



Under the Patronage of
H.R.H. Prince Meta'ab bin Abdul Aziz
Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs.



Eastern Region Municipality



**Symposium on" The Role of Cities and Municipalities in Responding
to the Needs of Children and Young People in Saudi Cities"**
Al-Khobar, 21-23 Muharram 1427H, 20-22 February 2006



RECOMMENDATIONS

Complying with the teachings of Islamic Sharia' on the rights and privileges of children and young people, and in the light of the economic, social and demographic changes witnessed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and building on the results of previous international and regional conferences such as: "Children and the City", Amman 2002, "Children and the Mediterranean", Genoa 2004, "Children and Youth in Cities of MENA Region", Dubai 2005, "Childstreet", Delft 2005; and recognizing the ratification of Saudi Arabia of international conventions especially "Convention on the Rights of the Child", "A World Fit for Children", the "Millennium Development Goals", and "The Arab Plan for Childhood Development".

The participants, who included 250 men and women comprising municipal leaders, and representatives of government agencies, NGOs, children and young people, recommend the following:

1. Reaffirm the role of municipal authorities in responding to the needs of children and young people, within their mandates, and urge them to include those needs within their priorities.
2. Encourage municipal leaders to enhance knowledge among their employees on the rights of children and on appropriate intervention methods for dealing with children; and to assist in raising awareness about children's rights.
3. Make city environments safer and conducive to the psychological and physical development of children, thus contributing to establishment of Saudi child friendly cities.
4. Develop a mechanism to ensure coordination and partnership among all institutions that work in this field, including government agencies or private institutions, and benefit from the expertise of regional and international agencies in fields related to responding to children needs.
5. Activate the role of municipalities in providing services and facilities that enhance the physical development of children and young people and stimulate their creativity and mental abilities. Those include parks, playgrounds, public libraries and museums; and ensure access of all children to them.
6. Facilitate allocation of land, for free or at nominal prices, for community social centers, and ensure access of community members to them – particularly children and young people.

7. Allocate sufficient funds to enable municipalities implement their projects and programs for children and young people, and reallocate available resources to maximize the benefits to children and young peoples.
8. Revise urban planning guidelines, and the Saudi building code to foster development of livable neighborhoods and urban environments suitable for children, and request the chairman of the National Team at MOMRA to circulate the outputs of this symposium and the papers presented on child adequate urban planning, among team members assigned with updating the Saudi code.
9. Increase participation of children and young people in city and municipal management through advisory committees, or councils, through which they could convey their ideas and ambitions, which should be considered when setting plans, programs and services.
10. Develop urban indicators and knowledge databases at the municipal level, that include economic and demographic characteristics, disaggregated by age, sex...etc, and utilize them when setting policies, programs and plans.
11. Organize cultural and social activities that enhance the development of childrens' personalities, while preserving the Islamic cultural heritage and traditions.
12. Urge municipalities, media and all concerned agencies to raise awareness about preserving public facilities and properties, and on the need to keep them clean and tidy, as well as providing periodic maintenance.
13. Highlight successful experiences and share knowledge that will inform responses to children's needs in Saudi cities.
14. Urge the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI) and MENA CPI to produce manuals that could assist municipalities make their cities more child friendly, and disseminate such literature through a regional symposium. AGFUND could support such an activity.
15. Establish an electronic network, under the umbrella of AUDI/CPI, that links cities and municipalities and facilitate raising awareness and sharing knowledge among members on providing services to children.
16. Cities and municipalities may request assistance from MENA CPI in the fields of capacity building, work methods, and sharing of international experiences.
17. Request AUDI to extend the duration of the CPI, to enable it accomplish its mission of improving the welfare of children and young people.

At the end, the participants conveyed their gratitude to H.R.H. Prince Meta'ab bin Abdul Aziz, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs for his patronage of the symposium, H.R.H. the Governor of the Eastern Region and H.H. Deputy Governor; H.R.H. Prince Talal bin Abdul Aziz for his continuous support of children's issues in the Kingdom and in the Arab World. The participants also thanked the Mayor of the Eastern Region and all his staff for their great efforts in hosting the symposium and facilitating its successful conclusion.