD, University of Birmingham, UK.

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1. Introduction

The provision of an adequate urban infrastructure for slums and squatters in terms of water, sewerage, drainage, roads, etc. (technical infrastructure), and education, health, social services etc. (social infrastructure) as well as income generating activities have been seen in the past as technical problems and tasks of related central, state or municipal governments. The organization of the provision of these services can be considered, in the light of privatization, as technical or technocratic aspects of Urban Management, geared to a maximum of efficiency and effectiveness. The needs and benefits of community participation have been recognized as significantly important since Jon F. Turners first publications in the 60th and HABITAT I. The many „best practice“ examples shown at HABITAT II in Istanbul are vivid proves of the capacities and advantages of community involvement to be involved in the improvement of their neighbourhood. These best practices could suggest that the question of participation in slum-upgrading projects has conceptually been resolved and does not pose any intellectual challenges to academics and practitioners: the concepts need only to be applied. Experiences from working with a variety of state and municipal governments in Brazil suggest that participation is in many cases still restricted to information or consultation of the poor (slum and squatter dwellers) and upgrading of slums and squatters is, in many cases, still equated with the provision of infrastructure. The „top-down approach“ has softened and under a rhetoric of participation, the dominating role of the clientelist politics and technocratic administration seems to continue Starting from the unequal relations of the main actors of Urban Management and drawing on the access and labelling discussion³ I will concentrate on four aspects, which may contribute to reduce clientelist policies and technocratic bureaucracies and enable a system of urban management where the poor⁴ participate or take over certain functions. These aspects will be the basis for the analysis of the experiences of the PRORENDA upgrading project of Porto Alegre, executed by the state and the municipal government in collaboration with official German Technical Cooperation⁵, directed towards changes of the four points mentioned above. In the concluding remarks some „limits of local action“ and „needs for public policies“ will be discussed.

2. Urban Management with and by the Poor

The growing demand for participation of civil society in an increasingly pluralistic and democratic society questions the „top-down approach“ of technocratic solutions for slum-upgrading. It requires new relations between the main actors in Urban Management in the form of joint decision making processes on priorities and standards (joint-management or management with...), or the delegation of municipal/state functions to organizations of civil society (self-management or management by...). This demand adds a political dimension to Urban Management or the question of (good) governance.

³ Schaffer (1986,1971); Schaffer and.Huang Wan-shien (1975).

⁴ Within the scope of this article I cannot elaborate on the question of urban poverty and its characteristics. For details see for example Matthaues (1995) op.cit., Urbanization and Environment Vols. 7 1 and 7 2, 1995, or Nelson (1979).

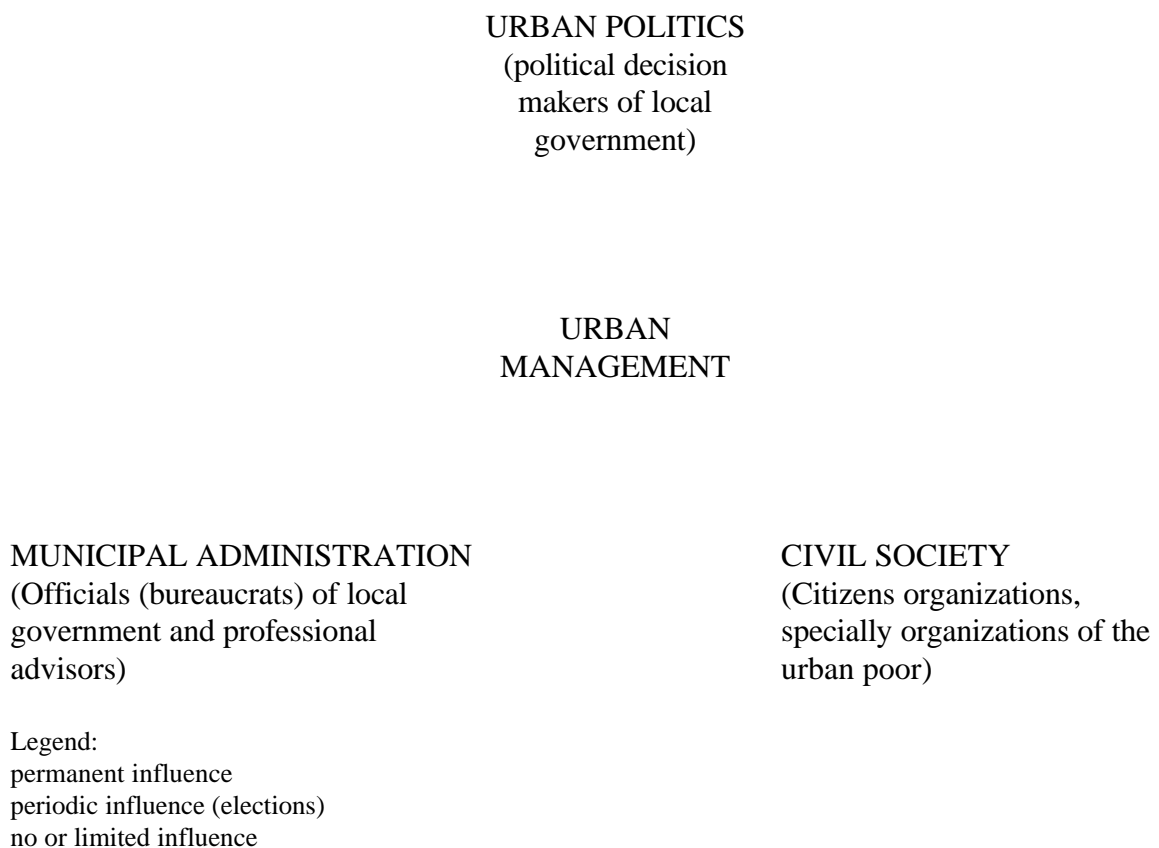
⁵ Financed by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and executed by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

This aspect has become only recently one of the main themes of the Urban Management Program⁶, besides the fact that earlier definitions already pointed in this direction:

Urban management is the task of organizing and carrying-out the operation, planning and policy-making function of city (urban) government, involving the participation of professional advisors, (local) political decision makers and citizens, and requiring, on the one hand, cooperation with the national government and on the other sensitivity for the private social goals of the citizens (Thornley, 1974, p.21).

