



## Living Historic Cities and Urban Cultures

Integrated revitalization of historic centers

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# PREFACE

## Developing Historic Cities – Valuing Cultural Heritage

The world is urbanizing: Today, the majority of the world's population lives in urban areas. By 2030, almost 5 billion people (60 % of the world's population) will be called urbanites. Their life styles and cultures can at present only be assumed.

Cities in Europe compete increasingly on soft location factors. Thus cultural assets are staged in the limelight of urban renewal. In most developing partner countries the rapidly growing population needs access to decent housing, infrastructure, services and income opportunities. These priorities and pressure to serve the increasing city population often put the genuine local urbanization history into the background. Cultural capital for an urban future based on the local experience becomes lost or is even destroyed.

Ambivalence especially prevails around historic centres: they are the image and face of the city; they provide cultural identity but at the same time, their architecture and structure, economic strength and social importance as well as their charisma are often highly endangered.

For over 30 years, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ GmbH) on behalf of the German Fed-

eral Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been promoting urban development in partner countries, often in cooperation with the kfw Development Bank Group and the German Development Service (ded). Only a few projects concentrate on the rehabilitation of historic cities or city quarters, but they are very present to the general public and in the media. These projects rise to the complex challenge of linking preservation of historic sites and modern urban development. They intend to keep the original character but at the same time activate the development potentials of historic centers.

Thus, unique quarters can be revitalized, achieve new value and be exposed to fresh interpretations and at the same time keep cultural traditions alive.

This booklet offers insight into our manifold experience. Based on short project descriptions, it shows the pride we share with our partners in succeeding to save and develop livable historic cities. Also, the following pages illustrate the range of services we have adapted respective to local conditions, following the demands of our clients and partners.

Our mode of operation has gained praise nationally as well as internationally. We do our best to support our partners to develop their professionalism, instruments and tools, regulations, organizations and such capacities over a stretch of time. Simultaneously, we keep an eye on social, economic and environmental concerns. We help underrepresented interests or groups to participate in decision-making processes. We encourage partners to find new acceptable solutions through cooperation between public, private and civil society stakeholders, and thus promote local steering and management capacities.

Programs for the integrated development of historic centers are excellent paradigms how to shape a sustainable future.

Jörg-Werner Haas  
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# Modern Living in Old Cities

As an international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development with worldwide operations GTZ, on behalf of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), has for many years been supporting city administrations and political decision makers at the national and local levels on how the cultural diversity and architectural heritage of historic centres can be conserved and developed. We see the greatest challenge as gaining the support of both citizens and city administrations to work together to acknowledge, conserve and develop the urban cultural heritage with its socio-cultural importance that has evolved over centuries in all its diversity. At the same time, the aspiration is to balance the demand for modern living and working environments with preservation challenges in old quarters and their social and cultural, economic and political history.

We support and assist our partners flexibly in their efforts over extended periods offering integrated solutions. We identify the problems with our partners, indicate development opportunities and conceive strategies that are generated out of the local conditions. Jointly with our cooperation partners, including UNESCO, the Cities Alliance, the Arab Fund, the Aga-Khan-Foundation as well as the German development agencies (such as KfW Development Bank Group, DED German Development Service) we promote an integrated development process based on sustainability. We apply a range of instruments and methods, the most important components of which are set out below.

## **Awareness-raising – citizens become active**

Sustainable development of historic centres has a chance of succeeding only if all ener-

gies are pooled. The most important stakeholders in the rehabilitation process are the people living and working in the historic centres. Residents will only engage in the continued development of historic centres if they participate at an early stage in the process, sensitised to the issues and involved in decisions that lead to plausible results of their joint efforts. It is especially important to engage the younger generation.

Working closely with citizens is a fundamental component of all our advisory support concepts. We encourage citizens in forming initiatives and associations aimed at the renewal of their neighbourhoods. We demonstrate to homeowners and tenants how to maintain and to renovate their houses often in spite of difficult conditions.

The form of citizen participation can vary widely from mobilizing dormant knowledge to self-help linked to micro-finance to more formal access to grant and loan schemes. In addition it is important to seek allies for the revitalization of the historic centres. These may be traditional groups and leaders, persons engaged in the cultural sector, tourist enterprises, craftsmen or journalists who are interested in the local history and credible authorities residents find trustworthy.

## **Strengthen urban management – build local capacities**

Many city administrations still lack the requisites for self-contained management of the development of their historic centres. They frequently lack the benefit of practical experience of bargaining compromises with public and private stakeholders, suitable administrative procedures and experienced experts. Municipalities in most cases do not specify departments to deal with the complex concerns of urban rehabilitation that

# OUR SERVICES

would develop the legal planning and conservation framework and at the same time actively engage in the implementation process with very diverse groups. We support municipal administrations in the creation of suitable organizational structures, the development of human resources and the formation of locally appropriate strategies and promotional tools.

Our suggestions concerning the optimal organization of the rehabilitation process are adapted to the existing situation: they range from the formation of strong departments or the expansion of functions and services of already existing departments, to the creation of urban rehabilitation agencies to public-private partnership and citizen self-help. Our approach has worked well. It enables municipalities to tackle complex rehabilitation processes on their own – often a social, political, managerial and administrative challenge. It encourages citizens to develop their historic and cultural assets.

