Already in 2015, we’ve held community forums in Tanzania and Belize on aspects of urban resiliency, kicked off a study to identify interventions in the informal settlements of Cairo, and carried out multiple training courses for public officials in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. This week, we are pleased to share with you our Summer 2015 Newsletter to update you on some of these key developments and accomplishments.

2015 marks a milestone year for the Institute as we celebrate ten years as an independent not-for-profit institution. We’ve strengthened new topic areas to address some of the most urgent challenges that cities in the 21st century face, such as climate change, and in doing so, sustained the Institute’s relevance in a dynamic and rapidly changing field. We’ve formed new connections and reconnected with community and educational partners in Boston and around the globe to share lessons from our work and leverage them to respond to new urban challenges. Lastly, we’ve continued to uphold our reputation for producing high quality research, documenting urban trends, and analyzing their impact on urban space and governance. In this last year alone, we have produced multiple policy reports and research papers for international organizations such as UN-Habitat and the World Bank.

All of our activities have been made possible by a highly committed staff and a generous Board who believes strongly in the Institute’s mission and values in the promotion of sustainable urban development. We look forward to your continued support to our work as we pursue transformative urban research projects and activities that help make cities better places for all.

Wishing you an enjoyable summer from our Cambridge office,
François, Mona, John, Daniel, Jim, Alejandra, Maren & Barbara
I2UD AND CO-PLAN CO-AUTHOR CHAPTER IN NEW UN-HABITAT/FUPOL PUBLICATION ON E-GOVERNANCE

UN-Habitat, in partnership with the Future Policy Modeling consortium (FUPOL) has released a new publication, E-Governance and Urban Policy Design in Developing Countries. This book illustrates the synergies, contradictions, and potentials that are emerging through the intersection and interplay of urbanization, information communication technologies, and the increasing role of local governments.

The first chapter of the book, Marginalized Groups in ICT-enabled Governance: Lessons from the Balkans, was co-authored by John Driscoll and Maren Larsen from I2UD and Dritan Shutina and Aida Ciro from the Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development in Albania. I2UD and Co-PLAN’s chapter seeks to identify the barriers facing marginalized populations to engage fully with e-governance mechanisms, and explore ways in which five cities in South Eastern Europe have formulated strategies to include society’s most vulnerable in socially accountable policy formulation and governance.

I2UD and Co-PLAN look forward to continuing their work together on social accountability and citizen engagement in this region through the second phase of the World Bank – Austria Urban Partnership Program, kicking off in August 2015.

I2UD TEAM TRAVELS TO BELIZE FOR FIELD MISSION

In May, a team of I2UD researchers and professionals spent ten days in Dangriga, Belize to research alternative strategies to increase the town’s resiliency to the impacts of climate change. Jim Kostaras, Elda Solloso, and Maren Larsen were joined in Belize by Dr. Elizabeth Hamin and students from UMass Amherst, and environmentalist and GIS specialist Jan Meerman to undertake action research supported by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. The research team also worked in close collaboration with Keisha Rodriguez, the Urban Planning Officer of the Belize Municipal Development Project (BMMP), and members and staff of the Dangriga Town Council, whose generous hospitality made for highly productive working sessions with the Local Planning Working Group (LPWG) and the community.

The trip began with a presentation by Regional Planning students from UMass Amherst of a Climate Change Action Plan for Dangriga, including a vulnerability assessment that identified areas vulnerable to flooding. The I2UD team subsequently went into greater detail to assess the feasibility of proposed strategies, such as rain gardens and the use of mangroves. Through site visits, Dangriga Mayor Francis Humphries provided a detailed understanding of the town’s drainage system and Councilor Herbert Nicasio organized a community meeting in the Wagierale neighborhood, which experiences serious flooding during the rainy season. I2UD’s week of meetings and site visits in Dangriga led to a workshop with participants from the central government, donor-funded development programs, local town council, and concerned residents. I2UD is currently working to integrate lessons learned from the workshop into the final research paper.

I2UD has a long history of continued engagement with the people and places involved in our projects. This research project is no exception and offers a unique opportunity to research ways in which municipalities in Belize can begin to integrate and streamline resiliency planning into their recently completed and adopted Municipal Development Plans. Through the Belize Municipal Development Project, funded by the World Bank and implemented by the Social Investment Fund of Belize, I2UD provided technical
assistance to seven municipalities to prepare their development plans.

During this most recent field mission, members of the I2UD team interviewed officials in Belmopan and San Ignacio/Santa Elena to reflect on the planning process and the status of the plans emerging lessons of the BMDP nearly one year after the plans were drafted. To learn about some of the highlights of plan implementation, click here to read the full article.