Although this definition is relatively old, it will be used for the purpose of this paper, mainly because it clearly indicates the three main actors involved in urban management, local politicians, bureaucrats and the public. It also points to the political character of urban management, emphasizing the aspect of citizen participation. Diagram 1 expresses this approach.

Diagram 1: Urban management and its main actors



Source: Matthaeus (1995, p. 7) and Pfeiffer (1996, p.12)

Definitions, such as the ones used by the Urban Management Program in its earlier phases, are often geared towards the aspects of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery of

⁶ Under the coordination of World Bank various UN-organizations (UNDP, UNCHS) and bi-lateral donors are promoting worldwide research and dissemination of "good and innovative" examples of different aspect of urban management (Urban Management Program, 1991). The third phase of the program was officially launched during the HABITAT II conference in 1996. Its main themes are (good) governance, urban poverty and urban environment.

municipal government, which are not the main themes of the present paper⁷. It suggests that in dealing with urban management we have to consider three direct relations, which are in fact dynamic processes, where each of the actors is tempted to expand its influence at the cost of the others with negative consequences either for democracy, participation or professional administration respectively. The above mentioned definition implicitly presupposes political systems in which cities are managed by locally elected governments as is the case in Brazil, where local government enjoys a great autonomy.

Urban management influences and is influenced by all segments of the society. Nevertheless this paper concentrates on the urban poor based on the hypothesis that this part of urban society is by and large excluded from participation in urban politics and administration as a result of elitist, laissez-faire and restrictive politics on the one side and lack of capacity to voice its interests on the other. Although this exclusion is to a great extent a result of the lack of financial resources and income, other aspects such as the exclusion due to bureaucratic procedures in the delivery of public services, technocratic planning, inadequate and unaffordable infrastructure standards etc. may as well contribute to this exclusion⁸ in a process of conscious or unconscious „labelling“ and the erection of „access“ barriers These issues:

must not be regarded as marginal to an understanding of the process by which formal institutions occupy authoritative positions in society as embodiments of a legitimate state. (They constitute) .. an entry into the wider questions of the relationships between the state and civil society: the ways we are managed, the extent of our freedom, the choices available to us, the organizational forms through which solutions can be achieved (Wood, 1986, p. 475).

Support policies for or with the poor, which break away from clientelistic and paternalistic behaviour by politicians and bureaucrats, and which may reduce labelling and access restrictions, as for example proposed by Rondinelli (1993, 1992, 1986), Cheema (1984) or Wakley (1986), are not generally a routine of bureaucratic and political practice in Brazil, despite numerous political statements of practically all governments and parties. For an analysis of programs directed towards the reduction of political and administrative domination the foregoing discussion can be summarized in the definition of four aspects for urban management with and by the poor, as follows:

1. The strengthening of the capacity of community organizations to articulate their needs and to be recognized as executor of a variety of self-help activities;
2. The introduction of additional elements for political participation besides the periodic influence in elections (elements of direct participation in a representative democracy);
3. The adaptation of procedures and standards of the Municipal Administration to the needs of the poor (reduction of access restrictions);
4. The development of new relations between politicians, bureaucrats and the poor.

The four aspects have been put in a sequence which starts with the strengthening of the weakest actor of the Urban Management triangle: the organizations of Civil Society specially that of the poor. A stronger organization and more efficient articulation may influence political decision makers in demanding changes (new procedures, which allow effective participation, appropriate standards infrastructure, housing, social services; changes of attitudes of bureaucrats etc.) in the municipal administration. An extended political influence could be seen as a precondition for these changes in the municipal administration. Additional channels for political participation (besides the election of representatives), strong community organizations and open service oriented municipal administration may then develop new relations between

⁷ For a comparison of the different definitions, meanings and emphasizes of urban management see Matthaeus (1989).

⁸ see p.e. Batley's description of the exclusion from public benefits on the basis of the provision of public housing in Brazil through the state housing companies: Batley (1983).

the three actors mentioned above, where the provision of adequate public services (infrastructure) could be a consequence.

The PRORENDA program, discussed in the following, is one of the many programs in Brazil, whose objectives point in this direction.

3. The PRORENDA program

The "Conceptual Orientation of PRORENDA" (GTZ, 1987) was elaborated by a joint Brazilian and German mission in the euphoric spirit of the "Nova Republica" after the end of the military regime, when the slogan "tudo para o social" (everything for the social sector) was newly created by the Government of President Sarney (1985-1990). The orientation reflected the spirit of decentralization, municipalization and participation. The joint document quotes the "first national development plan of the New Republic" when it states:

A new form of action will be developed, through programs directed to the provision of social and physical infrastructure for the population with very low income.. Improvements will be sought in urban management.. through the participation of the citizens in the process of organisation of (urban) space (Governo Federal do Brazil, I PDN-NR, 1985, p.241, quoted in GTZ, 1987).

On the German side, the Conceptual Orientation of PRORENDA was influenced by the emphasis of the German Ministries of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) concept on "fighting poverty through self-help" and by the Ministry's definition of self-help and participation (BMZ, 1986). As such the Conceptual Orientation combined the Brazilian and German policies at a national level and it stated as the general objective of the program:

In the PRORENDA project, the target groups will change from being objects of government intervention to subjects who articulate their own demands. As such they will exercise their civil rights as citizens. With this conceptual approach it is hoped to improve the economic space of the target group and consequently their living conditions (GTZ, 1987, P. 4).

