

## **Buffalo City-Sida Urban Development Programme Dissemination Seminar**

The exchange of good ideas, discussing of best practices, sharing of lessons learnt as well as discussions of new initiatives on broader development cooperation are some of the issues under discussion at the Buffalo City – Sida Urban Development Dissemination Seminar this week.

The Seminar, to be held in East London on Thursday June 14 will also give neighbouring municipalities as well as other stakeholders an incentive to embark on their own similar programmes, which aim to benefit local communities.

Sida's extensive development co-operation programme with Buffalo City was embarked upon in 2001. In February 2001, discussions between Sida and Buffalo City Municipality ensued on the bridging projects to be implemented as part of the extended partnership between the two parties within the area of Urban Development and Housing.

As a result of these discussions, Sida formulated a Partnership Program for consideration by the Municipal Council of Buffalo City. Prior to this, since 1999 Sida had been involved with the Comprehensive Urban Planning programme in the erstwhile King William's Town Local Council, later forming part of Buffalo City Municipality.

The Sida-BCM programme included core themes of co-operation agreed upon within the framework of a national inter-governmental agreement for a period originally intended to end in July 2004. Due to the positive outcome of the Urban Program it was extended to June 2007. Approximately 75MSEK (Swedish Kronor) was earmarked for projects. In the Partnership Programme a number of activities, programmes and projects were identified. They were based on a set of locally adapted guidelines which were as follows:

- The activities should be based on actual need in Buffalo City;
- Sustainable and tangible results shall be achieved as far as possible;
- Sida's support should be based on transfer of knowledge and capacity building for both political office-bearers and municipal employees, and thereby provide added value to the activities;
- Projects should as far as feasible be interlinked in order to achieve synergy effects and promote cross-sectoral and integrated planning approaches, within the framework of the municipality's IDP;
- Where appropriate, the implementation of the co-operation projects should also involve local resources and services;
- Some projects might be oriented towards direct investments but only if a direct interrelation with the more knowledge-based activities is evident; and finally,
- The programme shall fit into the general framework of Sida's Country Strategy.

The direct Sida support to Buffalo City ends this month, and with the evolution of the development co-operation model over the years and the concomitant reduction in direct material support from Sida to the structured programme of activities in Buffalo City, it has become necessary to find ways to ensure that the reciprocal benefits obtained from Sida are sustained beyond the duration of the direct Sida Urban Programme activities in Buffalo City.

Buffalo City with its twin sister, Gävle in Sweden have already committed to continuing with partnership activities through the new Swedish Association of Local

Authorities & International Development Agency (SALA/IDA) an agency funded by Sida. However, the several projects embarked on in the Sida-Buffalo City Urban programme from 2001 – 2007 represent some good examples of municipal development work and have benefited the Buffalo City Municipality significantly in terms of tangible outputs, lessons learned and capacity building among staff.