

Closing Comments:

What wasn't discussed?

What lines of inquiry might be promising?

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I will continue my role as advocate for informal enterprises to the community of urban planners, urban managers, and politicians, especially at the level of local government

- So, I'm focusing on the "micro", steering away from the macro issues of defining the informal sector and informality, national economic development strategies, taxation and finance, and how to generate tens of millions of new jobs.
- I'm also containing my outrage at the transnational corporations, financiers, oligarchs, plutocrats, corrupt administrators and greedy middlemen who are responsible for so much poverty and human misery in a fundamentally unjust and inhuman global system.
- I will be optimistic and positive, because billions of people around the world are just that – they work, they struggle, and they achieve, despite the injustices of the systems within which they live and work.

It was intriguing ...

- That we didn't hear more about micro-credit, for so many "the magic bullet";
- That we didn't hear more about Hernando de Soto and his four "magic bullets" ... deregulation, debureaucratization, privatization, and granting title to informal real estate;
- That we didn't hear more about the significance of child labor, its positive and negative features, and child-minding on the job.

Key post-modern ideas in urban planning

- Growing recognition of the value of cultural and physical diversity, with its concentrations of ethnic businesses and its craft cultures, its historic buildings and traditional urban environments, and its preference for medium- to high-density low-rise neighborhoods with a variety of economic activities and buildings of different ages;
- Public Spaces - Festival marketplaces – visions of colorful human activity and “vendor variety”, dynamizing formerly sterile streets, plazas and mall environments; (W.H. Whyte, PPS & Rousification)
- New urbanism: an anti-sprawl movement advocating walkable, livable neighborhoods at a human scale with cafes, pubs and other localized meeting-places;
- Community food security: the growing realization that health and diet are intimately inter-related, and that households must “take back control” from the agribusiness corporations. Leads to programs emphasizing community gardens & kitchens, farmers’ markets, food coops, etc.

Current Priorities

- **Rights** to livelihood
- **Rights** to home
- **Rights** & security in public space
- **Rights** to education, public services & benefits
- **Rights** to democratic participation
- Framing issues as “**human rights**”, hoping that what’s happening in various Middle Eastern countries right now is just the beginning of a global wave of people’s democracy -- a process that began with a humble street vendor setting himself on fire in a provincial city in Tunisia; a warning to every government on earth to take the rights and aspirations of ordinary citizens very seriously.
- **Organizing & networking** -- what WIEGO and its member organizations do so well; do it more, do it better, find out how others do it and succeed.

Some more specific proposals

1. **Best practices – document good examples, develop models, guidelines & handbooks; publish case studies, nominate for awards;** Why not start with Singapore's small enterprise promotion policies during its transition from Third to First World status that began in the early 1960's?
2. Document best practices in **displacement**: with appropriate warning, compensation, relocation and support systems for homes, livelihoods & businesses; involving community leaders in the process and maintaining communities as close as possible to where they were previously located; -- not because displacement is good, but because a few displacements are unavoidable in periods of rapid urban growth

3. Improve guidelines for **creation of retail markets & micro-business incubators**, using vacant lots and other public lands, and adaptively re-using large old buildings;
4. Set standards and publicize models for providing **small business locations in big new facilities** like malls, stadiums and convention centers, and for locating small-scale vendors on downtown and neighborhood streets;
5. Improve guidelines for **associating small retailers & handicraft producers** for internet marketing, bulk buying, publicity & contracting discounts;

6. Obtain or develop “**model ordinances**” for the regulation of small enterprises, combatting crime and preserving health and safety, but supporting enterprise, competition and livelihood;
7. Develop & distribute **appropriate technology designs** for mobile, movable and fixed vending, outdoors and within large buildings, and adapted to different climates;
Make stalls more cost-effective, energy efficient & secure;
- link to ITDG?
8. The **internet and cellphone**: what impact have they had on informal enterprises?; what is their potential to increase security for informal workers and the general public, strengthen networks, speed payment, reduce inventories, speed supply, and generate new income opportunities?;

9. Greater appreciation of **periodicity & seasonality**, and how to supply very irregular demands; Studies of “**down-time**” (when, where, why?) and how it might be effectively used for income generation;

10. **Globalization of handicraft marketing** opportunities, building on the “festival marketplace” idea and especially targeting international events, tourist & recreational sales; International networking & ideas exchange on designs, target markets & episodic demands;

11. Women’s rights to **inexpensive, safe and efficient transport**, and to be transport providers & entrepreneurs;

12. **Public & workplace toilets** -- very important service providers & employment generators; Legislation & guidelines on toilet provision; best practices on toilet design, management & maintenance;
13. Greater emphasis on **sustainability and alternative energy sources**, and the degree to which these facilitate the decentralization of economic activity to small enterprises;
14. More focus on **sanitation, solid waste disposal, composting and recycling** – key headaches for planners, and areas where there is great potential to develop more hygienic labor-intensive approaches.