## **New push through suitable consultation and promotion**

The condition of many historic buildings is desperate due to the failure and incentives for maintenance in the past. Many homeowners are not in a financial position to carry out the proper rehabilitation or modernization of their buildings on their own.

The public authorities are in a position where they can motivate individual owners to invest in the restoration of their houses using appropriate programs. This often encourages neighbours to take positive action.

Appropriate measures include free technical and financial consultancy on rehabilitation, small credit facilities and grant programs for conservation, emergency repairs, rehabilitation and modernisation.

## **Stop decay – renovate according to conservation guidelines**

Historic buildings are important witnesses to a country's heritage. In order to preserve these for next generations, careful rehabilitation concepts, experienced and adapted practice based on conservation guidelines are needed. In many places the technical know-how and skills for renovation have been lost in the modernization of construction industries.

GTZ makes available internationally acknowledged expertise in the planning, preparation, assistance and implementation of rehabilitation projects. Identifying educational and vocational setups, we help to qualify craftsmen as well as architects and engineers in historic conservation skills and knowledge. The courses are often conducted "on the job", that is to say on the building site. In this way, traditional local crafts are revitalised. This contributes to employment generation, creates sources of income and provides apprenticeships for the future rehabilitation works – also a part of local economic development.

## **Start to rehabilitate infrastructure – a basic for further private and public investment**

Deficient drinking water supply and inadequate sewerage are only two of the many reasons for poor living conditions frequently found in historic districts. Many residents leave the historic centres because of faulty infrastructure – bad water supply, sewerage systems, gas and electricity lines and poorly maintained roads and footpaths. We assist city administrations and utilities to modernise the technical infrastructure. In so doing, we help define suitable technical solutions, solicit necessary subsidies and guarantee the quality of the civil works. This gives inhabitants new



# Integrated revitalization of historic centers

confidence in their locality and lays the foundation for private and public investment.

## **Improve the residential environment**

Public greening and squares in historic districts are often in poor condition or do not exist. This is also true to a great extent of inner courtyards, most of which are relegated to parking lots, commercial areas or places to collect rubbish. In order to render historic districts competitive in the inner city housing market it is not only necessary to restore and modernise apartments and houses but above all to create an attractive living environment.

"More green, less gray" is our motto. We assist local authorities and private owners to provide for more green space and to brighten up the living environment. Revitalized and newly created public spaces increase the quality of life and the image of the historic quarters. Often, derelict sites may be used for additional green spaces. Attractive public space breathes new life into entire neighbourhoods. Supporting measures like this also encourage local residents and owners to rehabilitate their own houses or businesses.

## **Calming traffic – enhancing the quality of life**

Motorised traffic is everywhere on the increase. Many historic districts are threatened by gridlock or with large-scale demolition in order to make way for new thoroughfares.

Based on our long-time and always controversial experience on this issue, we support local authorities to develop or to update their traffic management plans. We support them how to find ways and means to better manage, reorganize and calm the traffic. Restrictions on motorised traffic and the

creation of pedestrian zones increase the quality of life and the attractiveness of historic districts for residents, tradesmen, customers and visitors.

Traditional crafts and industry create income.

Historic centers have always been places for living, for work and for commerce. Yet today, trade has become increasingly displaced from historic centers. This is frequently caused by new shopping centers built on peripheral green-field sites. Also, the market for traditional arts and crafts in many cities has almost come to a standstill for lack of consumer demand and the poor financial means of residents. Historic centres will only have a future if they can assert their place in the economic structure of the city and the region.

We provide access to an abundance of tools and resources in order to render historic centres attractive and economically viable again. We help to create the conditions for economic revitalization and development of historic centers together with the local authorities. We promote the competitiveness of the local economy and support small and medium scale enterprises in reviving traditional arts and crafts. Our efforts include training as well as conceptualization of viable marketing strategies. The rehabilitation of historic centers revitalizes the local economy. New sources of income and apprenticeships emerge.

## **Promote cultural tourism**

The attractiveness for tourists of old towns is immense, with different motivations and segments prevailing – be it nostalgic, locally religious or historic, internationally on the cultural or jet set list or a regional memory or a childhood market place – yet in so many cases this remains undeveloped. The decayed state of buildings and infra-

# OUR SERVICES

structures in many historic districts renders them unattractive. Moreover tourist infrastructure is often lacking. We support cities on how, in the context of integrated rehabilitation projects, they can add economic value via tourism to conservation and rehabilitation efforts. Socially and ecologically compatible cultural tourism is an important promotional medium and source of income for the private and public sector.

## **Urban environmental protection – healthy historic centers**

The environmental conditions in many historic centers are poor. In part this is due to inadequate water supply and sewerage systems, deficient waste disposal or the impact of harmful industries and traffic. This is a burden on the health of residents and reduces the location attractiveness. We advise our partners to apply suitable measures to improve the environmental conditions of historic centers. These extend from the introduction of new technical standards in businesses and households, traffic calming and the prevention of waste to the organization of campaigns to raise environmental awareness and advice on energy efficiency measures.



