

STEFANIA ABAKERLI

Senior Urban Development Planner and Architect with 39 years of experience in green inclusive growth, integrated urban planning and service delivery, local government strengthening, jobs, creative cities and urban regeneration.

World Bank staff since 2002, managed and contributed to distinguished policy reforms, country strategies, national schemes, multi-sectoral projects, applied analytical work and institutional strengthening in and across Africa, Latin America, Southeast and Central Asia and the Middle East. Established track record of translating systemic problems into practical solutions, handling complex contexts and clients, nurturing strategic alliances, and leveraging scarce resources with high impacts on the ground.

Prior to joining the Bank, undertook policy and action-oriented research on urban poverty, lectured on Sociology of Urbanization at University, and managed own firm devoted to strategic development planning and urban regeneration across Brazil. At age 27, awarded as *“the model for a new generation of urban planners”* by the Brazilian Association of Architects and Urban Planners.

EDUCATION

2002 PhD in Development Studies

Institute of Social Studies – ISS, The Hague, The Netherlands

1998/1999 MSc in Development Planning (Sir Bartlett Scholarship and dissertation distinction)

Development Planning Unit – DPU, University College London – UCL, London, UK

1996 Master’s in International Policy

School of Foreign Policy and Sociology Foundation, São Paulo, Brazil

1989/1993 BSc in Urban Planning and Architecture (Dissertation distinction)

School of Architecture and Urban Planning, Mackenzie University, São Paulo, Brazil

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- ◆ Results achiever—extensive experience in developing innovative and multi-sectoral portfolio, and managing forward-looking programs, projects and ASAs with highest client ownership.
- ◆ Risk taker—creative problem-solver who experiments, restructures, mixes, learns from and nurtures talents and ideas and applies contextualized knowledge/practices that lead to change.
- ◆ Complexity manager—ability to articulate complex issues in simple ways to a wide variety of stakeholders leading to proactive actions and to quickly respond to ever-changing contexts.
- ◆ Collaboration promoter—strong interpersonal skills with clients, partners and teams, and ability to build long-standing alliances towards common goals and incremental long-term impacts.

BRIEF WORK HISTORY

Organization: World Bank, Washington D.C., USA
Date: 2002 – present
Current Position: Senior Urban Development Planner, South Asia Region

Core skills: Business Development, High-level Client Dialogue, Project Design and Management, Strategic ASA and Advisory Policy Support, Donors Coordination and Joint Programming

Achievements:

- ✓ Built from scratch a demand driven US\$ 1.2 billion in new Green Resilient Inclusive Development (GRID) & Culture in Development business in South Asia entailing multisectoral and multi-Global Practices (GP) projects and programs targeted to growing cities, shrinking rural settlements and at regional level, as well as a new generation of municipal development operations in Africa and across Latin America.
- ✓ Highest government ownership over analytical work, policy reforms, programs, projects and TAs that contributed to policy reforms, increased capacities, and improved budget allocation and delivery systems. Repeated requests for continued WBG advisory support and financing.
- ✓ Strengthened intra-governmental systems and multi-sectoral/multi-stakeholder collaboration, improving programming, targeting, and results particularly in volatile and institutionally dysfunctional contexts.
- ✓ Spatially aligned and leveraged fragmented initiatives and funds through the design and delivery of practical programs/projects and establishment of strategic partnerships across sectors/GPs and with development partners, bilateral donors, private investors and community organizations.

US\$ 2.1 billion portfolio of multisectoral regional, national and municipal development programs and projects in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, South East Asia and Pacific and Middle East.

Design and supervision of more than **35 loans** and **55 ASAs**, policy reforms and formulation/implementation of national schemes that delivered services and increased income/jobs to more than **550 million people**

Operational, analytical and policy advisory experience in **42 countries in all Bank regions:** Angola, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Maldives, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Panama, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, United Kingdom, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam

Main thematic areas of work:

1. Multisectoral Spatial Planning & Integrated Territorial Development

Led the design and managed first spatially led, asset-based and people-centered strategy for urban regeneration and for regional integration in South Asia, including applied analytical work, advisory policy support and formulation of multisectoral programs and lending projects. Interconnected various scales from broader regional governance, planning and cross-border connectivity to city-level planning, service delivery, job creation and urban regeneration, focusing on spatial inclusion, asset management, environmental sustainability and economic resilience.

Main accomplishments

- ✓ Policies and mindset change from immediate politically driven decisions to strategic multisectoral initiatives that unlocked existing physical and socioeconomic assets for prosperity and well-being in poorest villages, cities and sub-regions.
- ✓ Increased intra-/inter-governmental collaboration, leading to better programming, targeting and allocation of scarce resources, thus results. Informed donors own programming and harmonization, increasing development impacts.
- ✓ Brought together multisectoral teams (i.e., Social, Transport, Environment, Water, Governance, MTI/FCI, Gender, Jobs), external donors and partners (i.e., ADB, DFAT, UN-Habitat, UNDP, UNESCO, UNWTO, etc.) and knowledge institutions (i.e., MIT, Harvard, etc.) towards common goals and higher impacts.