Based on these general political and conceptual statements the progra was conceived to explicitly contribute to poverty reduction of three specific target groups:

- ⇒ small farmers
- ⇒ the urban poor
- ⇒ small entrepreneurs

For each of these target groups different projects were developed, considering the specific sector policies of the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and the local priorities and conditions.

For the upgrading project the German Government's sector policies for aid projects on housing (BMZ, 1986) and urban development (BMZ, 1989b)⁹ were relevant; especially influential was the emphasis of both sector papers on the participation of neighbourhood organizations. The Housing Paper states in relation to upgrading programs:

measures should be applied which are in the opinion of the inhabitants the most urgent, as for example strengthening of the neighbourhood organizations, legalization of land occupation and measures to improve social and technical infrastructure. For the success of the project in the long run the participation of the inhabitants in project preparation and implementation is indispensable (BMZ, 1986, p. 59).

Based on a political consensus between the Brazilian and German federal governments, the PRORENDA program attempted to avoid the well known criticisms of development projects

⁹ The BMZ considered the sector concepts as a "necessary link between the principal political guidelines for development cooperation of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and individual projects and programs, defining criteria for appraisal, planning, execution and evaluation" (BMZ, 1992).

particularly in the fields of sustainability, standards, forms of participation and integration into the institutional and socio-political environment.

Within this framework, the program and its individual projects were supposed on the one hand to aim at community empowerment, to use Moser's term (1989), and on the other at participation of government (or NGOs) in activities of the selected communities, in order to support or stimulate self-help activities and self-management. However, as a government program it started from the top and therefore, at least initially, the "participation of the community in government programs" had to be accepted as the starting situation.

Nevertheless, its aim was to enable the population "to articulate their own demands as an exercise of their civil rights as citizens". This points to an eminently political goal, in line with the political concept of Urban Management. Strengthening of neighbourhood associations, the creation of local development committees, the transfer of financial resources to these committees and the stimulation of self-managed actions are aspects, directed towards „Urban Management by the poor“. They contribute to the strengthening of the community movement, the transfer of authority from the public sector to the voluntary sector, and a redefinition of the relations and functions of the three principal actors in Urban Management as identified above. This redefinition could lead to a questioning of the traditional representative democratic structure, with its only periodic participation (through election¹⁰) in the political decision making process and it may be interesting to remember Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who in 1985 posed the question:

Is it possible, within the limits of theories of democracy that, in a society such as ours, mechanisms of participation could exist, considering the differences that exist in this society between the "povo" and the "technocrats"? How can these differences be reduced and what mechanisms are required for it? (Cardoso, 1985, p. 69).

The rather general political or philosophical directions and the lack of specific, defined targets for the PRORENDAs projects were seen as creating the possibility of treating the projects as open ended processes of social changes¹¹. The broad objectives of the PRORENDAs program were confirmed in a revision of the PRORENDAs conception in 1996 and specified in the formulation of two specific objectives:

- *the PRORENDAs projects should strengthen the self-management capacity and the exercise of civic rights of its target groups*
- *the PRORENDAs projects should contribute to an adaptation (standards, contents, delivery procedures) of public services to the needs of the target population (GTZ, 1996).*

The program started formally in 1990 with 6 projects in the Brazilian states of Rio Grande do Sul and Ceará. In the beginning of 1997 the number of projects in execution raised to 8 and 4 are in a planning stage¹². As such the PRORENDAs program is one of the largest (explicit) poverty reduction program of the German bilateral aid with a budget allocation of approx. 50 Million. US\$ in technical assistance. Financial resources of State and Municipal Governments amounted to at least the equal amount.

How far the PRORENDAs upgrading projects have realized this ambitious aim and what strategy was applied will be discussed in the following using the project Rio Grande do Sul as an

¹⁰ See Diagram 1.

¹¹ As such the conception PRORENDAs comes close to Held's and Pateman's definition of an "experimental participatory society open to radical reforms... and keeping the notion of participation at its heart" (Held, 1987, p. 261). See also Rondinelli (1993, chapter 5).

¹² PRORENDAs urban projects are under way in Porto Alegre and several medium towns of Rio Grande do Sul, Fortaleza and several medium towns of Ceará; one projects is due to start in 1997 in Metropolitan Region of Recife (Pernambuco). PRORENDAs rural projects are under way in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Ceará, Pará and Pernambuco and others are planned in Bahia, Minas Gerais and Espírito Santo. PRORENDAs informal sector projects are executed in Rio Grande do Sul and Ceará and one is due to start in Pernambuco.

example. The projects of Belo Horizonte and in an initial stage also the one of Ceará had given more attention to the production of physical upgrading (provision of infrastructure)¹³. In Belo Horizonte the project was concluded in 1993, and in Ceará it uses structure and instruments similar to those described below.

4. The PRORENDA upgrading project Rio Grande do Sul

Porto Alegre is the capital of the southernmost Brazilian state, Rio Grande do Sul. With aprox. 1,2 Million inhabitants it is the eighth largest city of Brazil and the leading city of a metropolitan region of 3,5 Million inhabitants. On the basis of IBGE/PNAD 1990, Rocha (1995, p. 227) estimates, that in 1990 the Porto Alegre metropolitan region counted 21.5% of the population in relative and 5.9% (172.000 inhabitants) in absolute poverty¹⁴. The municipal planning office calculates for the same year that 390.000 inhabitants of Porto Alegre city lived in slums or squatters, the respective figure for the metropolitan region was 628.000 (METROPLAN, 1992, p.74).

The PRORENDA upgrading project Rio Grande do Sul was conceived already in 1988 as a metropolitan program. For that reason the State Government has been the coordinating agency, leaving the execution of the activities to the municipalities. This institutional arrangement proved to be difficult and at some stages even impossible to implement. The continuous ideological differences made a cooperation between the municipality of Porto Alegre and the State Government nearly impossible. Although working relations were established, constructive cooperation was very limited and hampered the progress during its pilot phase (up to the end of 1994). During this time the project was concentrated in five slum areas with aprox. 60,000 inhabitants in Porto Alegre. Since 1995 the project is expanding to other municipalities of the state and the metropolitan region¹⁵.