# Giving Urban Cultural Heritage its Due



## Bhaktapur / Nepal

80,000 residents of whom ca. 60,000 reside in the old city containing 320 historic buildings

The oldest and smallest of the three royal cities in the Kathmandu valley suffered in the 1970's from manifold problems. After patient, integrated urban redevelopment, it now offers methods of resolution for other Nepalese cities.

**Project:**  
Urban Rehabilitation of Bhaktapur  
**Country:** Nepal  
**Term:** 1974 – 1991  
**German contribution:** 15 Million €

## SITUATION

"Golden pagodas set in glittering snow-covered mountains" – this is how travellers in the 15th Century described the Kathmandu valley with its three royal cities. The ambition of competing God-kings, trade, tolls and crafts, developed into a unique cultural landscape of temples, palaces and residences that in 1979 was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Bhaktapur lost its importance after 1768 following conquest of the Kathmandu valley by the Gurka king. A strong earthquake in 1934 further contributed to the decline of the city. In the 1970s Bhaktapur was considered economically backward and grubby. Those who could, left the city that, at the time, housed a population of some 40,000 people.

## PROJECT

A German wedding gift for the crown prince in the form of the restoration of a building destroyed in the 1934 earthquake initiated GTZ involvement in the city rehabilitation. Comprehensive rehabilitation was carried out between 1974 and 1986 which included urban planning, water supply, sewerage, restoration of buildings, the construction and repair of elementary schools, the paving of alleys, streets and plazas, training of local draughtsmen and craftsmen, consultancy offered to small enterprises and the development of a small business park on the edge of the old city.

In the course of the four project phases the focus changed from planning and construction towards stronger participation of locals and the transfer of implementation responsibility to partners.



# BHAKTAPUR

## RESULTS

Today Bhaktapur is a lively Newari city with about 80,000 residents of whom 60,000 now live in the old city.

The comprehensive rehabilitation and urban renewal measures have revealed an art historic gem and reanimated and modernized the local building and craft industries that were barely still in existence at the outset of the project. Off-farm income possibilities have opened up. The provision of drinking water and the building of toilets, together with the introduction of solid waste collection and street cleaning have improved the hygienic conditions of the city. Building permits for new construction now follow regulations regarding height, façade and building materials and these are widely respected thanks to municipal subsidies. The municipality finances these as well as the further renovation of historical monuments, through entrance fees for tourists. Urban management in Bhaktapur is considered to be comparatively efficient.

The citizens are proud of the cleanliness of their old city. And the fact that for many years the status of the UNESCO World Heritage site was endangered has not lain with Bhaktapur, but rather with the overflow from neighbouring cities in the valley. Urbanization pressures and urban sprawl right across the Kathmandu valley has engulfed Bhaktapur such that the city's land use plan has been incapable of controlling development on the urban fringe. Furthermore, efforts not only to collect the city's sewage, but also to treat it adequately, remain unsuccessful.

## URBAN FOLLOW-ON PROJECTS

Following the Bhaktapur project the BMZ funded the Patan Conservation and Development Project that applied the experiences of Bhaktapur to the Kathmandu valley's second royal city Patan. This project followed a participatory approach from the beginning, supported the municipality to work closely with neighbourhood organizations wishing to improve living conditions in old town quarters while at the same time conserving their cultural assets which are meaningful to them. This also included the contribution in kind or money to the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic buildings, plazas and urban structures.

And not least, a small component of the country-wide programme of the German development collaboration Urban Development Through Local Efforts, apart from work in the World Heritage sites since 2000, has involved initiatives that bring together local organizations, religious and municipal initiatives with city administrations and national conservation authorities to secure, develop and maintain their urban cultural inheritance.

Transitional times demands transitional solutions: Nepal is now engaged in a peace process, after years of conflict. At some point it will chose to appropriate its old urban cultures anew.



# A Newly Accessible Old City



## Aleppo / Syria

2.5 Million residents of whom ca. 120,000 are resident in the Old City with 16,000 building plots

In the Syrian metropolis, early urbanization fatally affected the world heritage listed old city. Yet, through modern urban management, the center gained a new appeal.

### Project:

The rehabilitation of the Old City of Aleppo

Country: Syria

Term: October 1994 – March 2007

German contribution: 10,000,000 €

## SITUATION

Aleppo, located in the northwest of Syria, looks back over a 5,000-year history. This great metropolis owes its rich cultural heritage to trade between Europe and the Orient. Even today the ancient souk gains its character from the rectilinear street grid laid out in the Byzantine past. Admittedly Aleppo had grown well beyond its historic core already by the end of the 19th century. Neglect of the old city began already as a consequence of this early urbanization.

The situation then developed dramatically from the 1950s to the 1970s when major parts of the urban core gave way to thoroughfares designed for fast and efficient traffic. Residents who were able to afford it, left the walled city. Social and economic decay and the associated decline in the building fabric set in which was not halted by the listing of the old city in 1986 as a World Heritage site.

## PROJECT

German-Syrian cooperation in the city took as its task preservation of the architectural and socio-cultural heritage while promoting modern living and working conditions. To initiate the process a comprehensive upgrading plan was formulated. With the intention of achieving considerable improvements to the local quality of life a program of rehabilitation and, where this was lacking, the construction of economic, technical and social infrastructure was taken in hand.

The goal was to increase the attractiveness of the old city and open perspectives on 21st century living for the inhabitants whilst keeping the rich cultural heritage in view.

## RESULTS

The engagement was fruitful. The Syrian government increasingly regards the efforts to rehabilitate the historic centre of Aleppo as worthwhile. Residents have in-



involved themselves actively in the renewal process. The establishment of an Old City Department in the municipal administration proved to be crucial. It formed the basis to implement a diverse package of measures. Decisive successes were achieved together with the efforts of important local actors:

- The Old City Department directs the entire renewal process, issuing renovation permits;
- A conservation and development land use plan guarantees the orderly development of the old city, creating a secure legal basis for the development;

# ALEPPO

- With the help of a grant program over a 1,000 buildings have been renovated and modernized. The Old City Department offers free technical advice on renovation and



interest-free small loans for building improvements. Urban design projects have accompanied this activity, increasing the value of public space and contributing to the improvement of the reputation of the old city.

- The successful realization of the rehabilitation concept has significantly affected the image of the old city and promoted tourism. Growing numbers of visitors are encouraging investment in hotels and restaurants.

- Entrepreneurial interest in the old city has increased as a consequence of the new conditions. Investments in businesses and housing are on the rise.

- Exhibitions, workshops and information events have motivated the old city residents to take their own initiative. Neighbourhood projects have reinforced local identity thereby sharpening consciousness of the need for individual responsibility and engagement.

The example of Aleppo demonstrates impressively the opportunities that can be opened up through the preservation of historic centres and from the development of urban management initiatives.

Consequently, a similar project is now underway in Damascus, where in addition to local activities the national Government is being advised on the creation of effective structures to support municipalities countrywide. A Toolkit for Urban Conservation and Development developed in Aleppo is providing ideas and instruments that can be applied in other cities.

Meanwhile, a new phase has begun for Aleppo: together with the Cities Alliance that focuses on fighting poverty, strategies are being developed for the city as a whole with special attention to the improvement of conditions of life in the numerous spontaneous settlements. The former problem child 'Old City' is now providing solutions to problems encountered also in modern urban quarters. This has proved to be a great example of how innovation can be disseminated!



# Living and Working in the Cultural Capital



## Sibiu / Romania

180,000 residents of whom ca. 14,000 reside in the Historic Center with 1,200 historic buildings

Historic preservation for the benefit of residents: in former Hermannstadt, citizens participate in a carefully conceived city center renewal. It creates future prospects and acts as a shining example for other Romanian cities.

### Project:

Careful Rehabilitation of the Historic Center of Sibiu / Hermannstadt

Country: Romania

Term: Sept. 1999 – December 2008

German contribution: 8,700,000 €

## SITUATION

European Cultural Capital 2007 – so reads the interim crowning conclusion of a rapid yet successful urban rehabilitation. The value of Sibiu's cultural built environment, founded as Hermannstadt in the 12th century, enjoys a reputation far beyond the borders of Romania.

It is important to preserve and further develop this heritage for future generations. In the 1990s the decay of many of the approximately 1,200 buildings composing the inner city seemed unavoidable. Disrepair, considerable traffic, high residential density and increasing poverty, afflicted the core of the city. There was a threat of losing further sections of the historic center comprising 90 hectares of land contained within four medieval fortification rings with upper and lower quarters housing a total population of around 14,000.

## PROJECT

The basis for project success remains the same as other examples in this publication. It requires close collaboration of all partners as well as an active and participatory engagement of the authorities. The Romanian-German cooperation in Sibiu began with a year of orientation in which the GTZ team gathered a multi-faceted impression of existing conditions.

From September 2000 they set out to work, prioritizing these goals: to stop the decay in collaboration with the municipality and to rehabilitate the historic center through an integrated and sustained approach. Attention was paid not only to solving structural problems but particularly to the removal of economic, social and legal difficulties. A range of offers of advice and opportunities for participation

bound the residents and local institutions into the rehabilitation process.

An important goal was to strengthen the economy of the old town. This involved the revival of traditional building crafts and the promotion of cultural tourism.

Realizing these multiple project goals required a well-balanced range of activities.



## RESULTS

With the help of the cooperation project the direction was clear, facilitating a swift and successful urban renewal process:

The GTZ team supported the administration by forming a management plan to guide the rehabilitation. Various supplementary consultation and working aids, including building design handbooks were produced. These will continue to provide guidance as urban renewal continues.

Homeowners and tenants can seek free consultation from a team of eight architects and engineers. Focal points of their activities are damage assessment and the creation of a rehabilitation concept including costs estimates. The team helps in particular to sensitize homeowners to the significance of the historic building fabric and to avoid investment in poor quality or inappropriate work. Over 300 consultations carried out so far emphasize the great interest for this kind of service.

Building activity supported by the project concentrates on securing repairs and modernization of residential buildings in the historic centre as well as the upgrading of public spaces. By means of financial subsidies (1,250,000 Euros, of which 500,000 Euros was administered by the GTZ and 750,000 Euros by the KfW Development Bank Group) over 100 buildings have been renovated. Thanks to an extensive municipal program to improve public space it is not only the three main public squares that are now radiant but the pedestrian zone and stairway between the lower and upper city glow equally with a new brightness.

Decades of neglect and non-maintenance caused the decay of the urban fabric. This

also led to the loss of traditional craftsmanship and knowledge in traditional construction methods. Remedies were created through extensive training and demonstration efforts awakening new interest in the area of building restoration and opening fresh market prospects. They revived traditional crafts and provided apprenticeships and jobs. Extensive information, pamphlets, competitions, image campaigns and displays, and the continuous communication assured the participation of local residents for a favourable outcome. Today wide sections of the population, important local decision makers and investors are committed to the strategy, convinced by successful implementation over the past few years.

The careful urban renewal of Sibiu presents a model for initiatives in other Romanian cities. Furthermore, new options to preserve built cultural heritage have been opened up through the availability of EU structural funds.



# Between Mud Architecture and Computer Class



## Shibam / Yemen

District Shibam, 50,000 residents of whom ca. 2,600 are resident in the Old City containing 400 historic buildings.

**Help to self-help:** from the threat of an endangered "Desert Manhattan" comes this portrait of a renaissance. The prize-winning GTZ-Project approach allows further Yemeni towns to become model cities.

### Project:

Urban development of Shibam in the Hadramaut

**Country:** Yemen

**Term:** June 2000 – June 2010

**German contribution:** 6,950,000 €

## SITUATION

Because of its more than 430 mud houses, up to nine floors high, since 1982 old Shibam has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. For many centuries this desert city, located on the 'incense road' in the Yemeni Wadi - Hadramaut, functioned as a trade axis for food and other supplies.

Technical, political and economic transformations of the 20th century resulted in Shibam losing its importance. The start of the socialist era in 1967 was the signal for many of the wealthy merchant families to emigrate overseas. The remaining population became impoverished and the old town was left to deteriorate, placing its status as a world cultural heritage site in jeopardy. By the year 2000 over half of the unique mud towers were in a poor state of repair and some ten percent were altogether in ruins. These buildings are costly and complex to renovate but there were few resources in the region to invest in the necessary work.

## PROJECT

This Yemen-German cooperation concerning the city aims to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants, to open economic perspectives and to preserve the cultural riches of the city. The objective is that Shibam should again become a vital urban centre, not a Disneyland in the desert sands. The needs of the residents and historic preservation must complement each other.

The project started in the year 2000 at a relatively favourable point in time as shortly thereafter, in the spring of 2001, Yemen staged its first local elections. As the district councils received increasing

authority so the project team gained motivated partners. Through a lengthy joint consensual planning and development process, four essential fields of action were defined: maintenance and revitalization of the cultural heritage, acceleration of economic and social development, advancement of local skills and initiatives as well as improvements to the infrastructure.

The fact that approximately 50,000 people live in the district of Shibam was always borne in mind.

In preparing and realizing the building, economic and socio-cultural activities, the project worked together closely with the district council, the local administration, the Old Town Authority responsible for urban heritage preservation and other important actors within the civic community. An important partner at the national level has been the Yemen Social Fund for Development that has been considerably involved in the financing of building work.

## RESULTS

The project provides help for self-help initiatives. This approach extends through all fields of activity. Since 2002 a subsidy program has guaranteed that the cost in restoration work carried out in accordance with traditional methods has been covered. Following free consultation offered by the project, residents of the old city can employ architects and master builders of their choice for the renovation of their homes. So far roughly 200 buildings have benefited from this programme. The demand for qualified craftsmen has quadrupled. A newly established craftsmen's guild now ensures the quality and competitiveness of the traditional building busi-

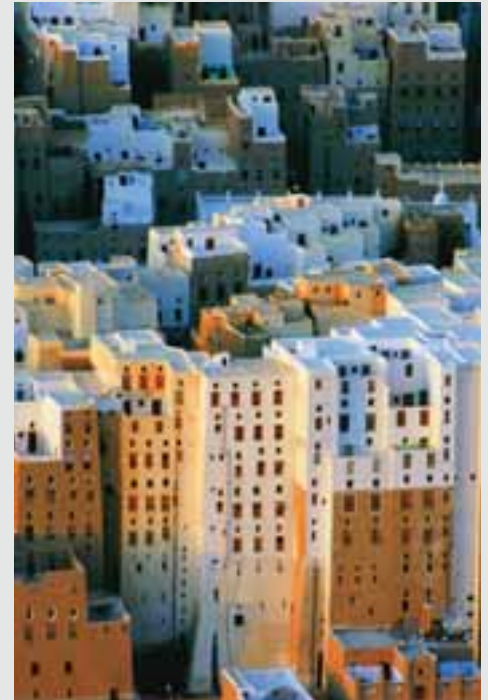
# SHIBAM

ness – a goal that found an especially prominent advocate in the German Nobel laureate and author Günter Grass. In order to help the demand-oriented development program to succeed civil society networks were built and strengthened. The GTZ team collaborates closely with municipal decision makers and a wide range of community based organizations. It supports numerous citizen initiatives, among them those promoting the interests of women and girls. Thus, hundreds of women have benefited from reading and writing courses reducing the illiteracy rate among women by around 20 percent. Others train to become seamstresses, tailors and professional hairdressers.

lenge to the capacities of the partners involved.

