

The Bellagio Initiative

Global Dialogue Summary

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Urbanisation: Delhi

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The Bellagio Initiative process is bringing together people from across the world to explore how issues of wellbeing, international development and philanthropy are changing, and to engage philanthropists in discussions about priorities for action, and how to mobilise for action.

While it has been important for us to bring together intellectual experts we have also endeavoured to bring together 'situated experts' – in other words, people who are personally or professionally engaged with the issues that they are discussing. This has led us to build a multi-stranded dialogue process. These dialogues have had a dual role. Firstly, as inquiries in their own right with a view to action, and secondly to provide rich material to feed into the deliberations at the Bellagio Summit.

The Global Dialogue on Urbanisation was held in Delhi in September 2011. It was co-organised by IDS and our partner PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia). The idea was to bring together practitioners and thinkers to explore through dialogue the key issues for a rapidly urbanising South both now and over the next twenty years. Urbanisation is growing at a rapid pace. It is driven by changing agricultural practices, the inability of people to sustain livelihoods in the face of climate change, people fleeing from conflict, etc. It will be but a matter of decades before the majority of the very poor live in cities. However this rapid transformation of the landscape of poverty is neither reflected in the international development agenda, nor in that of philanthropic giving. Thus it represents both a pressing need and a major opportunity.

The urgent issues at a personal level are security and ensuring that social networks are not destroyed through development. The urgent issues at a societal level are failures of governance, planning and taxation, and at the interface between them there are fundamental and unresolved issues about how the infrastructure development which accompanies economic growth displaces poor people and creates further inequality.

The key issues for philanthropists are listed below.

- How can we put urban issues higher up the philanthropic agenda? Rural issues have been articulated in a way that elicits giving, but urban issues much less so.
- Is it possible to develop a more strategic and long-term approach to investment – with funding targeted at core issues such as governance failures as well as more 'glamorous' projects?
- If governments are driven by short-term results as a result of electoral cycles etc., is there a role for philanthropists to develop innovative pilots and take greater risks?
- Can philanthropists develop a greater profile in campaigning and advocacy – well developed in the US but not in Africa and Asia?

The logo for the Bellagio Initiative, featuring the text "Bellagio Initiative" in a white serif font on a dark, abstract background with overlapping circular shapes.

Bellagio Initiative

The Future of
Philanthropy and
Development in the
Pursuit of Human
Wellbeing

Credits
Danny Burns,
'Urbanisation: Delhi' ,
Bellagio Summary,
Brighton: IDS

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The Bellagio Initiative is a series of global consultations to produce a new framework for philanthropic and international development collaboration in pursuit of human wellbeing in the 21st century. The project is led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the Resource Alliance and the Rockefeller Foundation.

