



NUSP RESOURCE KIT

Part 9

Sustaining Improvement



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A UISP-funded project has a beginning and an end and is focused particularly on the provision of infrastructure. But municipal officials and the residents know that life in the informal settlement is not limited to the project period, and the required improvements are not limited to infrastructure.

The responsibility for improving the built environment in the settlement and the quality of life of its residents must go on – perhaps for many years. Furthermore, if the improvement process is not sustained there is the possibility that the good work achieved in the UISP process will be undone.

A support structure must be put in place to ensure continued progress, and that must be done whilst the UISP project is still in operation – so that the whole improvement process is regarded as continuous.

These are the key ingredients of a sustained improvement process:

- A resident community that is full of organisations and special interest groups, all of which are represented in the community leadership structure. The leaders are accountable to the residents, listen to them, consult them and keep them informed.
- A municipality that treats informal settlement residents as full citizens and addresses the informal settlement in an integrated, coordinated way.
- An urban society that regards informal settlements as part of itself, and expresses that through involvement with the residents and the municipality on a sustained basis, building real friendships and offering useful skills and resources to combine with those of other partners.
- A long term, incremental improvement programme which contains a variety of objectives that are people-centered, realistic and inspiring. Its activities must address all the needs, in an order of priority set by the partnership, with short, medium and long-term goals.
- A financing programme, based on contributions by the municipality and the residents, which are used to gear up contributions from the wider community, other organs of government and even international donor organisations.

The examples that we will be able to access from this page will all be from South Africa. Please send us the story of how sustained improvements to informal settlements are being achieved in your area, with a few photos, and it will become part of the NUSP Resource Kit and encourage your colleagues around the country!