The ancient irrigation systems of the oasis belt around the city have been restored. The cultivation of the gardens there now offers a welcome additional source of income for many families. In addition the green zone provides a buffer between the old town and new developments. At the same time the canal system protects the mud walls, easily damaged by humidity, as it diverts the onslaught of monsoon floods that occur on average twice a year.

The gradual growth in the number of cultural tourists is opening up trade opportunities for local arts and crafts. Now it is



Beyond, women benefit from courses on computer and internet skills, from scholarships to attend colleges for teachers or midwives training courses in neighbouring towns. This creates new occupational opportunities for women and opens prospects to participate in the development processes in a society otherwise shaped by men. The income of participating families has climbed in general by around 30 percent.

Thanks to the Yemen Social Fund for Development the ailing sewerage system is being renewed, alley by alley, house by house right into the toilets, posing a major organizational, technical and social chal-

lenges. The project was intended to introduce a tourist levy that could support the rehabilitation process. For their efforts to create a living community rather than a museum piece, the people and institutions involved in the project received the Aga Khan architecture award in 2007. This is a highly prized honour that recognizes community-oriented developments in a Muslim context.

Other Yemeni cities are following this example of Shibam. Thus places like Zabid, also a world heritage site that was placed on the endangered list in the year 2000, are using the instruments and methods that have proved themselves in Shibam.



# A Future for the Old City



## Yangzhou / People's Republic of China

1.2 Million residents of whom ca. 100,000 reside in the Old City with 22,000 historic buildings

A new thoroughfare was planned through the old harbour city's historic centre. This was cancelled and today at this city on the Grand Canal now shines with a fresh radiance. It has been dubbed an ecological model city.

### Project:

Sustainable Urban Conservation of Old City of Yangzhou

Country: People's Republic of China

Term: June 2002 – December 2007

German contribution: 500,000 €

## SITUATION

China's urbanization is unfolding with an unprecedented dynamic. There is an urgent need to supply more housing, energy and water. At the same time sewage and waste disposal has become an increasing problem.

This rapid urbanization has sometimes disastrous effects, not only for the environment: cultural losses are also considerable. In many cities the old urban districts have disappeared completely. They have made way for new traffic arteries or functional new buildings meant to accommodate increasing demands for housing, acting as banners that boast a modern urban lifestyle. The signals resulting from this policy of demolition and reconstruction are, however, fatal. Thus old town residents forgo investments as they fear their buildings will soon fall victim to the bulldozer. Modern housing developments do not always meet the needs of all local residents.

This same fate could also have befallen Yangzhou, a city located some 200 kilometers northwest of Shanghai in Jiangsu province. The historic centre suffered from aging infrastructure, overloaded drainage and accompanying poor hygienic conditions. Yet at the same time population and economy were booming. The usual solution of demolition and reconstruction lay immediately to hand. However, the decision was instead to renovate the traditional harbour city on the Grand Canal through sustainable ecological development, in the process causing some sensation nationwide and also partially changing attitudes.

## PROJECT

In an effort to protect the historic centre against demolition and decay the city administration organized a participatory initiative. The inhabitants remain in their homes during the restoration and modernization; the old city centre retains its appearance and function; and social structures and cultural traditions are preserved. Municipal development measures accommodate the needs of residents and ensure the general improvements on the local quality of life. In 2003 Yangzhou was approved by China's Environmental Protection Agency, SEPA, to become the first participant in the country's Eco-City Programme that seeks innovative solutions through ecological, social and economic measures to improve environmental quality and the conditions of life.



# YANGZHOU

## RESULTS

The planned demolition of the old town center to make way for a new road was abandoned. Instead, a high-level steering group was established to develop an approach to the careful renovation of the old town. From the beginning local residents of this five square kilometre old town, containing 22,000 historic buildings and a population of 100,000, became the most important partners, participating in the planning, financing and execution of the renovation. Through numerous public meetings they worked out various concepts with great enthusiasm and produced a development plan.

The inhabitants themselves were responsible for the rehabilitation work of their own buildings. However, the municipality provi-

whilst water pipes and sewers have been renewed. Thanks to the Eco-City concept, public green space grew within only three years by approximately two-thirds to 563 hectares.

Industrial production also is being oriented along ecological guidelines with chemical and textile industries implementing environmental management measures that have made a significant contribution to Yangzhou becoming an ecological model city. The GTZ contribution to this environment and people-friendly modernization in the Yangtze-Delta took place between 2002 and 2007.

In 2006, UN Habitat, the housing and human settlement program of the United Nations, conferred the Scroll of Honour



ded additional support through subsidies and investments in the infrastructure. Today Wenhuali street is considered a good example of careful old city renovation: restored in observance of historic precedence, many buildings now shine in a new light; doors and windows have been restored to their original condition and streets are paved with traditional paving stones

Award on the city of Yangzhou in recognition of the outstanding contributions it has made to the improvement of urban life. The award celebrates an extraordinary project that succeeded, in spite of difficult circumstances, in awakening the interest of local residents in the remodelling and preservation of its old building fabric. The city was able to preserve its character.