Highlights

- 2021 REGIONAL Trade and Connectivity Programmatic Loans (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal)
BHUTAN COVID Crisis Response DPC
- 2020 REGIONAL Buddhist Circuit Development Program in South Asia – Phase 2
- 2018 GLOBAL FCPF/REDD+ EAP and SAR Project
- 2017 SAUDI ARABIA Al-Ula Cultural Landscape Development RAS
- 2016 REGIONAL Buddhist Circuit Development Program in South Asia
BHUTAN Guidance Note for Effective Large Infrastructure Investments and Delivery
- 2015 INDIA Iconic Sites Initiative, flagship initiative as part of Clean India Scheme
- 2015 INDIA HRIDAY National Urban Revitalization Program
- 2014 INDIA HPDPL Phase 2 Programmatic TA for Inclusive Growth
- 2012 BHUTAN Poverty and Social Impact Analysis of Bhutan Draft Heritage Sites Bill
- 2011 NEPAL Social Inclusion Action Program
INDIA National Demonstration Program on Heritage-based Inclusive City Development
- 2008 GLOBAL Economics of Asset-based Development ASA
- 2005 PERU Vilcanota Valley Rehabilitation and Management Project
ECUADOR Second Fiscal Consolidation and Competitiveness Growth SAL
- 2003 HONDURAS Regional Development in the Copan Valley Project
- 2002 ECUADOR Poverty Reduction and Local Rural Development – PROLOCAL

2. Green Prosperous Cities and Inclusive Urban Regeneration

Managed task teams for the design and supervision of innovative projects, analytical work and policy advisory support for increased prosperity in rapidly growing unplanned cities, shrinking rural settlements and sub-regions. Advised and contributed to task teams across GPs on the preparation and supervision of rapid response loans, policies and national schemes, and restructuring of problem projects.

Main accomplishments

- ✓ Practical (incremental and asset-based) operational model for green and inclusive development tested and mainstreamed at policies, programming and investment levels.
- ✓ Improved policies, government allocation and public delivery systems.
- ✓ Enhanced public and private collaboration as well as donor coordination, leveraging financing for innovation and more inclusive and sustainable service delivery and jobs creation in highly poor towns, cities, and sub-regions.

Highlights

- 2021 NEPAL Urban Governance and Infrastructure Project
- INDIA Madhya Pradesh Urban Development Project
- INDIA Jharkhand Municipal Development Project
- 2020 BHUTAN Nobgang Revitalization Project
- 2018 INDIA Uttar Pradesh Pro-Poor Tourism Development Project
- 2016 CHINA Hubei Jingzhou Historic Town Conservation Project
- 2015 THE PHILIPPINES Intramuros Urban Regeneration
- CHINA Shandong Confucius and Mencius Cultural Heritage Project
- 2014 INDIA 2nd Himachal Pradesh Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development DPL
- 2013 INDIA Himachal Pradesh Inclusive Green Growth and Sustainable Development DPL
- 2012 BANGLADESH Northern Areas Poverty Reduction Project
- INDIA National Rural Livelihoods Project
- INDIA Rajasthan Rural Livelihoods Project
- 2011 INDIA National Ganga River-basin Project, riverfront development component
- 2010 BRAZIL GEF Sustainable Transport and Air Quality Project
- COSTA RICA Puntarenas City-Port Project
- 2009 BRAZIL GEF Sustainable Transport and Air Quality Project
- 2008 BOLIVIA Lake Titicaca Local Sustainable Development
- ECUADOR Chimborazo Development Investment Project
- 2007 COSTA RICA Port-City of Limon Integrated Infrastructure Project
- BRAZIL APL 1 Para Integrated Development
- BRAZIL GEF Caatinga Region Conservation and Management
- 2006 HONDURAS Barrio-Ciudad Project
- 2005 BRAZIL Integrated Municipal Project – Betim Municipality

3. Local Government Strengthening and Decentralization

Led/contributed to the design and supervision of flagship operations delivered by multisectoral teams and first-of-its-kind initiatives, including the first decentralization project in post-conflict Angola, the first Bank-financed portfolios of municipal lending in Brazil and of local governance in Latin America, and the first Bank-financed inclusive urban regeneration projects in India. Advised CMUs, contributed to formulation of

Main accomplishments

- ✓ 100% transparency of national budgets and improved targeting and delivery of services to the poor based on users' feedback.
- ✓ More equitable allocation of state budgets for poor municipalities and its poorer dwellers.
- ✓ Enhanced local governments' capacity in integrated spatial planning for improved livability and economic diversification, municipal budgeting, and intra-governmental service delivery.
- ✓ Enhanced donors' harmonization through collaborative spatial planning, service delivery, jobs creation and local governance strengthening.

Highlights

- 2012 NEPAL Social Inclusion Program
- 2011 GUINEA Public Expenditure DPL 1
GUATEMALA Enhancing MSME Productivity Project
- 2010 ANGOLA Local Development Program – LDP
NEPAL Program to Promote Demand for Good Governance
- 2009 BOLIVIA Productivity and Job Creation Project
ECUADOR Programmatic HD Reform II
- 2007 PERU Results and Accountability – REACT DPL
- 2006 BOLIVIA Productivity and Employment Generation Project
ECUADOR Programmatic Human Development Reform Loan II
- 2005 ECUADOR 2nd Fiscal Consolidation and Competitiveness Growth SAL
ECUADOR Poverty Reduction and Local Development Project
COLOMBIA Displaced Persons Project
- 2004 ANGOLA 3rd Social Action Fund – FAS 3
ECUADOR Second Fiscal Consolidation and Competitive Growth Project
- 2003 ECUADOR Participatory Governance and Budget Transparency Initiative
- 2002 ECUADOR Poverty Reduction and Local Rural Development – PROLOCAL
ANGOLA 2nd Social Action Fund – FAS 2

4. Indicative ASAs and Publications

- 2021 REGIONAL “SAR Regional Integration: The Buddhist Circuit Strategy”, South Asian governments, World Bank, DFAT and ADB
- 2020 NEPAL “Development Plan for a Prosperous, Connected and Diverse Greater Lumbini Area”, Government of Nepal and World Bank
BHUTAN “Punakha-Wangdi Valleys Development Plan”, Royal Government of Bhutan and World Bank
- 2019 REGIONAL “Cultural Landscape Framework for Regional Development”, Royal Government of Bhutan and World Bank
- 2018 INDIA “Inclusive Urban Regeneration in India”, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India and the World Bank
INDIA “Swachh Iconic Places: A Compendium of Action Plans”, Swachh Bharat Mission, Prime Minister Office, Government of India, Collaborator
- 2017 BHUTAN “Tourism Policy Review”, Royal Government of Bhutan and World Bank
INDIA Economic Diversification ASA for the Mizoran Connectivity Project
- 2016 GLOBAL “Innovations and Good Practices in Poverty and Social Impact Analysis, 2010-16”, World Bank
INDIA Rajasthan Inclusive and Sustainable Growth ASA
INDIA Madhya Pradesh Inclusive and Sustainable Growth ASA
- 2015 INDIA “National Urban Regeneration Scheme”, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India
- 2014 INDIA Urban Regeneration ASA
GLOBAL “Reconnecting the City: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach”, UNESCO
- 2013 NEPAL “Migration and Entrepreneurship in NEPAL with a focus on Youth: An Analysis”, World Bank
- 2012 INDIA “Crafting India’s Economic Growth and Development”, DRONAH, New Delhi
BHUTAN “Poverty and Social Impact Analysis of Bhutan Draft Heritage Sites Bill”, World Bank and Royal Government of Bhutan
- 2011 REGIONAL “Inclusive Green Growth in South Asia: Regional Strategy for Improved People to People Connectivity and Assets Management”, World Bank
GLOBAL “Culture, Common Denominator for Development: 18 Successful Practices”, OAS, Collaborator
- 2009 GLOBAL Strengthening Citizenship through Upgrading Informal Settlements
LATIN AMERICA Local Governance Guidelines
BURKINA FASO Local Government Competition of Excellence Initiative
URUGUAY Social Inclusion Policy ASA
- 2008 ANGOLA Urban Land Policy ASA
GLOBAL Policies and Financing Instruments for Urban Regeneration
- 2006 REGIONAL Local Governance ASA
ANGOLA Public Expenditure Review focused on Decentralization
ANGOLA, ZAMBIA and THE PHILIPPINES Participatory Local Governance ASA
BRAZIL Participatory Budgeting ASA
- 2004 GLOBAL Capacity Development Framework for Local Governments Strengthening and Decentralization
LATIN AMERICA Portfolio Review and Guidelines for CDD Projects
- 2003 GLOBAL Urban Environment ASA

Organization: **A+H Strategic Development Planning, São Paulo, Brazil**
Date: 1993 – 2001
Position: Founding Partner

Technical and policy advisory support to national, state and local governments as well as non-profit and community organizations on strategic planning and green inclusive development across Brazil.

Highlights

- *Jaçanã Local Development Program, São Paulo* – Project Manager of this awarded multisectoral program for the revitalization of one of the largest low-income neighborhoods in metropolitan São Paulo.
- *Paraty Mirim Regeneration Project, Rio de Janeiro* – Project Manager, coordinated situational assessments and prepared strategies with technology centers to reverse the impacts of the unplanned urban growth of one of the first human settlements in Brazil.
- *Amapá Sustainable Development Policy* – Prepared guidelines for a greener and more inclusive development policy for this lagging state in northern Brazil.
- *São Sebastião Sustainable Development Strategy* – Facilitated participatory visioning and formulation of a sustainable development strategy for the municipality's greener growth.
- *Greenpeace New Vision for the Sustainable Development of the Amazon Region* – Facilitated the formulation of Greenpeace's policy for the protection of the Brazilian Amazon region in a context of rapid urbanization.
- *Egyptian Inclusive Urban Environmental Policy Research* (for Development Planning Unit, UK) – Assessed Cairo's urban programs nexus with slum upgrading, women empowerment and jobs, with a special focus on the Zabbaleen's communal solid waste management practices.

Organization: **JGP Socio-Environmental Consultancy, São Paulo, Brazil**
Date: 2000, part-time
Position: Consultant

Coordinator of field assessments in peri-urban low income areas and preparation of safeguards documentation for the provision of large infrastructure, as well as of establishment of innovative sustainable development initiatives targeting isolated communities across the Amazon basin.

Highlights

- *Social Impact and Environmental Assessment of the Bandeirantes Road Extension, São Paulo* – Assessed the socio-environmental impacts (ESIA) and vocational land use inducted by the extension of inter-state road on 11 municipalities and their low-income communities/slums affected, and prepared mitigation plans.
- *Involuntary Resettlement of People Affected by the Intersections of the Rodoanel* – Prepared action plan with mitigation measures for IADB to address social/resettlement and environmental impacts of the ring road intersections on affected low-income settlements and peri-urban populations settled along it in the west boundary of the city of São Paulo.
- *Natura NTFP Certification Program, Amazon* – Supported the establishment of this pioneer certification program for community-based forest operations sponsored by the largest cosmetic manufacturer and retailer in Brazil.

Organization: Centre for the Third Sector Studies, Getúlio Vargas Foundation, São Paulo, Brazil
Date: 1994 – 1996, part-time
Position: Policy Researcher

Impact assessment of central, state and local governments' urban development programs in peri-urban areas and support to the design of progressive public policies and CSR programs.

Highlights

- *Brazil Presidency's Solidarity Program* – Supported program design, co-leading assessment of national, state and local programs targeted to vulnerable families and youth-at-risk living in slums within the São Paulo metropolitan area.
- *Campinas Social Entities Federation* – Supported programming, researching the socioeconomic strategies and aspirations of poor communities living in the five largest slums at the northern fringe of São Paulo metropolitan area.
- *Santa Fé – Housing for Street Children Project* – Field coordinator of this multidisciplinary housing project in support to children and adolescents who live in the streets of São Paulo. Besides shelter, the project offered a package of mental health support to strengthen their self-esteem through creative therapeutics, life skills and internships.

Organization: Mackenzie School of Architecture and Urban Planning, São Paulo, Brazil
Date: 1990 – 1992, part-time
Position: Professor Assistant

Developed new syllabus for the University's course on Sociology of Urban Planning, combining theory and field research conducted in slums in the city of São Paulo. The course was adopted as proposed, unanimously considered an innovation by for the first-time exposing students to the ground reality and social responsibility of a new generation of urban planners in Brazil.

OTHER AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

2021 **Land Pooling**, World Bank, Washington D.C., USA
2016 **Leadership**, World Bank, Washington D.C., USA
2005 **Decentralization and Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations**, Washington D.C., USA
2004 **Mastering Negotiations: Building Dynamic Agreements**, JFK School of Government, USA
2004 **Economics in Comprehensive Development**, World Bank, Washington D.C., USA
2001 **FSC Certification Auditor**, Imaflora/Smartwood, Belém, Brazil
2000 **Certified Moderator for Design and Facilitation of Participatory Decision Making**, Brazil
1998 **Diploma in Gender Policy and Planning**, Development Planning Unit, UCL, UK

INDICATIVE AFFILIATIONS

- HARVARD KENNEDY SCHOOL, Alumna
- UN, Sustainable Development Goals Expert Working Group, Paris/Canada, Expert Member
- TURIN UNIVERSITY, Master in Cultural Projects, Italy, Senior Lecturer
- ICOMOS Economics of Heritage Committee, Core Member
- ASSOCIATION OF ARCHITECTS AND URBAN PLANNERS, Brazil, Associate