

Global Planners Network Self-diagnostic Tool for an

International Assessment of the Capacity of Planning Worldwide

<http://tinyurl.com/2gbffk>

Background

In 2006, representatives of the planning professions of the world came together at the World Planners' Congress in Vancouver as the 'Global Planners Network'. Their purpose was to promote more inclusive and sustainable settlement planning, and to address the challenges of urbanization, the urbanization of poverty, climate change and natural disasters.

The rapid pace of urban growth makes increased planning capacity an urgent priority across the world. To assess what the most urgent priorities for increased capacity are, it's necessary first to take stock of existing capacity and then to see where the most serious gaps are for future needs.

To aid this assessment process, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) with support from the Lincoln Institute have built a [self-diagnostic assessment tool](#). All those engaged in planning activities can use this tool to examine the capacity for planning in their own country, and to reflect on their individual needs and capacity.

Using the self-diagnostic tool

The tool is available in Chinese, English, French & Spanish at <http://tinyurl.com/2gbffk> or on request in paper format. Technical help also is available online or on request.

It has been designed for all those engaged in planning. Separate versions are provided for professional planning organizations, government ministries & local government, the private sector, NGOs & community-based organizations, and academia.

The tool is designed take around half an hour to complete, although it may take longer. By working through the pro-forma, respondents will be able to highlight their achievements, identify future needs and consider the areas where enhanced capacity would bring the greatest benefits.

Outputs from the self-diagnostic tool

Data from the tool will be reported for individual countries/territories on GlobalPlannersNetwork.org. Names of individual organizations will not appear. The results site provides a chance to view and comment on other entries and the subsequent analysis of them.

The findings of this project will be presented later in 2008 to the UN Habitat World Urban Forum 4 in Nanjing "Urbanisation, Poverty and Climate Change", and to the Global Planners Network Congress in Zhenjiang "Spatially Harmonious Cities".

The Scale of Urbanization

- For the first time in history, more than half of the world's population now live in a town or city. By 2050 a further 3 billion people will have joined them. The UK alone is set to build 3 million new homes by 2020.
- This growth represents a huge challenge for the world's planners to provide for the basic needs of city dwellers.
- The process of global urbanization has been extraordinarily rapid and it won't slow down:
 - In 1900, only 14% of the population lived in cities. By 2000, 47% did so.
 - There are now 3.3 billion urban dwellers on the planet, by 2050 there will be 6.4 billion.
- By 2025 there will be 27 megacities in the world, each with over 10 million people. But the fastest growth will take place in urban areas of developing countries, particularly in smaller cities and towns in Asia and Africa.
 - About 40 % of China's population are city dwellers. By 2050 this proportion is expected to exceed 70%.
 - The proportion of India's population living in cities will rise from 29% now, to 55% in 2050.
 - Right now, Africa has just one megacity – Cairo. Kinshasa and Lagos will join the club by 2025.

The Planning Challenge of Urbanization

- In the short term, the rate of growth cannot be slowed. It represents a major challenge in terms of ensuring that:
 - the provision of sustainable housing keeps pace with demand.
 - basic infrastructure and services like clean water, sanitation, roads, schools and clinics are provided.
- Planners and policymakers also have to respond to the social and environmental consequences of the growth of cities.
 - Urban poverty is escalating. One billion people – a sixth of the world's population – now live in shanty towns.
 - Such settlements can be difficult to govern and they can experience high levels of insecurity.
 - Many are built in vulnerable areas, liable to landslides or flooding, exposing residents to very high risks from natural disasters.
 - Unplanned settlements exacerbate environmental problems such as the loss of vital tree cover or pollution of water supplies.

The [Royal Town Planning Institute](#) is the UK based organisation representing 20,000 professional planners. The Institute was established to advance the science and art of town planning for the benefit of the public and it works to raise professional standards and supports members through continuous education, training and development.

The [Commonwealth Association of Planners](#) is concerned with the planning and management of settlements and regions across the Commonwealth. Professional organizations of Commonwealth urban and regional planners members. CAP is a forum for creative ideas and practical action to make healthy, attractive and competitive towns, cities and regions.

Founded in 1974, the [Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#), based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, provides a nonpartisan forum for the discussion of planning and urban form; economic and community development; valuation and taxation; and international land policy.

The [Global Planners Network](#) was established in 2006. With 25 member organisations from around the world, the GPN represents professional planning organisations working together, and with others, to address the challenges of rapid urbanization, the urbanization of poverty and the hazards posed by climate change and natural disasters.