# Integrated Urban Renewal – the Key to Success



## **Timisoara / Romania**

**330,000 residents of whom ca. 150,000 reside in the historic quarters with ca. 15,000 historic buildings**

**The active practice in Timisoara to comprehensively redevelop disadvantaged neighbourhoods is exemplary and acts as a role model for other Romanian cities.**

### **Project:**

Careful Renewal and Economic Revitalization of the Historic Quarters in Timisoara

**Country:** Romania

**Term:** January 2006 – June 2009

**German contribution:** 2,200,000 €

## **SITUATION**

In Romania, a mood of economic optimism prevails. At the edges of many cities prospering business zones and extensive suburbs of detached houses are appearing. The historic city centres are, however, limping along behind this upswing.

Also in Timisoara, the third largest city of the country, structural and economic development is perceptibly unbalanced. The economy is booming and the unemployment rate lies at an impressively low two percent. At the same time historic quarters of the old town with their rich heritage from the imperial era are threatened with decay. The need for rehabilitation and modernization of the major part of the stock of some 14,000 historic buildings was ignored for decades.

The living spaces of many residents are endangered. Infrastructure deficiencies inhibit economic development. Valuable potentially attractive historic urban neighbourhoods are further deteriorating because of inappropriate repairs and modernization measures.

## **PROJECT**

To stop decay and to initiate positive development in the eyes of local residents is the major objective defined by the project. This includes the careful renewal and economic revitalization of the historic districts in Timisoara. As the key to success, the GTZ team selected an integrated approach: alongside the building-related measures, economic and social issues are integral part in problem discussions and the search for adequate solutions. The goal is to forge a path to sustainable redevelopment particularly in the three urban quarters of Cetate, Iosifin and Fabric. To this end, the project focuses on strengthening the local authority, participation of residents and a

close collaboration with all interest groups. Moreover, in order to implement jointly planned measures, funds need to be raised. The model initiative did not only restrict itself to the renewal of historic private residential and office buildings, public squares and streets are also to be upgraded and the ailing water supply and sewerage systems are also to be renewed.

In this way the project team strives to improve the quality of life, to preserve the cultural heritage as well as revitalize the building fabric of the historic neighbourhoods.



# TIMISOARA

## RESULTS

Together we're strong! In accordance with this motto, collective powers are bundled. The administration and the citizenry of Timisoara have been collaborating closely with the two German sister cities of Gera and Karlsruhe. Efforts so far have brought visible successes:

- A free consultancy service helps owners and tenants to understand the structural problems of their houses and to undertake suitable measures to overcome these. This has contributed significantly to initial repairs such as the 'true to the original' mending of defective roofs.
- Local training institutions have trained over 150 masons, stonecutters, plasterers, and carpenters as well as architects and engineers in historic preservation tech-

renewal and animate those affected to take part actively.

- The project team, in collaboration with the citizenry and specialist departments of the local authority developed a renovation strategy for the coming years. This concept describes the building, economic and social measures that will need to be taken to achieve a sustainable renovation of the old town.
- In the near future, owners whose financial means are insufficient to pay for urgent repairs and modernizations will be able to access support from subsidies offered by the European Union and from various national and municipal sources.
- In the mean time, measures developed

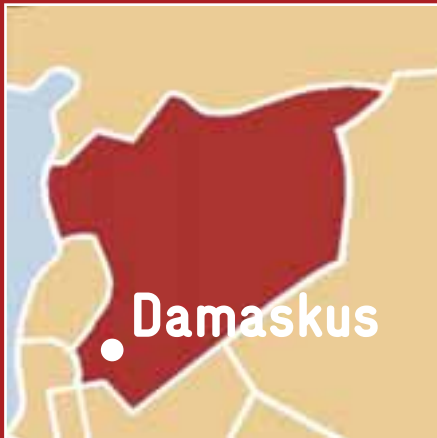


niques. The courses take place 'on the job' at the building sites of historic buildings.

- Expert meetings, discussion groups and information pamphlets serve to keep the public actively involved in the process. They create awareness in citizens and policy-makers of the challenges of urban

for Timisoara provide a shining example for further Romanian urban renewal initiatives.





### Damascus / Syria

5.5 Million residents of whom ca. 50,000 reside in the old city that contains 7,500 historic buildings

Lured by a new offer of restaurants, hotels, businesses and earning possibilities, the Damascenes have rediscovered their Old City. Admittedly, investments have had a negative affect on the socio-cultural structures and the city fabric. Only a rapid and focused steering can secure the identity of the historic centre and prevent its destruction.

#### Project:

"Old City Restoration Damascus" in the frame of the programme "Sustainable Urban Redevelopment Syria"

Country: Syria

Term: August 2007 – March 2010

German contribution: 4,000,000 € for the entire program

### SITUATION

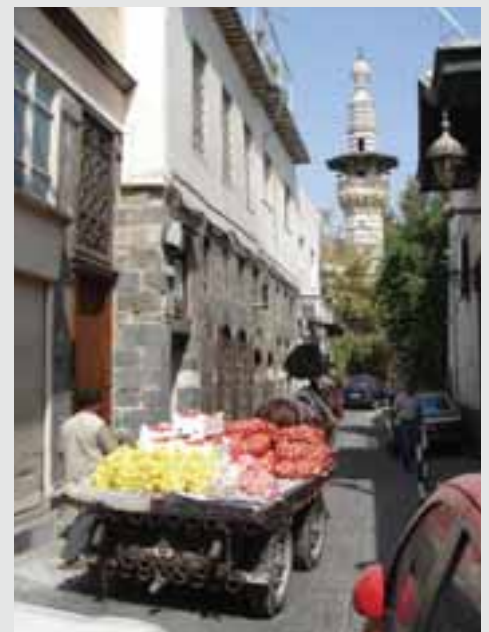
At the crossroads of two caravan routes, situated in an oasis, Damascus developed over the last 5,000 years into one of the great metropolises of the Middle East. Along the way, the city was exposed to a multitude of western and eastern influences that are evident today in the cityscape. Aramaic and Assyrian elements, Roman columns, Omayyad mosques, Ottoman dwellings and French city expansions reveal multicultural influences and indicate the adaptability of the city over time. Mosques, churches and synagogues reflect its religious variety.

