



# Urban Development and Civil Society: The Role of Communities in Sustainable Cities

*Michael Carley, Harry Smith*

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The world's population is rapidly urbanizing but the affluence and development often associated with cities are far from equitably or sustainably distributed. Where it was once taken for granted that responsibility for urban development lay with the state, increasingly the emphasis has shifted to market-driven and public-private sector initiatives, which can marginalize the intended beneficiaries - the urban poor - from decision making and implementation. This text outlines the essential conditions for effective urban planning and management by placing bottom-up community initiatives at the heart of the push for equitable and sustainable development in cities. Crucially, the state must engage with both the market and civil society in pursuit of sustainable cities. Presenting a wide-ranging selection of case studies in rapidly urbanizing and transitional countries, from the poorest parts of Africa and Asia to the relatively developed United Kingdom, the authors describe and analyze innovations in how globally disadvantaged urban communities can be engaged in improving their living environments.

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