4.1 The project's organization and management structure

From 1992 onwards the projects implementing agency was the State Foundation for Regional and Metropolitan Planning (METROPLAN) on the Brazilian side and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), which on behalf of the German Government provided technical and financial assistance to the project. The projects management structure consisted of the following three instances of decision making:

- (a) the PRORENDA council (colegiado PRORENDA),
- (b) the local development committees (LDCs) (comitês de entidades locais)
- (c) and the PRORENDA forum

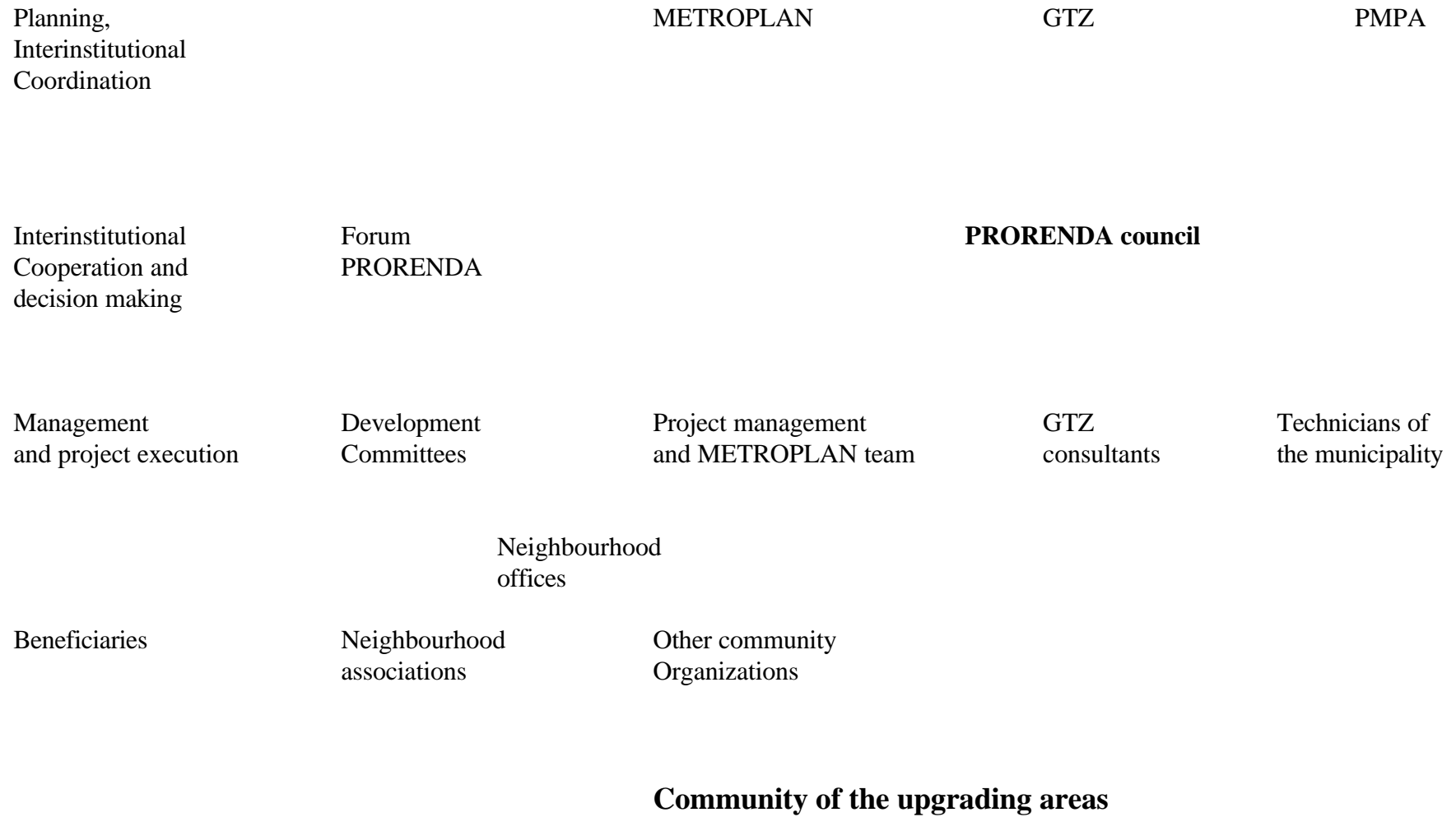
Their interrelation and principal functions are shown in diagram 2.

¹³ For details of these projects see: Brunke (1989), Brunke and Müller-Glodde (1993).

¹⁴ A study of IPEA (1993) comes to much higher figures: 7.48% or 226.000 inhabitants of the metropolitan region are considered in absolute poverty.

¹⁵ Presently the project works with the municipalities of Caxias do Sul, Pelotas, Alvorada and Viamão. For 1997/99 an expansion to the 20 largest municipalities of the State is planned.

Diagram 2: Operational structure of the PRORENDA upgrading project



Source: PRORENDA urbano (1993)

The **PRORENDA council** consisted of 12 members with five representatives from the communities involved and one from the association of the Porto Alegre neighbourhood associations (UAMPA), two representatives of the municipal government, one from GTZ and three from METROPLAN. The council functioned as the decision making and coordinating body of the project and met once a month in the office of METROPLAN. The composition of the council (six community members and six officials from the government sector) gave the community representatives a considerable influence, although in the case of a balanced vote the METROPLAN president had a casting vote. Up until the end of 1995 this provision had not been used. Major issues discussed in the PRORENDA council meetings were conceptual and procedural questions to do with the Community Fund, neighbourhood offices, local development plans and physical improvement measures. The discussion of the annual budgets and programs, general information about progress of activities of METROPLAN in relation to the project and progress reports on the different local development committees were other topics.

