Today, as more than half of the world's population lives in cities and urban areas, and as the rate is expected to reach 60% by 2030, slum upgrading is one of the main challenges of the developing world. According to UN-Habitat, it is estimated that one billion people live in slums in the cities of the world – one sixth of the human population – and that the numbers are rising. Considering the magnitude of the problem, even where government and development aid is available for slum upgrading, there are simply not enough resources to make a real difference for most of the world's slum dwellers. In this context, slums upgrading and the delivery of services to the poor stand as important poverty reduction strategies.

UN-Habitat, a world leader in promoting sustainable urban development and adequate shelter for all, is focusing on slum upgrading as one of its key areas. UN-Habitat promotes different programs to support slum upgrading: Participatory Slum Upgrading, Cities Alliance, The Slum Upgrading Facility, and more.

Slum upgrading requires a comprehensive approach, partnerships and financial and organizational tools for implementation.

- Comprehensive approach – to integrate aspects of infrastructure, living conditions, land ownership, environmental considerations, services systems and delivery, human capital and community development, economic activities into one comprehensive development process.
- Partnerships – local government "ownership" of the process and partnerships between local and external stakeholders in strategy formulation, planning and implementation.
- Financial and organizational tools - to mobilize the significant amount of resources required for such a development process and to promote and sustain implementation.
Israel gained significant experience in upgrading and revitalizing poor urban areas. Though slums and poor urban neighborhoods in Israel are different from those of the developing countries, our experience from previous seminars showed that our accumulated knowledge, on the approaches, strategies and tools, is relevant and that it can benefit decision makers and professionals involved in slum upgrading and the delivery of services to the poor.

The seminar is designed to focus on integrated strategies to slum upgrading including service delivery systems for the poor, and financial and organizational implementation mechanisms. The provision of services to the poor is also vital for poverty reduction and for upgrading the neighborhoods. Good services provision helps people’s transition out of poverty, but an integrated approach to slums upgrading is essential to avoid pushing people out of the neighborhood without upgrading conditions within the area.

The 30-day seminar aims at enabling participants to acquire practical tools for the design and implementation of innovative strategies to slum upgrading. Specifically, participants of the seminar will benefit from:

- UN-Habitat’s global experience in slums upgrading
- The support from the Ministry of Construction and Housing, a leading actor in these strategies in Israel
- Israel’s experience in integrated approaches to upgrading poor urban areas and its adaptation to the developing world
- Understanding the critical role of an integrated approach, of partnerships and of implementation mechanisms in slums upgrading
- Understanding the role of public sector, local government, private sector and civil society’s involvement in upgrading urban neighborhoods
- Exercising the formulation of small scale upgrading projects

The seminar involves presentations, workshops, discussions, field trips and meetings with professionals and decision makers, as well as personal assignments and formulation of small scale planning projects in small groups. UN-Habitat and Israeli cases and practice will be discussed and exercised throughout the program. The program covers the following main areas:

- **Introductory Sessions**: Slums in the urban development context, Integrated assets based strategic approach to urban development
- **Slum upgrading – UN-Habitat experience**: Key factors for successful slum upgrading, Obstacles and barriers to slum upgrading, Approach, experience, lessons learnt and tools from UN-Habitat’s programs
+ **Urban Areas Revitalization – the Israeli Experience:** The Israeli context – features, processes and indicators of urban poverty; Policies and strategies: Urban Renewal, Clearance and Construction, Infill - and their relevancy to developing countries

+ **Implementation Mechanisms:** Local and national planning, management tools and legal frameworks; Organizational platforms for planning, implementation and management; Developing institutional capacities; The role of the different stakeholders – central and local government, civil society and private sector

+ **Slum upgrading and service delivery from different angels:** the public sector – improving living conditions, empowering communities, small-scale infrastructure development and social services through slum upgrading; the private sector – financial opportunities with benefits to the public, project management; civil society – building community resilience, participation and empowerment to ensure benefits for the community

**Admission requirements**
The course is designed for officials and decision makers from local authorities, government agencies and ministries involved in slum upgrading, NGOs and CBOs active in the field, as well as business organizations and academic institutions engaged with slum upgrading programs. The selected participants are required to submit prior to the seminar:

→ A short presentation on slum upgrading in their respective countries/local areas
→ A case of slum upgrading they wish to further develop throughout the seminar in small groups (most relevant cases will be selected with the participants)

**Application Process**
Candidates must complete the appropriate application forms (including health certificate, declaration etc.) available at the Israeli diplomatic mission in their country, or through the Internet [http://mashav.mfa.gov.il](http://mashav.mfa.gov.il), [www.weitz-center.org](http://www.weitz-center.org). The completed forms should be submitted at the Israeli mission in your area and sent to our office (ronitshp@netvision.net.il) not later than DATE 2011.

**Arrival and transportation**
A Taxi Company called “MONI SITON TOURS” will transport the participants to “Reisfeld Residence” of the Faculty of Agriculture, Rehovot, Israel, where the students will stay during the seminar. Transportation will be free of charge only by this company.

The MONI SITON TOURS counter is located after the customs, at the gallery of floor 1 of Arriving Passengers’ hall, near gate 2.

**Responsibilities during the stay**
MASHAV will assume responsibility of the participants for the duration of the seminar. The medical insurance will benefit the participants during their stay in Israel, except for dental treatments, pregnancy, eyeglasses, and chronic illnesses.
Insurance of personal belongings
MASHAV, Weitz Center and the “Reisfeld Residence” are not responsible in case of lost or stolen personal belongings.

Additional Information
Any additional information is available at:

Weitz Center for Development Studies
Division of Training and International Cooperation
P.O.Box 12
Rehovot 76100, Israel
Tel: 972-8-9474373
Fax: 972-8-9475884
Cell Phone: 972-54-6655233 (Mrs. Ronit Shpindel)
E-mail: ronitshp@netvision.net.il