From the brink of collapse to rising stars: The cases of Bogotá and Medellín

Ambassador of Colombia, Mauricio Rodríguez-Múnera
City Health 2012 - 23 October
Plenary Session 3 – Urban health and well-being
Colombia: A few basic facts

- Total Population of 46.6 million (2012 est.)
- **Third** largest population in Latin America
- 27th largest population in the world
- 28% of the population under 15 and 54% under 29
- **Third** largest Latin American economy – USD 365 billion in 2011
Human Development Index 2004 - 2010

Bogotá D.C.

- Founded in 1538
- 2600 metres above sea level
- 7.7 million people, and 8.9 million in the city-region (19.1% of total)
- 30th largest city in the world (population)
- Most dense city in the western hemisphere
- 8th in competitiveness in Latin America by América Economía Magazine (2011)
Mayor Enrique Peñalosa’s principles

- A city friendly to people, in particular to children
- An urban environment for equality, social inclusion and democracy
- A dense and compact city
- A transport system fit for the desired city
- Transport policy has much to do with equality

Thus, we decided to invest the money in:

- Improvement or creation of public space and parks
- Public transport and bike-routes (Transmilenio, car-free day, private automobile restrictions)
- Housing for the poor (Metrovivienda) and improvement of marginal neighbourhoods
- Mega-libraries, schools, nurseries
Traditional public transport before Transmilenio 2000

- Inefficient and underutilized.
- Costly for the urban poor.
- Transport firms: inefficient and irresponsible.
- Aggressive competition in the streets.
- Heavy congestion of roads.
TransMilenio

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system to alleviate congestion and provide an efficient and cost-effective means of transportation, in particular for the poor

- Dedicated road lanes (troncales).
- One ticket (fare) to use in the whole system.
- Bus exchange in “paid-zones” to complete the whole trip.
- Performance capacity is comparable to that of heavy rail transit systems at a fraction of their capital cost.
- Can achieve capacities of approximately 50,000 passengers per hour in one direction.
- Daily demand approaches 1.5 million passengers.
- It has improved the quality of life of people and has increased urban productivity in Bogotá.
- It has proved to considerably reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
Transmilenio, Bus Rapid Transit
Reclaiming public space

Carrera 11 before and after

Carrera 15, before and after

Picture: Ernesto Granate
Creation or improvement of public space

Public space improvements and bike-paths

Juan Amarillo wetland park
Creation or improvement of public space
Integration of public space and mobility

Eje Ambiental Av. Jiménez & San Victorino plaza

Bike routes network and “ciclovia”
Bogotá D.C., Public Mega-libraries and public space
Bogotá D.C., Public Mega-libraries and public space

Four Mega-libraries were built to benefit thousands of citizens of all social classes and areas of the city.
Bogotá D.C., public libraries and public space

El Tunal
(Suely Vargas Nóbrega, Manuel Antonio Guerrero y Marcia Wanderley)
Bogotá D.C., public libraries and public space

El Tintal
(Daniel Bermúdez)
Bogotá D.C., public libraries and public space

Julio Mario Santodomingo
(Daniel Bermúdez)
Bogotá D.C.,

Urban regeneration
“Tercer Milenio Park”
Medellín

- Founded in 1616
- 1500 metres above sea level
- 2.4 million people, and 3.5 million in the metropolitan area (7.5% of total)
- 2nd largest city in Colombia (population)
Medellín

- Founded in 1616
- 1500 metres above sea level
- 2.4 million people, and 3.5 million in the metropolitan area (7.5% of total)
- 2nd largest city in Colombia (population)
Problems to solve in Medellin, according to Mayor SERGIO FAJARDO:

1. This is a deeply unequal society.
2. It has a long-standing social debt.
3. We have to make interventions that are really transformative.
4. Medellín, “The most educated”, is social transformation through education.
5. Because of violence we have built barriers within the city that have to be demolished (cultural, social, physical, economic).
Medellín and its “Social Urbanism”

• “Social Urbanism” is both a concept and a tool for social inclusion.
• It was a political decision to have the largest public investments in the poorest parts of the city.
• The goal was to do it with the best quality and the best designs.
• Material projects would be the means for starting an integral process of education, culture, a sense of belonging and self-esteem: INTEGRAL URBAN PROJECTS.
• A work of an interdisciplinary team of professionals working hand in hand with the community.
Public Library and Park León de Greiff
- Barrio La Ladera
Villahermosa, Comuna 8
(Giancarlo Mazzanti)
Parque Biblioteca Reyes de España - Barrio Santo Domingo Savio - Comuna 1
(Giancarlo Mazzanti)

Public Library and Park in the Comuna 1
Access to Comuna 1 by Metrocable (cable car) and electric escalators
Santo Domingo Savio Public School in Comuna 8
(ObraNegra Arquitectos: Carlos Pardo, Mauricio Zuloaga & Nicolás Vélez)

Picture: ObraNegra Arquitectos
La Independencia Public School

Castilla Public School, Comuna 5
(Marco Aurelio Baquero, Carlos Julio Calle, Marcela Holguín)
Las Mercedes Public School
(Juan Manuel Pelaez Freidel)

Public School in Aures, Comuna 7
San Javier Public School

Marco Fidel Suarez Public School, La Iguana
Public Library and Park in Barrio San Javier, Comuna 13
(Javier Vera)
Parque Tecnológico Explora

Orquideorama, Botanical Garden

Plaza de las Luces
Five Lessons

*Leadership
  • Vision
  • Execution

*Teamwork

*Social conscience

*Communication Skills

*Courage
Thank you for your interest

Ambassador Mauricio Rodríguez-Múnera
m.rodriguez@colombianembassy.co.uk