The continuous friction between State and Municipal Government were permanent topics at the council meetings. Additional major discussion points were the definition of planning procedures, infrastructure standards and the relation between the projects activities and the discussions process of the annual municipal budget with the population¹⁶.

The experience, based on the records of meetings and discussion with committee members, can be summarized as:

- (1) the council served its function as a means of coordination and information transmission between METROPLAN, GTZ and the representatives of the five local development committees;
- (2) it became a place for discussion and (joint) decision making on policy matters in the project;
- (3) it was not able to guarantee coordination and integration with the municipal government, leaving major issues for negotiations outside the council, generally without the participation of the community representatives.

Local Development Committees (LDCs) were formed in each of the five project areas as institutions which united all the existing neighbourhood associations, clubs and other community groups. They also included two directly elected local leaders, not associated with one or other existing group, elected in general assemblies of the whole population. Project staff was not foreseen to participate in the committees as members; its role was to be limited to the giving of assistance and advice. Within the conceptual framework of strengthening the self-management capacity of the communities, the project team saw the creation of the committees as an important step towards the permanent organization of the community and the establishment of a self-managed community structure.

When the project proposed the creation of the LDC, some of the community representatives were initially opposed to the idea of having a committee composed of different associations, women's or mothers' clubs and independent community representatives. This resistance, based on the fear of losing influence by some of the community's representatives, was only overcome after case by case decisions had been made about how the project should relate to each and every existing group. Andrade analyzed the resistance to the formation of the joint committee

¹⁶ The so-called „orçamento participativo“ was introduced by the left-wing municipal government in 1990 with the objective to introduce participatory democracy. The process consists of a number of discussion rounds at neighborhood and city level, the selection of representatives and the preparation of a budget proposal, which then is forwarded by the mayor to the municipal council. For details and a critique of this process see Matthaeus (1995).

of the three presidents of three independent neighbourhood associations in one of the project areas. She concludes her analysis by pointing out that:

the rivalries between neighbourhood associations are historical but the urban PROREND A project was a means to integrate the different associations, although each of them defended its own identity... (Andrade, 1993, p.52).

After acceptance had been achieved and some experience had been gained, two of the local presidents mentioned in the PROREND A council meeting in December 1993, reviewing their activities for the year 1993, that one of the most important contributions of the urban PROREND A project was the formation of the development committees¹⁷.

A critical point in the formation of the committees seems to be the democratic legitimization of its members. As mentioned above, only two members of each committee were elected in general assemblies and the others became committee members as representatives of neighbourhood organizations or other community groups. The project records show that general assemblies had between 60 and 150 participants (of a population of between 1,000 and 4,000) , which elected the two independent committee members. Meetings or assemblies to elect presidents of neighbourhood associations often have even fewer participants. As such the democratic legitimization of the committee members is rather limited. The representatives of the neighbourhood associations seem, however, to be the more active or dominant leaders. To prepare the committee members, representatives of the neighbourhood organizations and interested members of the community, the project offered a number of training courses. The content and effect of the training component of the project will be discussed later.

A third element of the project organization was the **PROREND A forum**. This more informal forum of community leaders was defined as an independent organization of the communities which will be consulted by the council whenever it feels the necessity and which can develop its own activities (PROREND A urbano, 1993). Independent of the PROREND A council and project activity, the PROREND A forum was able to mobilize all its members and the community at crucial moments. These moments were:

- (1) the reorganization of the project in 1991/1992¹⁸;
- (2) the participation in the elaboration of the operational structure, demanding equal representation in the PROREND A council (May 1992);
- (3) during the process of setting-up the process for financing infrastructure works, which was considerably delayed in the Governor's office and the State Ministry of Finance (Nov./Dec. 1992).

These three moments had one aspect in common: they were decisive in the continuity and in the design of the projects strategy, thus establishing close relations between the community movement (represented by the PROREND A forum), the public sector (state and municipal government) and the external agency (GTZ). With the establishment of the LDCs, the Forum partially lost its dynamic: the leaders were tied up in activities in their region. A number of active leaders tried, in the first half of 1993, to strengthen the Forum and to restructure it. However, these attempts were not successful. It seems that the Forum only acted when the project as a whole was in danger. At other times interest diminished and the members of the

¹⁷ „even if so far no physical improvement had been carried out, the fact that all neighbourhood associations, mothers' clubs, sports' clubs and others participate in the committee made it possible for us to talk to each other and join forces in the struggle for improvements“ (representative of the region Mato Sampaio, PROREND A council meeting, December 1993, notes of the author).

¹⁸ When the German Government withdrew its support to the project at the end of 1991, the Forum PROREND A forced the state Government to re-negotiate the project. With the participation of the Forum PROREND A the re-negotiation were successfully completed in May 1992 and the project was continued. For details of the Forums activities see, (Forum PROREND A, 1994).

Forum were more concerned with their own local committees¹⁹. Additionally, many of the PRORENDAs forum members were active in a number of other activities and so overburdened

The process of elaboration of the project structure and of the working instruments was an unusual experience for the different actors involved: the project, as a government institution, did not present a pre-fixed program, which the project staff had to carry out and the community had to accept. Project staff (bureaucrats), the directors of METROPLAN (political appointees), the GTZ consultants and the PRORENDAs forum jointly prepared the lines of action using, as discussed earlier, the possibilities of experiment, giving the project a processual character. Consensus was reached often only after intensive debate²⁰.

Summarizing the experiences of and with the project organization and the management structure, it can be said that at the council level an effective joint decision making mechanism was introduced, formalizing the transfer of decision making authority from the president of METROPLAN to the PRORENDAs council. At the committee level, a structure of self-management was established for coordination, planning, decision making and the execution of projects was established. The PRORENDAs forum established itself as a self-confident and independent expression of the community leaders. With the establishment of the content and procedures of the project, the PRORENDAs forum lost part of its dynamic and importance, despite the attempt of some of its members to strengthen its functioning.