Already in 1979 UNESCO recognized the value of the old city by listing it as a World Heritage site. Nevertheless, Damascenes shifted their attention to the new city. Only old and poor sections of the population remained in the historic centre, which proceeded to decay.

Recently the old city has been the subject of a reversal of fortunes developing into the city's most popular entertainment quarter. Residences have been converted into restaurants with many now housing new art galleries. Attractive hotels are luring overnight guests. The land market is flourishing, real estate prospects are blossoming and the infrastructure is groaning under the weight of this new load. Maintenance of the old adobe residential buildings is laborious and costly. In addition, large numbers of 'strangers' are moving into the old city, gradually driving out the remaining poor residents. For the first time in its history the city runs the danger of being unable to withstand the rush of new demands, thereby losing its identity.

### PROJECT

The German-Syrian cooperation aims to improve urban management through intensive citizen and investor participation and through local economic development. New, participatory planning instruments serve to protect the old city's identity. Technical consultancy and financial aid enable poor residents to undertake economic renovation of their houses in accordance with historic building methods. The introduction of energy efficient technologies and sources of renewable energy aim to reduce living costs and contribute to environmental protection. Local businesses are involved in the restoration of the architectural heritage. The support of local craftsmen creates new earning and employment opportunities. Through the upgrading of public space the old city is becoming a pleasant place to spend time. In this way, the historic centre is retaining its unique character and with it considerably improving the local quality of life.



# THE WAY FORWARD

## Relevance of Urban Rehabilitation Projects to the Achievement of Development Goals

In addition to standard project impacts, urban rehabilitation projects offer further development potential:

### Commitment of Partners

Generally partner institutions are highly committed to such projects right from the start as the topics of 'cultural conservation' and 'urban identity' have very broad acceptance. Due to the close relationship between the theme of urban rehabilitation and the concrete problems frequently found in old city centres, rehabilitation projects provide the chance for decision makers to produce positive results rapidly and with high visibility.

### Visibility

A large number of individual construction measures produces high visibility even in the case of quite small projects. Such a project approach may thus be of interest not only to German development cooperation but also to private enterprises and other donors (e.g. the Aga Khan Development Network, the European Commission) that could be implemented through Public-Private Partnerships or co-financing measures.

### Impact

Topics such as poverty reduction, public participation, anti-corruption or decentralization are sometimes seen as sensitive issues if approached directly. Within the framework of urban rehabilitation projects these aspects however also play a major role. Thus financing rehabilitation measures adequately, encouraging inhabitants to participate in development processes or tendering municipal construction measures

involve building capacities in the field of good governance, decentralization and local/municipal economic development but in a non-confrontational manner.

### Broad effect

One of the proofs of success of such projects is that many governments request follow-on projects and programmes based on previous urban rehabilitation projects. New approaches to public management, innovative financing instruments, new institutional structures or administrative processes can be tested in the historic city centres. Urban rehabilitation projects can be the start of broad spectrum of future topics – even up to the design of entire supra-regional urban developments, decentralization or local/municipal economic development programmes.

German development cooperation has so far successfully implemented or is currently implementing urban rehabilitation projects in **China, Yemen, Nepal, Romania** and **Syria**. Furthermore, a new project is about to start in the **Ukraine**. In addition to these the historic cities along the former **Silk Road**, along the coasts of the **Black Sea** or the **Southern Mediterranean** provide enormous potential to convey development goals through urban rehabilitation.

Isabel Mattes-Kuecukali  
Mediterranean Region and  
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## Our organisation

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH is an international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development with world-wide operations. It provides viable, forward-looking solutions for political, economic, ecological and social development in a globalised world. GTZ promotes complex reforms and change processes, often working under difficult conditions. Its corporate objective is to improve people's living conditions on a sustainable basis.

## Our clients

GTZ is a federal enterprise based in Eschborn near Frankfurt am Main. It was founded in 1975 as a company under private law. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is its major client. The company also operates on behalf of other German ministries, partner-country governments and international clients, such as the European Commission, the United Nations or the World Bank, as well as on behalf of private enterprises. GTZ works on a public-benefit basis. Any surpluses generated are channelled back into its own international cooperation projects for sustainable development.

## GTZ - worldwide operations

In more than 130 countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Eastern European countries in transition and the New Independent States (NIS), GTZ employs some 9,600 staff. Around 1,100 of these are seconded experts and approximately 8,500 are national personnel. GTZ maintains its own offices in 65 countries. Some 1,000 people are employed at Head Office in Eschborn near Frankfurt am Main.

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