

The Year in Review: 2014

As 2014 comes to a close, we look back on some of the Clinic's notable projects in the fields of housing policy, social urbanism and urban regeneration. For more information and regular updates, visit our website or Facebook page.



The full report "Social Urbanism: Ideas for Israel from the Seventh World Urban Forum in Medellin" is now available for download in Hebrew. An English translation will be available soon.

Housing Policy

Policy makers are currently working on lowering housing prices, but most of the proposed benefits are directed towards those who are already earning enough to buy or rent a new apartment. At the Urban Clinic we focused on affordable housing for disadvantaged populations:

- **The Leadership Program for Affordable Housing**, run in collaboration by the **JDC Institute for Leadership and Governance** and the Ministry of Construction, is a multi-sector program created to promote a common language and develop a specialized toolkit for professionals in the housing field. As part of the program, the participants drafted recommended guidelines for an affordable housing law. **The Israel Affordable Housing Center's** published a report proposing more possible legislative measures.

- **The Committee for the War on Poverty's housing team** wrote a report recommending increasing the public housing supply, raising rental assistance, broadening the public housing eligibility criteria and creating an integrated program for rehabilitating disadvantaged neighborhoods. The report was written by representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services, the Housing Ministry, the National Insurance Institute, the public housing companies, social workers and the Union of Local Authorities, headed by Dr. Chaim Fialkoff and Dr. Emily Silverman. Click [here](#) for a review of the Urban Clinic's tour of public housing for senior citizens with Amigour.

- Little attention is given to the **unique aspects of the housing crisis in the Arab society**. The Coalition for Affordable Housing, in which the Clinic is a participant, published a report on its findings and recommendations that was presented to the Housing Cabinet. In the coming year we will work towards implementing the report's conclusions.

Social Urbanism

Social urbanism is an approach that integrates the goals of urban equity and social inclusion into urban planning policy.

The Urban Clinic saw an opportunity for broadening the Israeli participation in the **World Urban Forum of UN-Habitat**, the world's leading urban conference, attended by over 20,000 decision makers and professionals from all over the world. This year 23 representatives from Israel attended the forum in Medellin, Columbia, which served as the host city as well as an inspiring case study for urban social change.

Many participants returned with ideas for promoting social urbanism in Israel, and the Urban Clinic compiled these in a comprehensive report, presented at the **Knesset's Urban Lobby**, the Urban Forum at Tel-Aviv University, the Ministry of the Interior's urban forum as well as at various social urbanism lectures around the country.

Under inspiration from the world urban forum an ad-hoc group of Israelis including the urban clinic is now organizing an **Israeli urban conference** that is scheduled to take place in Acre in November 2015. The conference will be open to 1,000 participants, including city council members, planners, city management officials and anyone interested in promoting social urban values.

Urban Regeneration

In contrast to many western countries, Israel has no national plan to identify and strengthen deteriorating neighborhoods and cities do not receive national assistance in coping with high poverty areas. The Urban Clinic is working towards developing tools and policy in this field.

The Local Planner's Urban Renewal Forum brought together planners from eight local authorities and their regional-level colleagues in the Ministries of the Interior and Construction for a series of meetings. The Urban Clinic will soon be publishing a summary report with the support of the **Gazit-Globe Institute**, including recommendations for urban regeneration strategies, a designated municipal company for urban regeneration, the role of community workers in the regeneration process and more.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services inaugurated a **new course** providing community workers with tools for examining the social aspects of spatial planning. 25 community workers participated in the Ministry's course, coordinated by planner **Hagit Naali-Joseph** and guided by the Urban Clinic. A follow up course will be held in 2015.

Co-producing knowledge is an important way to gather and use local insights in the planning process. The clinic hosted a **workshop by leading researcher Liz Richardson** from the University of Manchester.

The mayors of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem together with the presidents of The Hebrew University and Tel Aviv-Yaffo Academic College addressed the urban clinic launch event on the topic of the **The university as an engine for urban regeneration**. This was also the theme of a social planning course, in which graduate students drafted alternatives for developing the dorms area as a way of bringing together the university and the local community. Naama Katz, the Clinic's coordinator this past year, was recently appointed the Director of the French Hill Community Council. We wish her great success in her new position and hope to collaborate with her in implementing the course's findings.