With this participatory management system populist and clientelistic influences which Gay (1990) and Hagopian (1990) in their analysis of post-authoritarian Brazil saw continuous obstacles „for the democratization of the state and inhibiting its responsiveness to its citizens” (Hagopian, 1990, p. 159) were reduced. The establishment of transparent decision making mechanisms which could effectively be influenced by the beneficiaries in the PRORENDAs council and the transfer of decision making authority to the local development committees can be seen as steps towards overcoming these obstacles. The joint decision making in the PRORENDAs council created new links with political decision makers, thus widening the (sporadic) influence limited to the election processes (see Diagram 1).

In addition, the PRORENDAs forum established itself as a self-help initiative and its actions have been in line with other experiences as described by Santos (1981, p. 236). It learned to negotiate within established procedures of representative democracy and established itself as an independent pressure group. The PRORENDAs forum can be defined, following Schuurman and Naerssen (1989, p.7), as an “urban social movement engaged in day-to-day struggle for improvements” and less a movement with revolutionary objectives in Castells (1983) sense²¹. The advisory function of the METROPLAN team in relation to the LDC was an other breakaway from traditional relations between government technicians and community movement²². Influenced by the PRORENDAs orientation the team defined participation and its function as:

¹⁹ Santos in his analysis of the Urban Social Movement in Rio observes a similar situation (Santos, 1981, pp. 235-237).

²⁰ controversial issues included the composition of the PRORENDAs council, the function of the Local Development Committees and the question of the staffing of the committee offices.

²¹ Similar experiences are reported from the self-construction movement of São Paulo, which struggled through legal cases after the withdrawal of political support by the Government of the mayor Maluf. The movement learned with great difficulties the rules of the game of present day Brazilian politics.

²² A example among many others are the „housing cooperatives“ (cooperativas habitacionais) formed under the Sarney Government, where municipal officers and state government representatives were involved in the decision making processes.

1. participation means above all "the participation of the project team in the development processes of the communities";
2. to apply this new definition of participation the community and the project team have to understand, accept and be prepared for a new relationship;
3. this will only be possible with a change (or redefinition) of attitudes of both sides; the introduction of this process of redefinition is only possible if a corresponding
4. political will exists within the respective state or municipal government;
5. the process itself has to be oriented to achieve the maximum autonomy in relation to administrative (and political) changes (PRORENDA urbano, 1993).

4.2 The projects lines of action

By the end of 1992 all the elements of the project's organization and management structure were established and the main activities defined in a plan of operation (PRORENDA urbano 1992).

The principal lines of action were:

- installation of a community managed maintenance and social fund and neighbourhood offices as means of strengthen the self-management capacity of local development committees;
- elaboration of a concept of participatory neighbourhood planning and its application in the five pilot areas;
- execution of infrastructure works to improve public services (PRORENDA urbano 1992).
- additionally, the operation plan specified a number of training activities for community members and technicians.

Through the **community fund**, which was established in May 1993, the development committees were to acquire administrative capacities to use public funds in a way which the state auditors and funding agencies found acceptable for small social and maintenance works. Transparent procedures were developed to allow social control of the leaders by the members of the community (PRORENDA urbano, 1993). The five LDCs linked to the PRORENDA urban project received an amount of up to US\$ 800 monthly, under the following conditions:

1. elaboration of a monthly programme for the funds requested,
2. presentation of a monthly financial statement to METROPLAN and GTZ,
3. reports to the community every six months on the projects executed and the resources spent.

Table 2 shows how the community fund was applied in the different regions. It has been successful in executing 60 social projects and 95 physical improvements. However from the 25 instalments made available to each committee from May 1993 to July 1995 only between 11 and 21 instalments were used. The experience of the community fund showed that the committees were able to use only part of the fund in planning, executing and accounting for a wide range of small scale social, cultural and welfare projects, and repair and maintenance works of social and technical infrastructure. In this way the fund stimulated self-management and self-help, and was an important tool for building-up a management capacity of the LDCs. However, the low use of the funds indicate that the committees had difficulties to manage the approximately 800 US\$ per month. Reasons for this situation were identified on the side of the committees as being due to limited management and planning capacity, and the lack of sufficient time of the committee members. On the side of METROPLAN/GTZ it can be said that the accounting procedures (although simplified) were still complicated and with respect to LDC, they were difficult to handle.

Table 2: Use of the Community Fund May 1993 - July 1995

Project areas	instalments received	instalment accounted	social projects executed	maintenance projects executed
Restinga Velha	11	9	5	11
Medianeria Tronco	21	20	20	18
Maria da Conceição	19	18	20	23
Campo da Tuca	18	17	8	21
Mato Sampaio/Fatima	16	16	7	22
Total	85	80	60	95

Source: PRORENDA urbano (1994) and (1996)

Remarks:

- 1) In the period from May 1993 to July 1995, 25 instalments were made available,
- 2) monthly instalments varied with the exchange rate and the value of the minimum wage between 700 and 1000 US\$, (average 800 US\$),
- 3) "social projects" were defined as all cultural, educational and welfare activities, which did not include construction works,
- 4) "maintenance projects" included repair of technical and social infrastructure (day care centres, kindergartens, community centres).

For the project staff the fund was a testing ground for practicing their support role to the community movement and for the adaptation of bureaucratic procedures. As these issues were new for both the committees as well as the project staff the fund was a continuing topic in the PRORENDA council meetings: on the one side the committees complained that there was continuing interference in committees' autonomy and an excess of bureaucratic requirements for the liberation of the fund (in terms of accounting procedures); on the other the team members complained about the lack of planning and the delay in accounting for the expenditures. Following the analytical framework discussed earlier, the community fund can be considered as an instrument for exercising "urban management by the poor".

The **neighbourhood development plans** were described in the project documents as "tools of the community for articulating their medium and long term development strategy". The process for elaboration of the plan consisted of a series of community meetings and workshops with community representatives, and the drafting and approval of the plan by a multi-disciplinary team of technicians²³. The first aspect was based on the use of participatory planning techniques²⁴. The second can be described as the conventional elaboration of a technical document and its approval. Resistance by the team of planners to accept the workshop results as sufficient for the elaboration of the plan and their insistence on carrying-out (additional) conventional field surveys delayed the completion of the neighbourhood development plans. The combination of the techniques mentioned above produced a problem analysis which reflected the different perceptions of community representatives, social workers and planners, architects and engineers. It also resulted in innovative suggestions for solving the problems. The comparison of the different perceptions of problems and possible solutions stimulated an intensive dialogue between technicians and the population. It also contributed to a substantial

²³ Annex 1 shows the planning process and the involvement of the different actors.

²⁴ The project developed the planning process using participatory approaches such as ZOPP, Participatory Rural/Urban Appraisal, Planning for Real and Making Microplans.

shift of priorities from mainly physical topics (water, sewerage, land title etc.) to social issues (social discrimination, youth and children, elderly, drugs, AIDS etc.). This discussion resulted in a division of the development plans in two principal parts: the physical development and the social development plan.

In the third line of action, the **improvement of public services and infrastructure** the committees participated "only" in the definition of the work and the accompanying of the tendering process and the execution. Despite this limited participation the improvements for all committee members were an important result of their struggle and engagement in the project. The consultation process to define the most urgent project in the region is an activity used in many projects. However in the PRORENDA upgrading it happened after an intensive planning process, which enabled the communities to consider the pro and cons of the different activities, their technical interrelation and the sequence of measures to reach the aim, as one of the community leaders expressed „to take away the stigma of illegality associated with criminality and marginality of the areas and its inhabitants and transform the slum or squatter areas in regular residential regions“²⁵. During the planning process the initial priority (sewerage and road pavement) shifted or included as equal important a number of problems such as drug and AIDS problems, youth and children, domestic violence. The search for solutions to these issues led to the formulation of a social development plan. The committees were assisted in establishing relation with organizations dealing with some of these issues or to develop on initiatives²⁶. The involvement of the committee in the entire planning and tendering process can be seen as a transfer of knowledge of bureaucratic procedures. Equipped with this knowledge the community actively participated in the day to day supervision of the various contracted works, thus contributing to maintain high quality and the fulfillment of contractual obligations (as the hiring of community members wherever possible).

The **training component** of the project included both technician from public institutions (METROPLAN, municipal government), NGO's and community representatives. In most courses the transfer of knowledge was only one objective. A second one, the dialogue between the participants and the experience of the committees and community representatives to work together with technicians, was equally important. The courses stressed the understanding and practicing of what can be called a „participatory attitude“, of both the technicians and the community representatives.

The transfer of knowledge of a technique of continuous visualization as well as techniques of organizing, conducting and documenting meetings have been considered top priorities. They have changed the activities of the committees and also the work of METROPLAN's project team. Courses in administration of a community organization and simple bookkeeping helped the committees to make better use of the community fund.

Additional training in planning procedures (participatory urban appraisal, making microplans) and planning standards were geared towards an adaptation of technicians to a work with and not for the communities.

²⁵ Annex 2 shows a summary of physical improvements.

²⁶ For example: cooperation with THEMIS, an NGO, whose objective is the training of poor woman as legal advisors and the establishing of a legal advice service; the development of the project „Tché“, directed to mobilize youth in sports, music, dance and other activities; the Center for Environmental Education, which brings about 60 woman together in selecting and processing solid waste and promoting environmental education activities.

4.3 Experiences

The concepts and experiences of the four lines of action of the PROREND A upgrading project were geared towards two objectives:

- strengthening of the community movement,
- adaptation of bureaucratic procedures.

With the local development committees (LDCs) a strong community based institution was set up, which gained experience in management of financial resources, project planning and execution. The meeting places of the LDCs, the neighbourhood offices, have become centers for self-managed community activities and reference points for the communities and governmental or non-governmental agencies. The physical and social development plans, and more so, the process of elaboration of these plans created among the committee members and representatives of the community an awareness of existing problems, potentials and ways towards solutions. These plans provided the communities with a powerful tool in negotiating improvements with governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The PROREND A council created a space for exercising joint-decision making and to debate the functions of the four main executive actors executing of the project. The councils debate reflect that the communities involved have changed „from being objects of government intervention to subjects who articulate their own demands" (GTZ, 1987, p. 4). The PROREND A forum articulated and successfully defended the interests of the five project regions, in front of the state and municipal government.

Consequently, the project seems to have reached the principal objective of the PROREND A program and the first specific objective related to the strengthening of the self-management capacity and exercise of civic rights.

In respect to the adaptation of public services, the second specific objective of the program, it can be said, that this objective was so far only partially reached. Although the project developed and applied participatory planning procedures in some areas, the procedures have not been adopted in other upgrading projects by the municipal administration of Porto Alegre. Similarly discussions on land and infrastructure aspects are ongoing and have to overcome some resistance posed by planners and existing municipal and federal regulations.

Concerning METROPLAN, its role as an advisory body to municipal administrations has been institutionally introduced. The building up of respective capacities and communication material is the objective of a third phase of the project due to start in June 1997.

5. Concluding remarks

The provision of infrastructure in slum upgrading projects, which includes a process of information and consultation of the beneficiaries can be considered common practice of state and municipal administrations or NGO's, and an important task of Urban Management. An analysis of the relation of principal actors of Urban Management based on a political definition shows the weak position of the poor in relation to the political decision makers and bureaucrats in three aspects: limited influence on political decision makers, limited or no influence on municipal administration in terms of procedures and standards and their weak organization and managerial skills. This weak position of the poor results in a lack of articulation and in the proliferation of relations with bureaucrats and politicians characterized by domination and impositions, constituting typical labelling and access restrictions, as described by Schaffer and Wood.

Changing this position and introducing a system of Urban Management with and by the poor requires adaptations in all three aspects and the promotion of new relations between the three principal actors.

The objectives of the PRORENDA program are geared towards these changes in specifying, first, the need to strengthen the self-management capacity and exercise of civic rights of the poor urban (and rural) population and, second, the adaptation of public services to the need of the poor. The PRORENDA slum-upgrading projects in Belo Horizonte, Ceará and Rio Grande do Sul (discussed on the basis of the project executed in Porto Alegre):

- developed a management structure which defined areas of joint-decision making (PRORENDA council) and delegation of authorities where the communities had the authority and responsibility of self-management (Local Development Committees, PRORENDA forum and community fund);
- experimented and applied a participatory planning process and the elaboration of physical and social development plans, reflecting the populations aspiration and the technical conditions for implementation; it developed (partially) adapted planning and infrastructure standards for the upgrading of slum and squatter areas;
- executed part of the measures identified as priorities in the physical development plan and helped in the articulation of social development projects.

The training program for both, the project team and the community representatives, as well as the intensive dialogues during the definition of the projects strategy and the planning process established new relations between the involved actors. The success of the developed strategy provoked an interest in various municipalities of the state. In 1997/99 the project team plans to expand its advisory service to the 20 major cities of the state.

The parallel actions of the project on the community level, within the involved public administrations and training can be seen as crucial in attaining the positive results. The PRORENDA approach of strengthening the self-management capacity of the poor and the adaptation of bureaucratic procedures and services contributed to the reduction of the exclusion of the population of slum and squatter areas. Within this process the improvement of public services and infrastructure thus turned into a vehicle to support this processes, which can be called a process of change from technocratic (or bureaucratic) Urban Management to Urban Management with and by the poor.

Besides this success, the sustainability and continuity of the projects activities are so far not fully guaranteed.

The institutionalization of the management structure and the planning process in the regular procedures of the different municipalities was so far not possible. The application of the projects instruments in some specific project areas was relatively easy, however, adapting regular procedures of municipal planning offices, municipal land use legislation and infrastructure standards is by far more difficult. Resistance seem to exist in practically all municipal planning offices, with which the project worked.

Training curses offered by the project have so far not been linked to any training institution. This may have the consequence that, with the end of the project, these opportunities will not exist anymore. The experiences of the project suggest, that the community movement as well as the technicians require continuous learning opportunities to adapt themselves to the new relations and to acquire the respective knowledge that seems to exist.

Time constraints and limited management capacities of community leaders are additional factors, which may have negative influences on the sustainability and continuity of the projects approach. The project (besides the training) has not produced innovative solutions.

To reduce these limitations a need for local action and public policy arises in all three areas. Possible solutions could include financial incentives for local leaders, extended and institutionalized training opportunities and the adaptation of regulations and procedures. Of the three the first seems to be the most difficult one: increased participation of community representatives on a voluntary basis may function as long as there are direct benefits to be expected, because if these leaders were to be paid they could easily be misused in buying political loyalty. The provision of adequate training opportunities and the adaptation of regulations and procedures depend on political influence and power. During the remaining 2.5 years, for which the project is planned, the major challenge seems to be to institutionalize its process and instruments in as many as possible communities and municipal administrations, thus creating the dynamic required for a self sustained process.

ANNEX 1: Steps to elaborate the neighbourhood development plans

step	activity	objective	responsible/participants
1	subdivision of the areas	create 4 to 6 sub-areas with 200 to 500 houses	<u>development committee/</u> <u>project team</u>
2	general meeting of the inhabitants of each sub-area	information, selection of streets representatives	<u>dev.com./</u> project team community of sub-areas
3	workshop I in each sub-area	problem identification, proposals for solutions	<u>moderators</u> , streets rep., project team, NGO and government institutions
4	(parallel to step 3): preparation of base maps, collection of socio-economic information	create the technical base for the elaboration of the plan documents	<u>project team/</u> interviewers from local community
5	workshop II	definition of development. Strategy for the area divided in social and infrastructure development	<u>moderators</u> , project team/ development committee, rep. of each sub-area, NGO and government institutions
6	elaboration of a draft document	basis for discussion between streets rep. And development committee	<u>project team</u>
7	discussion of the draft document in general meetings in the sub-areas	consensus on the proposals and implementation strategy	<u>development committee/</u> <u>project team</u>
8	elaboration of the final document	guideline for the community to demand infrastructure improvements; basis for the legalisation of land use and ownership; guideline for searching partners for the implementation of social development projects.	project team/ development committee
9	application of the plan	transform the illegally occupied region into a regular residential or mixed area	municipal planning office, town council, development committee

Source: PRORENDA urbano (1997)

ANNEX 2: Infrastructure works of the urban PRORENDA project

Project areas and inhabitants (estimates 1990)	type of improvement	population affected/ benefited
Restinga Velha area: 47 ha inhabitants: 13,000	- Sewerage system, vila Castello, - Neighbourhood office	300 families total area
Medianeira/Tronco area: 28.1 ha inhabitants: 10,150	- Sewerage system Tronco Postão - Opening of pedestrian accesses and roads in whole area - Neighbourhood office	1.500 families total area total areas
Maria da Conceicao area: 11.8 ha inhabitants: 4,970	- Widening, drainage, pavement and street lighting - road Carazinho - road Irma Nelly - Neighbourhood office	500 families total region
Campo da Tuca area: 12.3 ha inhabitants: 5,400	- Surface drainage, pavement of main road - Neighbourhood office	480 families total region
Mato Sampaio area: 79.4 ha inhabitants: 13,600	- Surface drainage pavement road “A” and „D“ - Neighbourhood office	1,000 families total region

Source: author, from various project documents and PRORENDA urbano (1997)

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