UPGRADING AND EMPLOYMENT-ENHANCING PROGRAM IN CAIRO, EGYPT

In partnership with the Cairo-based Tarek Waly Center and Environmental Quality International, the Institute is working on a Needs Assessment and Activity Design Study in four unplanned, informal areas in the Cairo and Giza Governorates of Egypt. The team, led by John Driscoll and Elda Sollosio, will identify and propose interventions to be financed by the Agence Française du Développement (AFD), managed by the Social Fund for Development (SFD), and implemented through local authorities and NGOs.

The team’s approach is to work closely with the Cairo and Giza Governorates and community-based organizations to develop practical upgrading strategies that can have a significant impact on improving the quality of public spaces and services available to residents. Additionally, there is a strong focus on providing credit and business support to micro enterprises and small businesses within the four communities to stimulate employment opportunities and drive local economic development.

The social and economic diversity and different development patterns that exist among these four large settlements reflect the issues faced by other informal settlements in the Greater Cairo Region. The opportunities for improvement that will be identified through the study can provide an inventory of potential interventions for other unplanned settlements. This will include maximizing access to credit and business support, as well as building the capacity of local communities, micro-finance institutions (MFIs), and local authorities to shape the implementation of the program, monitor progress, and make adjustments using evidence-based monitoring approaches.

Learn more about the project here.

I2UD JOINS USAID MAKING CITIES WORK CONSORTIUM

I2UD is a member of a consortium led by RTI International that is part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) “Making Cities Work” program. The goal is to improve urban and local governance in 112 countries in key functional areas including public service delivery, accountability, climate change adaptation, disaster preparedness, and urban finance.

In response to requests from USAID missions, the consortium will work with municipalities to address some of the most serious challenges created by a rapidly urbanizing world. This includes a continued demand for basic services, infrastructure, land, and affordable housing in the context of increasing vulnerabilities to climate change, disasters, and public health risks. Along with RTI, the consortium partners include:

- Bankworld
- Cardno TEC, Inc./Cardno Emerging Markets USA, Ltd
- Development and Training Systems, Inc. (dTS)
- Innovative Emergency Management, Inc. (IEM)
- Integra Government Services LLC (Integra)
- Local Development International LLC (LDI)
- Overseas Strategic Consulting, Ltd.
- Relief International (RI)

I2UD brings its experience in building urban resiliency and community climate adaptation strategies, as well as urban planning and land management expertise to the consortium. We work with cities to identify and harness
their power of urbanization to solve a myriad of complex problems. The Institute works directly with city and community leaders from the ground up to identify and respond to local needs. We recognize that this leadership is key to building resiliency within cities.

Over the past three years, I2UD has increasingly focused its activities on documenting and understanding the potential impacts of climate change on land-use and urbanization patterns and exploring different adaptation strategies at the regional, urban and neighborhood levels. This work seeks to help local governments, community stakeholders and residents develop strategic approaches that address the multiple dimensions of risk faced by urban settlements (particularly lower-income communities) and integrate mitigating interventions into ongoing programs and projects. Our Climate Change Adaptation and Resiliency Framework summarizes this approach.

**BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL OFFICIALS IN THE KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ**

In addition, an overview of key findings from an assessment of KRG's housing program was presented to the Minister of Planning. I2UD staff began this assessment in October 2014. The assessment included an analysis of current housing laws as well as the program's institutional organization, beneficiaries, criteria, and long-term sustainability. I2UD provided an analysis of current unmet housing demand, a projection of future demand and policy recommendations for increasing annual funding for housing projects. The assessment also highlighted experiences in other countries in the Arab region to illustrate best practices.

Other activities that I2UD has supported through our participation in the SURP training program include the development of training modules on: municipal finance delivered in Erbil in partnership with the KRG Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism & Erbil Governorate; and case studies on successful low-income housing delivery programs and institutional arrangements for social housing provision to address the demand for housing for Internally Displaced Persons and Returnees in Baghdad, Iraq.

The Institute looks forward to its continued participation in the housing assessment and other capacity building initiatives with UN-Habitat and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

**THE INSTITUTE ORGANIZES URBAN RESILIENCE FORUM IN ARUSHA, TANZANIA**

In February, I2UD worked with local authorities and NGOs to organize a community forum on building urban resilience in Arusha, Tanzania. Arusha was recently selected as part of the second cohort of cities to join the Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities Network.

Mona Serageldin and Barbara Summers participated in the one and a half day forum that brought together over 130 participants to discuss resilience challenges and potential
In March, Research Associate Barbara Summers represented I2UD at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The 59th session of the CSW took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from March 9th-20th.

Dr. Mona Serageldin gave a keynote lecture on “The Dynamics of Neighborhood Transformation, Long Term Trends, and Immediate Responses to Turmoil and Civil Unrest” at the 2015 City Debates conference at the American University of Beirut in March. For more information, visit the conference website.

On behalf of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Senior Fellow Jim Kostaras gave a presentation on Financing Urban Climate Adaptation through Land Value Capture in Latin America at the Sustainable Cities and Climate Change conference (Ciudades Sostenibles Y Cambio Climático) in Lima, Peru at the end of 2014.