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## Vertreibungen Forced Evictions



# Editorial

Welche Formen Vertreibung und unfreiwillige Umsiedlung von ärmeren Stadtbewohnern annehmen können und welche Probleme damit verbunden sind, aber ebenso, welche Gestaltungsspielräume existieren und nutzbar gemacht werden können, um diese Prozesse abzumildern, einzugrenzen oder zu unterbinden – dies sind die Themen des vorliegenden TRIALOG-Heftes.

Angesichts klarer menschenrechtlicher Bestimmungen, welche gewaltsame Vertreibungen und Zwangsumsiedlungen verurteilen, stellt **Klaus Teschner** die Frage, warum sie so vehement, ohne Aufschrei der Öffentlichkeit und mit mangelndem Unrechtsbewusstsein der dahinter stehenden Akteure überall auf der Welt durchgeführt werden und die Realität der Slumbewohner/innen bestimmen. Das Beispiel Abuja in Nigeria zeigt **Deanna Fowler**, wie die großflächige Zerstörung von Slums und die Vertreibung ihrer Bewohner sinnlos deren Lebensgrundlagen zerstört, um einem vor 30 Jahren geschaffenen Masterplan Geltung zu verschaffen. Unrechtmäßige Enteignung und Räumung von Slums ist auch Thema des Beitrags zu Dhaka, Bangladesch. In diesem Fall sind städtische Großprojekte das Motiv. **Kirsten Hackenbroch, Mohammad Shafayat Hossain** und **Md. Asif Rahman** zeigen an diesem Beispiel die Existenz bedrohenden Folgen für die Betroffenen auf und schildern, wie Slumbewohner ihre Überlebens- und Einkommensstrategien nach einer Räumung anpassen. Während die ersten drei Beiträge menschenrechtliche Aspekte betonen, stellen **Somsak Phonpakdee** und **Thomas Kerr** von der Asian Coalition for Housing Rights basisorganisierte Alternativen zu Vertreibungen am Beispiel Kambodschas vor. Dort hat sich eine Bewegung armer Stadtbewohner/innen entwickelt, die durch Verhandlungen oft eine Verbesserung ihrer Viertel erreichen oder durch ihre aktive Beteiligung die Folgen eines Umsiedlungsprozesses abmildern. Ergänzt wird der Beitrag durch einen Aufruf von **Raquel Rolnik**, UN-Sonderberichterstatterin für das Recht auf Wohnen, in dem sie die fortgesetzten massiven Zwangsumsiedlungen von Armenvierteln durch die kambodschanische Regierung kritisiert. Dass Vertreibung oder Zwangsumsiedlung ärmerer Stadtbewohner nicht nur Themen des Globalen Südens sind, zeigt der Beitrag von **Carolyn Bender**. Sie schildert die Erfahrungen einer Wohnbaugenossenschaft, die im Zusammenhang mit den Olympischen Spielen 2012 in London umgesiedelt wurde und kommt zu dem Schluss, dass Versäumnisse im Umsiedlungsprozess zu einer Verschärfung der räumlichen Fragmentierung und der sozialen Polarisierung führten. In Buenos Aires steht Stadterneuerung unter dem Vorzeichen der Bewahrung des Kulturerbes und der Tourismusförderung. **Hilda Herzer, Mercedes Di Virgilio, Carla Rodríguez** und **Gabriela Merlinsky** schildern, wie unter dem Deckmantel „Kultur“ Stadterneuerung als Instrument der wirtschaftlichen Aufwertung der Innenstadt neue soziale Probleme erzeugt und vor allem wohlhabenderen Akteuren dient, die damit ihre wirtschaftlichen Interessen verfolgen. Am Beispiel des Slum Act in Südafrika zeigt **Marie Huchzermeyer** auf, wie die repressive Ausgrenzung unerwünschter armer Stadtbewohner sowie Vorkehrungen, um ihnen die Ansiedlung in der Stadt unmöglich zu machen, ja zu kriminalisieren, zunehmend Eingang in Gesetzesentwürfe erhalten, welche das Ziel „Städte ohne Slums“ auf unzulässige Weise interpretieren. Das Buch „Planet of Slums“ von Mike Davis erhielt Resonanz weit über die Fachszene hinaus. **Richard Pithouse** kritisiert Davis teils sehr pauschalisierende Beobachtungen und seine apokalyptische Rhetorik, die der von Eigeninitiative, Überlebenswillen, Hoffnung und Erfindungsgeist bestimmten Lebensrealität von Slumbewohnern und deren Selbstorganisationen in keiner Weise gerecht werden.

So steht oft gerade dieser externe Blick auf die Slums, der in Ihnen nur eine schnell auszumerzende Katastrophe sieht, hinter dem Exorzismus gewaltsamer Vertreibungen und Zwangsumsiedlungen. Doch nicht die Slums sind die Katastrophe, es ist ihre Zerstörung und Verhinderung, die neues Elend erzeugt und den städtischen Armen Möglichkeiten zur Selbsthilfe versperrt. Gleichen nicht die Bilder zerstörter Slums – etwa in Abuja – den Bildern verwüsteter Städte nach Hurrikans oder Tsunamis? Frei nach Bertolt Brechts „Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny“: „Wir brauchen keinen Hurrikan, wir brauchen keinen Taifun, denn was er an Schrecken tun kann, das können wir selber tun.“

This issue of TRIALOG focuses on the existing forms of forced evictions and involuntary resettlement of urban poor, the problems associated with these processes, as well as the existing and practical scope of manoeuvrability available to mitigate, curtail or prevent such processes.

In view of the defined human rights provisions that condemn forced evictions and forced resettlement, **Klaus Teschner** questions why these processes, which so influence the reality of slum dwellers, can be practiced throughout the world so vehemently – and to so little public outcry – by stakeholders with an underdeveloped sense of wrongdoing. Using Abuja in Nigeria as an example, **Deanna Fowler** documents how, in order to impose a master plan created 30 years previously, a large-scale destruction of slums and corresponding forced displacement of inhabitants was undertaken that senselessly destroyed the livelihoods of the slum inhabitants. The unlawful expropriation and eviction of slums is also the topic of the contribution on Dhaka, Bangladesh; in this case, major urban projects are the motivating factor. **Kirsten Hackenbroch, Mohammad Shafayat Hossain** and **Md. Asif Rahman** use the example to present the existentially threatening consequences for those involved and to also describe how slum dwellers adapt their survival and income-earning strategies following a forced eviction. Whereas the first three contributions emphasise the human rights aspects, **Somsak Phonpakdee** and **Thomas Kerr** (both of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights) use Cambodia as an example for presenting grassroots-organised alternatives to forced displacement. An urban poor movement has developed there which, through negotiation, often achieves settlement upgrading in situ or, through its active participation, helps mitigate the consequences of relocation processes. **Raquel Rolnik**, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, supplements the article with an urgent appeal criticising the continued and massive forced relocation of urban poor by the Cambodian government. That the expulsion or forced resettlement of impoverished urban inhabitants is not endemic to the south of the globe alone is revealed in the contribution of **Carolyn Bender**. She depicts the experiences of a housing cooperative that was resettled in connection with the upcoming 2012 Olympic Games in London and comes to the conclusion that the failures of the relocation process led to an intensification of spatial fragmentation and social polarisation. In Buenos Aires, urban renewal falls under the auspices of the preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of tourism. **Hilda Herzer, Mercedes Di Virgilio, Carla Rodríguez** and **Gabriela Merlinsky** describe how „culture“ was used as a smokescreen for urban renewal as an instrument for economic enhancement of the inner-city that created new social problems and primarily served to follow the economic interests of the wealthier stakeholders involved. **Marie Huchzermeyer** uses the KwaZulu-Natal Slums Act in South Africa to demonstrate how the repressive exclusion of undesired urban poor and the steps taken to help make their settlement within the city impossible if not illegal are finding increased inclusion in draft law that interprets the goal of „cities without slums“ in an impermissible manner. In his review of Mike Davis's book Planet of Slums, **Richard Pithouse** criticises Davis for the latter's in part highly generalised observations and apocalyptic rhetoric, both of which fail to do justice to the self-initiative, will to survive, hope and ingenuity of slum dwellers or their self-organisations. It is often this very external view of the slums – a way of seeing that only registers a catastrophe that must be quickly blotted out – that is behind the exorcism consisting of violent evictions and forced relocations. But slums are not the disaster: The catastrophe is their destruction and prohibition, which creates new miseries and obstructs the possibilities of self-help from the urban poor. Do the images of destroyed slums – such as Abuja – not resemble the images of cities devastated by hurricanes or tsunamis? To paraphrase Bertolt Brecht's Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny: „We don't need a hurricane, we don't need a typhoon, the horror that they do to us, we ourselves can do.“

Astrid Ley, Klaus Teschner

## Forced Evictions - Vertreibungen

Volume Editors: Astrid Ley, Klaus Teschner

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# Die unerträgliche Leichtigkeit der Vertreibung – Muster der Legitimation von Gewalt gegen städtische Arme

Klaus Teschner

## The Unbearable Lightness of Evictions – Patterns to Legitimise Violence against Urban Poor

Evictions and involuntary resettlements take place every single day and almost everywhere around the world. Recent forced mass evictions in Abuja (Nigeria), in numerous cities in Zimbabwe and in Yaoundé (Cameroon) illustrate that the practice is executed as a routine business by many local authorities. Most evictions are in clear contradiction to human rights. They leave hundreds of thousands of families homeless. Whereas natural disasters evoke world-wide empathy for the victims who are left without shelter, the fate of the urban poor whose homes have been destroyed tends to be ignored in the public media. This indifference and lack of public outcry seems to be a result of common thought patterns concerning the legitimacy of evictions. The common understanding of eviction as a legitimate practice is based on arguments such as the need to protect property rights, the illegality of urban poor settlements, or the need for modernising city centres. Displacements seem even to be a benefit, an adequate action for clearing unbearable social and sanitary conditions in the slums and which goes hand-in-hand with the idea that the poor should better all return to the countryside. This logic essentially „justifies“ the strong, global tendency to exclude the poor from urban areas. Urban social movements and NGOs seek to counter this justification of evictions by outlining the „right to the city“ and by recognising the self-organising potential of the poor in the city. Instead of criminalizing the poor for searching informal shelter in the city, it is the decision makers who need to be blamed for not providing adequate shelter and for not including the poor in the planning of urban renewal.

**1** Siehe dazu den ausführlichen Beitrag von Deanna Fowler zu den Zwangsräumungen und Siedlungszerstörungen in Abuja in dieser TRIALOG-Ausgabe, S. 10-16.

**2** Vor allem Gweru, Mutare und Victoria Falls.

**3** „Murambatsvina“ ist ein Wort in der Shona-Sprache und bedeutet „den Müll wegbringen“ oder „aufräumen“.

Vertreibungen und unfreiwillige Umsiedlungen sind eine tägliche Bedrohung für Millionen von Arme in den großen Städten der Welt. Bewohner städtischer Armenviertel, von der UN pauschal als „Slums“ tituliert, wurden in vielen Fällen bereits drei-, viermal oder öfters aus ihrem Haus vertrieben, das dann dem Erdboden gleichgemacht wird, weil dort eine andere Nutzung geplant ist oder weil die Stadt diesen Anblick nicht mehr ertragen will. Meist wird dabei auch ihre persönliche Habe zerstört. Die Betroffenen bleiben fast immer in der Stadt, entweder am gleichen Ort oder in einer benachbarten Siedlung. Wie nach Brandkatastrophen, der anderen großen Plage der städtischen Armen, bauen sie ihre Hütten nach dem Abriss beharrlich wieder auf. Oft wird dies jedoch unterbunden und die Haushalte werden zwangsumgesiedelt, auf Grundstücke am Stadtrand oder jenseits der Siedlungsgrenze, wo kaum Arbeitsmöglichkeiten existieren und die sozialen Netze zum Überleben nicht mehr gleichermaßen verfügbar sind.

Vertreibungen und Zwangsumsiedlungen sind alltäglich und scheinen auch für die Stadtverwaltungen eher Routine zu sein, *business as usual*, das ohne schlechtes Gewissen durchgeführt wird. Auch in den Medien finden sie kaum Resonanz. Dies gilt selbst für mas-

senhafte Vertreibungen, von denen Hunderttausende betroffen sind und bei denen riesige Siedlungsgebiete leegeräumt werden. Drei Beispiele aus Afrika mögen dies verdeutlichen:

a. Abuja, Hauptstadt Nigerias: zwischen 2003 und 2007 wurden hier – nach Schätzungen lokaler NGOs sowie der katholischen Ortskirche – etwa 800.000 Menschen aus ihre Häusern verjagt. Eine Vielzahl großer Armensiedlungen wurden komplett zerstört, mit allen Sozialeinrichtungen, Schulen, Kirchen, Moscheen. Es gab keine Entschädigungen und keine reellen Angebote zur Umsiedlung, vor allem nicht für den Großteil der Bewohner, die hier zur Miete wohnten. Es gab auch kaum internationale Medienresonanz. Die „unbestechliche Konsequenz“ des für den Hauptstadtbezirk zuständigen Ministers Nasir Ahmad el Rufai, mit der er endlich „dem Recht und dem Masterplan Geltung verschaffte“, wurde in der nigerianischen Presse sogar vielfach begrüßt. El Rufai zeigte sich stolz auf seine Taten und präsentierte sich gar als mutiger Kämpfer gegen Korruption und Gesetzesmissachtung.<sup>1</sup>

b. Harare, Bulawayo und andere große Städte in Zimbabwe<sup>2</sup>: Am 19. Mai 2005 begann die Regierung

Zimbabwe mit einer Kampagne zur „Säuberung der Städte“, die als „Operation Murambatsvina“<sup>3</sup> bekannt wurde und der fast flächendeckend alle informellen Märkte und Armensiedlungen, aber auch Hinterhofbaracken zum Opfer fielen. Nach UN-Berichten waren über 700.000 Menschen betroffen. Dies wurde zwar weltweit verurteilt, außerhalb Afrikas allerdings meist nur als Tat eines verrückten Diktators wahrgenommen. Fachleute aus den Planungsämtern des Landes hingegen – übrigens auch Amtskollegen anderer afrikanischer Länder – zeigten sich rundum überzeugt von der Legitimität der Operation und brachten das Argument vor, gerade in Deutschland oder Großbritannien würden doch illegal errichtete und menschenunwürdige Wohnhäuser in keinster Weise geduldet. Das Ganze sei eh zum Wohle der Armen, die nicht mehr in solch elenden Hütten wohnen sollten.<sup>4</sup> Wohin aber sollten sie jetzt gehen?

c. Yaoundé, Hauptstadt Kameruns: Seit 2005 werden zig-Tausende aus ihren Häusern vertrieben und ganze Stadtviertel abgerissen; insgesamt sind schon weit über 100.000 Menschen betroffen. Es gibt auch hier fast keine Resonanz in den internationalen Medien. Der von der Zentralregierung eingesetzte Regierungsbeauftragte für die Hauptstadt, Gilbert Tsimi Evouna, der diese massiven und entschädigungslosen Vertreibungen verantwortet, erklärt, Yaoundé umfassend modernisieren zu wollen. Er habe von Präsident Biya diese Mission übertragen bekommen und wolle sie bis zum Jahr 2010 auch vollenden. 2009 werde deshalb furchtbar werden. Aber auch Baron Haussmann sei ja einst in Paris für die Abrisse kritisiert worden, die schließlich das von allen bewunderte Paris hervorgebracht haben. Im übrigen mache er das nicht aus persönlichem Interesse sondern zum Wohle der Stadt.<sup>5</sup>

### Bei bestem Wissen und Gewissen...

Diese Beispiele zeigen, dass solche Vertreibungen offensichtlich mit reinstem Gewissen und bei vollem Bewußtsein der dafür verantwortlichen Akteure vollzogen werden. Auch Mugabe's Befehl zur „Operation Murambatsvina“ sollte nicht einfach als sadistische Idee eines irren Diktators missverstanden und abgetan werden. Die Operation könnte auf eine Warnung des Geheimdienstes zurückgehen, es braue sich auf enteignetem Farmland um die großen Städte ein gefährliches Gemisch aus städtischer Armutsbevölkerung mit oppositionellen Tendenzen und gewachsener Hausmacht der regierungsnahen Veteranen heran, welche dieses Land illegal parzelliert hatten. Offensichtlich war die Aktion also als Schlag gegen die Opposition und Denkzettel für



die zu selbstbewusst gewordenen Veteranen gedacht. Zudem scheint es, dass die mit der Räumung beauftragten Lokalverwaltungen die Gelegenheit nutzten und in eigener Sache kurzen Prozess auch mit anderen Armensiedlungen und informellen Straßenmärkten machten, die ihnen lange schon ein Dorn im Auge waren.

Man könnte sagen, dass etwas Skrupellosigkeit dazu gehört, Leute aus ihren Häusern zu vertreiben und ihnen Haus und Habe zu vernichten. Aber ganz offensichtlich ist Sadismus oder Hass hier nicht die Antriebsfeder. Diejenigen, die dies anordnen, werden dafür von vielen Seiten gelobt und sind scheinbar ernsthaft davon überzeugt, letztlich doch eine gute, legitime, ja sogar mutige Tat zu vollbringen, also die Welt etwas besser und ordentlicher zu machen. Angesichts des tausendfachen Leids der Betroffenen scheint dies ein absurder Gedanke. Ein humanistischer Ansatz würde solche „Kollateralschäden“ zur Durchsetzung eines Prinzips – etwa von Recht und Ordnung – nicht zulassen. Auch menschenrechtlich ist dies klar verurteilenswert.

### Vertreibungen – Menschenrechtsverletzung oder staatliches Kavaliersdelikt?

Die Allgemeine Erklärung der Menschenrechte und der Pakt zu den wirtschaftlich, sozialen und kulturellen Rechten, den „WSK-Rechten“, wurden von fast allen – auch den oben erwähnten Staaten – unterschrieben und ratifiziert, sind also auf zwischenstaatlicher Ebene als verbindliche Leitlinien staatlichen Handelns anerkannt. Staaten, die solche Regeln systematisch und in großem Maßstab verletzen, würden gemeinhin von der internationalen Gemeinschaft als Unrechtsstaaten gebrandmarkt und müssten dadurch erhebliche Nachteile erleiden – nicht nur auf diplomatischer Ebene: auch wirtschaftlich, kulturell, sportlich etc. Bei der Vertreibung von Armen aus den Städten und der Zerstörung ihrer selbst aufgebauten Wohnviertel scheint dies jedoch nicht gültig zu sein.

◀ Miloon Kothari, former UN Special Rapporteur for adequate housing addressing evictions in Abuja during World Urban Forum 2006 in Vancouver, Canada / Miloon Kothari, früherer UN Sonderberichterstatter für das Recht auf Wohnen spricht auf dem Weltstadtforum in Vancouver 2006 zu den Vertreibungen in Abuja  
Photo: Habitat International Coalition

4 Persönliche Gespräche des Autors im Planungsamt von Bulawayo, Mitte November 2005.

5 Interview von Gilbert Tsimi Evouna in der landesweiten englischsprachigen Tageszeitung Cameroon Tribune am 23. Juli 2008. In der Originalfassung heißt es: „...those of our citizen living abroad appreciates and congratulates me for the great job done in Yaoundé. Definitely I don't know what people like. It's true that the human being is strange; most of them are nihilist, supporters of nothingness. Anyway, the head of state gave me a mission. He placed his seven-year term of office in the sign of great achievements. Then, I have to present to him my report concerning my achievements before 2010. The year 2010 is almost there. Yaoundé citizen most acknowledge that in 2009 I will accelerate the job started, they have to be ready for more sacrifice. I repeat that by 2009 it would be terrible because we have to succeed. When you arrive in Paris, perhaps you don't know the story, sir Haussmann, the founder of this beautiful city was attributed all names of birds. When he had to destroy a house, he did it. When you walk along streets of Paris, you can easily admire boulevard Haussmann... Anyway, what I am doing is for the Yaoundé city interest, not for me.“

## 6

CESCR - Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (1998) *General comment 7. The right to adequate housing (art. 11.1 of the Covenant): forced evictions*, United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Geneva, Sixteenth Session of CESCR 1997, 20 Mai 1997; enthalten im UN Dokument E/1998/22, Annex IV.

## 7

Miloon Kothari, UN Special Rapporteur *“Basic principles and guidelines on development based evictions & displacements”* UN Dokument E/CN.4/2006/41. [www.ohchr.org/english/issues/housing/annual.htm](http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/housing/annual.htm)

## 8

Im Jahr 2000 wurde Miloon Kothari, ein indischer Architekt, zum „UN-Sonderberichterstatter für angemessenes Wohnen als Bestandteil des Rechts auf einen angemessenen Lebensstandard“ ernannt. Ihm folgte im Mai 2008 Raquel Rolnik, eine brasilianische Urbanistin, als neue UN-Sonderberichterstatterin mit wieder sechsjährigem Mandat.

## 9

Das HIC- Netzwerk <[www.hic-net.org](http://www.hic-net.org)> hat derzeit weltweit etwa 250 aktive Mitgliedsorganisationen (NGOs, Basisbewegungen, Mietervereine etc.) mit einer starken Konzentration der Netzwerkaktivitäten auf Lateinamerika sowie Afrika. In Asien existiert parallel dazu die Asian Coalition of Housing Rights (ACHR) mit nur punktuellen Bezügen zu HIC. Die thematische Substruktur HIC-HLRN (Housing and Land Rights Network) <[www.hlrn.org](http://www.hlrn.org)> unterhält ein Koordinationsbüro in Kairo sowie ein Regionalbüro in Delhi, Indien.

▶ Yaoundé, Cameroon; forced evictions in 2007 / Vertreibungen in Yaoundé in 2007  
Photo: collectif des déguerpis

Nun könnte vermutet werden, dass die menschenrechtlichen Bestimmungen in diesem Bereich nicht eindeutig seien und es nicht erlauben würden, klar zu unterscheiden, in welchen Fällen bei einer unfreiwilligen Umsiedlung oder Vertreibung nun eine Menschenrechtsverletzung vorliege oder nicht. Weiterhin könnte vermutet werden, Verletzungen der WSK-Rechte insgesamt oder des hier vorrangig berührten Rechts auf Wohnen würden im Verhältnis zu anderen Menschenrechten als weniger wichtig eingeschätzt. Nach den klaren Vorgaben des UN-Menschenrechtssystems lässt sich jedoch keine dieser Vermutungen bestätigen. Gewaltsam durchgeführte Vertreibungen und Umsiedlungen werden im Allgemeinen Kommentar No. 7 der UN zum Recht auf Wohnen eindeutig als schwerwiegende Verletzung von Menschenrechten beschrieben.<sup>6</sup> Hier ist bereits definiert, unter welchen Umständen unfreiwillige Umsiedlungen gerechtfertigt sein können und wie sie dann durchgeführt werden müssen, um keine Verletzung der Menschenrechte darzustellen. Bekräftigt und weiter detailliert wurde dies durch die 2007 von der UN-Vollversammlung verabschiedeten Richtlinien (*guidelines*) für entwicklungsbezogene Vertreibungen und Umsiedlungen.<sup>7</sup>

In den oben genannten Fällen der massiven Vertreibungen in Abuja, Harare oder Yaoundé werden die hier klar festgelegten Kriterien für menschenrechtskompatible Umsiedlungen nicht erfüllt. Weder waren diese Umsiedlungen unvermeidlich aus technischen Gründen oder zur Risikovermeidung, noch wurden Alternativen zur Umsiedlung ernsthaft geprüft und mit den Betroffenen abgestimmt. Zudem wurden den umgesiedelten Haushalten in keinem der Fälle akzeptable Alternativen geboten und der Umsiedlungsprozess war jeweils weit entfernt von menschenrechtlichen Mindeststandards.

Könnte es etwa sein, dass solche Menschenrechtsverletzungen nicht oder zuwenig dokumentiert sind? Das ist jedoch ebenso nicht der Fall. Die UN-Son-



derberichterstatterin für angemessenes Wohnen<sup>8</sup>, die Habitat International Coalition (HIC) mit ihrem Netzwerk zu Haus- und Landrechten (HIC-HLRN)<sup>9</sup> sowie das Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE)<sup>10</sup> sind hier besonders aktiv und mit Kontakten oder Vertretungen in allen Kontinenten auch stets gut informiert. Sie dokumentieren seit Jahrzehnten ihnen bekannt werdende Verletzungen von Menschenrechten in diesem Bereich durch Systematisierung lokaler Berichte sowie durch eigene *fact finding missions* und veröffentlichen diese Information in Jahresberichten, in thematischen Dokumenten und in aktuellen Stellungnahmen, auch vor der UN. Sie finden nur kaum Gehör.

Festzustellen bleibt also, dass die permanent von Regierungen auf allen Kontinenten – auch in Europa oder Nordamerika – durchgeführten Zwangsräumungen und Umsiedlungen in einer Vielzahl der Fälle nach den international festgelegten Kriterien eindeutig schwere Verletzungen von Menschenrechten darstellen. Hier gibt es eigentlich nichts zu bagatellisieren und zu beschönigen: dies ist ein Skandal. Aber es scheint die Öffentlichkeit und die Medien kaum zu berühren. Deshalb wenden wir uns kurz der Frage zu, was öffentliche Empathie erzeugt und als skandalös empfunden wird und was nicht.

### Wann erwecken „menschengemachte Tsunamis“ Mitleid und Empörung?

Die Bilder der Verwüstung und das menschliche Leid in den zerstörten Siedlungen gleichen den Bildern und dem Leid nach einem Erdbeben oder einem Wirbelsturm. Es sind – an den Schäden gemessen – „menschengemachte Tsunamis“. Auch wenn hier zum Glück sehr selten Menschenleben zu beklagen sind, so werden doch viele Existenzen zerstört und Leute ins Elend gestürzt. Trotzdem gibt es bei massenhaften Zwangsräumungen meist keinen Aufschrei der Weltöffentlichkeit, keine Welle der Empathie und keine Spendenbereitschaft, wie sie etwa den Überlebenden eines Erdbebens oder eines Wirbelsturms zugute kommt.<sup>11</sup>

Die Ausnahme war der Fall Zimbabwe, wo die internationale Entrüstung vor dem Hintergrund der Isolierung des Mugabe-Regimes stattfand und wo die Zerstörung von „Slums“ und die Vertreibung der dortigen Armen Eingang in die Medien fand. Es scheint jedoch so, dass nicht das Unrecht gegen städtische Arme Medieninteresse erzeugte, sondern primär die lustvolle Bestätigung des Bildes eines afrikanischen Schurkenstaats. Denn zur gleichen Zeit zeigte sich die Weltöffentlichkeit indifferent gegenüber dem Schicksal der 800.000

Menschen, die aus ihren Siedlungen in Abuja vertrieben wurden – unter ebenso brutalen Vorzeichen. Hierzu gab es so gut wie keine Medienberichte. Dies sollte das Publikum also nicht interessieren.

### Die Indifferenz der Diplomaten

Bezeichnend war die Reaktion des Diplomatischen Corps auf die Vertreibungen in Abuja. Das Bischöfliche Hilfswerk MISEREOR hatte sich, alarmiert u.a. vom katholischen Erzbischof Dr. John Onaiyekan, seit April 2006 mehrfach an das deutsche Außenministerium und die deutsche Botschaft gewandt, um einen diplomatischen Protest wegen der gerade stattfindenden Vertreibung mehrerer Hunderttausend Menschen zu erreichen.<sup>12</sup> Die Botschaft in Abuja ließ mitteilen, angesichts des „Vorwurfs von Zwangsräumungen“ sei festzustellen, dass es sich hier lediglich um „Abrissverfügungen für illegal errichtete Bauwerke“ handle und dass sich die Regierung sehr wohl um die Armen bemühe.<sup>13</sup> Skurril ist, dass dies fast wörtlich die Begründung des Regimes in Zimbabwe zu den dortigen Zwangsräumungen wiedergibt. Trotz Nachhakens des Hilfswerks und des Erzbischofs kam es zu keiner Protestnote.

Unter dem Eindruck dieser Indifferenz auf diplomatischer Seite und auf Seiten der weltweit operierenden Medien und Nachrichtendienste erscheint es angebracht, einmal grundsätzlich die Frage zu stellen, welche Faktoren und Denkmuster zur Gleichgültigkeit, zur Akzeptanz oder gar zur Sympathie mit solchen Menschenrechtsverletzungen führen könnten.

### Nein zur Bedrohung des Paradieses! Aber wen kümmert die Zerstörung „der Hölle“?

Ein erstes Erklärungsmuster bietet sich durch die Tatsache, dass die Vertreibung aus Dörfern mit weitgehend autarker Lebensweise – etwa bei der Planung von Staudämmen oder Freihandelszonen – weitaus mehr Bestürzung und Entrüstung evoziert als die Räumung städtischer Armutsviertel. Mit Dörfern werden – in der kollektiven Imagination – intakte, selbst lebensfähige Lebensräume assoziiert, kleine Paradiese, die geschützt werden sollten. Im Falle von städtischen Armsiedlungen, die als „Slum“ alle negativen Assoziationen wecken, die „die Hölle“ auf Erden zu sein scheinen, scheint deren Verschwinden kein allzu beklagenswerter Verlust zu sein. Deshalb gelingt es den Betreibern von Zwangsräumungen auch vielfach, für die Zerstörung von „Slums“ Beifall zu erhalten. Die Assoziation der „zerstörten Hölle“ wird jedoch stets durch weitere Argumente untermauert, die im Folgenden beispielhaft aufgeführt sind.

### Typische Denkmuster zur Legitimation von Vertreibungen

Ogleich je nach Gegebenheit verschiedene Rechtfertigungen für die Räumung und Zerstörung von Armenvierteln präsentiert werden, so lassen sich doch in diesen Erklärungen typische Denkmuster wiederfinden, die solchen Maßnahmen – trotz der meist eingeräumten „menschlichen Härte“ dieses Prozesses – den Anschein von Legitimität geben sollen.

- 1. Argument: Die armen Leute haben doch gar kein Eigentumsrecht auf diese Flächen.** Die Grundstücke, die Flächen die geräumt wurden, sind nicht das Eigentum der Leute. Deshalb müssen sie einsichtig sein und verschwinden, wenn die rechtmäßigen Eigentümer oder der Staat das wollen, weil etwas anderes mit der Fläche geplant ist. Die Leute müssen auch nicht entschädigt werden, sie waren ja keine Eigentümer.
- 2. Argument: Die Siedlungen waren illegal; dort zu siedeln verletzt das Recht, verletzt Baubestimmungen, verletzt Bebauungspläne, ist kriminell.** Es handelt sich bei den zerstörten Häusern um illegale Bauten, Bauten ohne Baugenehmigung, die abgerissen werden mussten. Die Häuser sind ohne Genehmigung errichtet und verletzen ökologische, planerische, gestalterische oder auch Sicherheitsregeln. Die Leute, die solch eine Bebauung außerhalb der Regeln unterstützen und fördern, etwa illegale Landunterteiler oder die Organisatoren von Landbesetzungen, sind kriminell.
- 3. Argument: Die Städte haben doch das Recht, sich zu modernisieren, die Armen können da nicht im Weg stehen!** Die Städte haben die Notwendigkeit, neue Infrastruktur im Interesse der Gesamtstadt zu erstellen, die Verkehrsinfrastruktur auszubauen, Großprojekte zu entwickeln etc. Die Hüttsiedlungen folgen archaischen Gesetzen der Selbstorganisation; sie widersprechen dem rationalen Muster moderner Städte, sind in sie nicht wirklich integrierbar.
- 4. Argument: Innerstädtischer Boden, und gerade in dieser Lage, ist doch viel zu wertvoll für die Armen!** Die Bodennutzung muss den Marktgesetzen folgen. Das freie Spiel des Marktes sorgt für eine gesellschaftlich optimale Allokation der Nutzungen im vorhandenen Raum. Ein Eingriff in diese Bodenvermarktung führt zur Marktverzerrung und hemmt so die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung der Stadt und des Landes.
- 5. Argument: Städtische Slums sind doch eh nicht zu verbessern; sie sind chronische Brennpunkte von Elend und Kriminalität. Es ist daher gut, wenn sie verschwinden.** Für die Leute müssen eben andere Lösungen gefunden werden oder sie

### 10

Das Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, COHRE hat seinen Hauptsitz in Genf sowie Regionalbüros in den verschiedenen Kontinenten; <[www.cohre.org](http://www.cohre.org)>.

### 11

Ein „Mangel an Handlungsoptionen“ dient Medienleuten oft als Begründung, warum dies das Publikum nicht interessiere. Die Handlungsoption des Spendens ist tatsächlich bei Vertreibungen nicht gegeben, obwohl Nothilfe auch hier dringend notwendig wäre. Sie wird in der Regel den lokalen Kirchen überlassen. Die Ereignisse sind weit weg, die Zusammenhänge undurchschaubar, die Lebenssituation der dortigen Leute schwer nachempfindbar. All dies trifft aber auch auf Fälle zu, wo trotzdem Empathie entsteht – durch einfühlsame Berichte, entsprechende Bilder etc.

### 12

Pressemitteilung Misereors vom 28.04.2006 sowie mehrere Anschreiben und Stellungnahmen Misereors an das Auswärtige Amt und an Außenminister Dr. Steinmeier im Juni und Juli 2006.

### 13

Bericht der Deutschen Botschaft in Abuja an das Auswärtige Amt vom 19.06.2006. Unter anderem wird hier ausgeführt, dass „den Einwohnern rechtzeitige Räumungsbescheide zugegangen seien, die allerdings ohne Beachtung geblieben seien und sich die Betroffenen nun nicht beschweren dürften, keinen anderen Wohnraum zur Verfügung zu haben.“ Damit wird die zynische Aussage von Minister El-Rufai kommentarlos wiedergegeben und im Folgesatz bekräftigt: „In Abuja dürften diese behördlichen Angaben auch zutreffen.“ Weiter schreibt die deutsche Botschaft: „Grundsätzlich ist sich die (nigerianische) Regierung der desolaten Lage eines Großteils der Bevölkerung bewusst und das grundlegende Ziel des Regierungshandelns geht erklärmaßen dahin, diese Lage grundlegend zu verbessern.“

## 14

Argumentiert werden kann beispielsweise mit der „angemessenen Lage“ als Element des Rechts auf Wohnen, siehe Punkt f. des Allgemeinen Kommentars Nr. 4 des CESCR zum Recht auf Wohnen.

## 15

Die Idee eines „Rechts auf Stadt“ geht auf eine Veröffentlichung des französischen Philosophen Henry Lefebvre (Lefebvre, Henry „Le Droit à la ville“, Anthropos, Paris, 1968) zurück. Die ursprüngliche Idee war keine Neudefinition menschenrechtlicher Instrumente, sondern ist als Vorschlag für die Entwicklung einer Utopie zu verstehen, die sozialen Kämpfen in der Stadt als Orientierungsrahmen dienen kann. Siehe unter anderem die Entwürfe für eine „World Charter for the Right to the City“, die auf dem World Urban Forum in Barcelona (October 2004), auf dem World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (Januar 2005) sowie zuletzt auf dem World Social Forum Ende Januar 2009 in Belem diskutiert wurden. Der aktuell diskutierte Text ist zu finden unter: <[www.hic-net.org/document.asp?PID=62](http://www.hic-net.org/document.asp?PID=62)>

## 16

Cernea, Michael M.: „Involuntary resettlement in development projects: policy guidelines in World Bank-financed projects“; World Bank technical paper No. 80, p.25. Dort heißt es: „...squatter communities slated for removal must receive alternative locations for housing although they may lack the legal title or rights to their land (or other property) that would ensure their compensation.“ <http://rru.worldbank.org/Documents/Toolkits/Highways/pdf/91.pdf>

## 17

Das Recht auf Eigentum, ein in den bürgerlich-kapitalistischen Gesellschaften dominierendes Recht, steht stets in latentem Konflikt mit sozialen Rechten, ökologischen Rechten oder etwa auch Mieterrechten.

sollen zurück aufs Land gehen; dahin wo sie hergekommen sind.

- 6. Argument: Slums sind ein unendliches, fast unlösbares Problem – es ist nur gut, wenn eine Regierung einmal klar und mutig durchgreift, um sie zu beseitigen.** Sobald wir hier Kompromisse machen und uns in kleinteiligen Lösungen verlieren, wachsen die Slums überall neu wie Pilze aus dem Boden. Hier sind radikale Lösungen nötig, um das Problem endlich einmal grundlegend anzugehen und Ordnung in der gesamten Stadt herzustellen.
- 7. Argument: Es ist eh besser, wenn die Leute aufs Land zurückkehren. In den städtischen Slums werden sie nur unglücklich.** Die Leute haben es sich nicht gut genug überlegt, dass sie in der Stadt nur im Elend leben werden. Auf dem Land können sie sich selbst versorgen und unter viel besseren ökologischen und sanitären Bedingungen leben. Das Wachstum der großen Städte muss begrenzt werden und die Zerstörung von Slums könnte unter anderem die positive Nebenwirkung haben, weitere Zuwanderer abzuschrecken.

### Arme raus aus der Stadt?

Die Kombination solcher Denkmuster und der von Kapitalinteressen dominierten Entwicklung der großen Städte führt dazu, dass Vorhaben zur städtischen Modernisierung, von denen doch gerade die Armen profitieren sollten, meistens in deren gewaltsamen Vertreibung gipfeln. In der Logik des dritten Arguments scheint Verbesserung nur in der Bekämpfung des „nicht mehr zeitgemäßen“ Verhaltens der Armen realisierbar zu sein. Konsequenz ist: Armut wird in immer größere Distanz zur Stadt umgesiedelt, oft 30 oder 50 km entfernt, dort wo Grundstücke billig sind, wo die Leute jedoch von Sozialkontakten oder Einkommensquellen abgeschnitten sind. Menschenrechtliche Instrumente sind nur beschränkt wirksam in diesem Punkt<sup>14</sup> und offensichtlich nicht stark genug, um diese Tendenzen abzubremsten. Oft wird bei weitgehender Einhaltung menschenrechtlicher Bestimmungen trotzdem vertrieben und nur der Transfer in das Niemandsland außerhalb der Stadt „menschenrechtskonform“ bzw. etwas humaner gestaltet.

Angesichts der viel tiefer sitzenden Denkmuster, die eine Ausgrenzung der Armen und damit Vertreibungen generell als legitim erscheinen lassen, scheint es daher nicht ausreichend zu sein, allein mit einer menschenrechtlichen Argumentation gegen die Zerstörung von Armensiedlungen in der Stadt angehen zu wollen. Solche Denkmuster müssen dezidiert und gezielter einzeln adressiert werden; die dahinter stehenden Interessen müssen benannt und hinterfragt

werden. Letztlich ist dies die Auseinandersetzung um das „Recht auf Stadt“, eine Debatte, die seit mehreren Jahren von städtischen Sozialbewegungen und NGOs in Europa und Lateinamerika initiiert wurde und seit kürzerer Zeit – mit teils anderen Vorzeichen – auch in Nordamerika und in anderen Kontinenten intensiver geführt wird.<sup>15</sup>

### Alle haben das Recht auf ein gutes Leben in der Stadt!

Ich befürchte, dass Leser/innen bei einem oder mehreren der oben aufgeführten Argumente zur Rechtfertigung von Zwangsräumungen innerlich zugestimmt haben. Dies würde die ideologische Stärke dieser Argumente unterstreichen, mit denen eine Vertreibung städtischer Armer legitim erscheinen soll. Den sieben Argumenten seien deshalb sieben Erwiderungen direkt gegenübergestellt.

- 1. Erwidern: Eigentum ist keine Voraussetzung für Bleiberechte.** Für das Recht auf Entschädigung oder Ersatzunterkunft bei Umsiedlungen ist es unerheblich, ob die Leute formelle Eigentumstitel besitzen oder nicht. Dies erkennt selbst die Weltbank an.<sup>16</sup> Arme Zuwanderer erwerben meist nur Besitzrechte nach traditionellen Regeln oder in informellen Rechtssystemen. Viele sind Mieter, auch in den Armenvierteln. Ihre Vertreibung ohne Ersatzunterkunft ist immer menschenrechtswidrig.<sup>17</sup>
- 2. Erwidern: Solange den Armen kein Zugang zu angemessenen Wohnmöglichkeiten in der Stadt legal und ökonomisch ermöglicht wird, ist es nicht legitim, sie für die Informalität, mit denen sie ihr Recht auf Wohnen realisieren, zu bestrafen.** Aspekte wie Standsicherheit, Katastrophenrisiken oder Gesundheitsgefährdungen sind natürlich sorgfältig abzuwägen – aber eben auch im Sinne einer möglichen Nachbesserung als Alternative zu Umsiedlungen. Die schlechten Wohnbedingungen und die schlechte Lage sind nicht den Armen anzulasten. Im Sinne der menschenrechtlich geforderten schrittweisen Ermöglichung guter Wohn- und Lebensbedingungen für alle sind die Regierungen und Stadtverwaltungen in der Pflicht.
- 3. