experience that can be useful to other cities interested in twinning.

Washington, D.C. and Dakar have taken initial steps this summer to explore the possibilities for a technical partnership. The mayors of the two cities, who have met twice since 1984, have agreed to expand their sister city relationship, begun in 1980.

Washington Mayor Marion Barry says that it is important to recognize that the responsibility for city services may be handled differently by each city. "In developing countries, the central government might be responsible for things like police, managing roads, and other activities in the city. In Washington, we are responsible for all our services, but we don't have the same financial resources as the U.S. government," he says. "We have to emphasize our limitations."

A team headed by the chief of administrative services of Washington visited Dakar for two weeks in June to discuss solid waste problems. Together with Senegalese officials, they designed a preliminary, phased program of technical cooperation that would begin with a clean-up operation in the city, followed by a reorganization of solid waste management operations. A third phase would involve equipment purchase, strengthening management procedures, and training local staff.

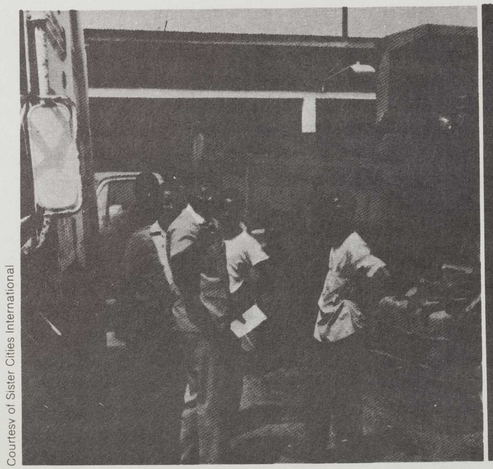
Monrovia, Liberia

Monrovia and the U.S. city of Dayton, Ohio, are working on the details of a technical twinning arrangement that focuses on solid waste management and maintenance of city equipment. The two municipalities have been sister cities since 1976. Although the earlier ties were mainly cultural, Dayton has provided some equipment for trash collection in Monrovia in the past.

Like many cities, Dayton has found that it is unable to spare staff for extended periods, so its personnel plan to do their work in short, three-week visits to Monrovia. Dayton will pay the staff salaries. Transportation and subsistence in Monrovia will be financed under an IDA-supported urban development project begun in Monrovia in 1982.

Bank project officer Benedetto di Zitti says that plans worked out by the two cities call for:

- Dayton's deputy city manager, who is the former director of public works, to assist in identifying landfill sites for solid waste, planning improved access to the sites, and developing routes and schedules for equipment.
- A heavy equipment mechanic from Dayton to help develop a preventive maintenance program for municipal equipment.
- The superintendent of fleet management in Dayton to assist inventory clerks and supervisors in Monrovia in setting up a system for keeping track of spare parts and streamlining a complicated ordering system for spares, which currently causes lengthy delays.



Courtesy of Sister Cities International

Department of Public Works employees in Monrovia, Liberia, standing near open bed dump trucks used to collect trash. Monrovia and Dayton, Ohio, are working on details of a twinning arrangement that focuses on solid waste management and maintenance of city equipment.

Editor's Note

In this issue, we describe the relatively new field of municipal twinning and look at several pilot efforts. One of the virtues of municipal twinning is that it can be designed to fit individual city needs. As a result, each effort requires innovation. Some are likely to work out very well. Others may encounter real difficulties. However, all are likely to provide useful lessons to other cities that are interested in twinning. We invite readers to let us know about additional examples of municipal twinning and other innovative approaches to urban technical assistance.

Other cities have worked out small-scale programs that target specific tasks that can be accomplished effectively without a large expenditure. Rochester, New York, and Bamako, Mali, have developed a technical partnership as part of their sister cities relationship. The technical cooperation, which began eight years ago, has included visits of about five weeks' duration by a French-speaking Rochester city planner (who provided advice in aerial surveying, traffic management, and sewerage) and a civil engineer to aid in solid waste and water purification.

The Bamako-Rochester program has received backing from Sister Cities International. The organization's Technical Assistance Program provides small grants to U.S. cities for transportation costs and basic living expenses for technicians going to Third World sister cities for specific projects.

- It may take many months for two cities to reach a twinning agreement. The terms must be agreed upon not only by technical staff, but by municipal and sometimes ministerial authorities, a process that cannot easily be rushed by those anxious to begin a given project. UE

Western Africa assistant director Bouhaouala says that his office's interest in municipal twinning grew out of a realization that, in many cases, traditional technical assistance—usually provided by individual experts or by consulting firms—was not working.

The price of expatriate services was driving project costs up considerably. Yet a review of Bank experience in sub-Saharan Africa that was prepared in 1983 indicated that technical aid frequently had done little to effect permanent improvements.

Individual consultants, Bouhaouala explains, often bring personal skills, but not operational experience or knowledge of how systems and institutions work. This is a problem, he says, when the objective "is to build institutions—not to provide short-term services to repair some buses, but to build the capability to maintain the buses after the expatriate leaves."

Officials in many developing countries have voiced frustration, saying that they have little to show for the money they have spent on technical assistance.

Advantages of twinning

Experience with twinning indicates a number of potential advantages.

- It tends to be less expensive than conventional methods. In many cases, the only cost for the advisers is their salary (typically much lower than individual expert or consultant salaries), transportation, and living expenses.
- The municipal staff members providing the technical assistance have direct, hands-on experience with day-to-day problems in their jobs at home that is comparable with the work of the people they are advising. The two parties can deal with each other as counterparts facing common problems.
- The technical assistants bring not only their own skills, but the know-how and experience of their institutions. They can bring manuals, budgets, accounting systems, and preventive maintenance programs used at home that can be adapted for use in the developing country.
- The twinning relationship is not limited to the individuals involved at a given time. It is a long-term partnership between two cities that can flourish long after specific advisers have completed their work and gone home.
- The long-term, city-to-city character of the partnership gives it a high degree of flexibility. The kind of assistance provided can change over the years, depending on a city's needs. At one point, a twin city might help with solid waste management. At another, it might provide assistance in transport
- Training is easily incorporated and can take varied forms, including local on-the-job training and special training programs, as well as visits by selected staff for on-the-job training in the city providing assistance.

Creating a Working Partnership

Finding a municipal twin can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Some cities have expanded, longstanding cultural relations with sister cities to include technical cooperation. This has the advantage of building on a history of friendship and interaction between the two cities. In some cases, associations of local authorities, such as the Washington, D.C.-based International City Management Association, have acted as intermediaries to help identify cities that might be able to provide technical assistance.

Features that a Third World city might look for in a potential twin include language compatibility and a serious commitment by local authorities to the partnership. Those who have worked with twinning suggest a number of other points to consider.

The basic agreement between the two local authorities should be broad—not limited to a specific task—and provide the basis for a long-term cooperative relationship.

Direct contact is important—both between top officials on both sides and with the individual technical people who will be providing assistance. Traveling to their city to meet them in their home environment can increase understanding about their operations and help in defining what kind of assistance might be most effective.

It is important to develop the twinning partnership one step at a time. Rather than starting with a grandiose, wide-ranging scheme, it is better to begin by identifying tasks that can be carried out competently and to build on that experience.

Lauren Cooper, a World Bank consultant who has examined past twinning efforts, has outlined a variety of practical considerations that can contribute to a successful technical partnership. In a publication, "The Twinning of Institutions: Its Use as a Technical Assistance Delivery System," Cooper suggests:

- Twinning works best when the supplier provides services within its areas of expertise (which usually will be operations and maintenance), recognizes its own limitations, and does not attempt to do tasks in other fields of specialization.
- Clear lines of communication between supplier and the local staff is essential to keep track of progress, call attention to problems, and provide feedback. Terms of reference should clearly specify lines of accountability.
- The contract should specify a phasing of the work to ensure periodic joint reviews and allow the work plan to be redesigned if necessary. Specifying the tasks to be done in terms of reference can help clarify what skills, or combination of skills, will be needed to implement the technical assistance.
- Potential partners should examine the appropriateness of the technology that is to be transferred and the applicability of the operating principles to be used. Do they fit the managerial, political, legal, and economic environment? Some adaptation may be required.

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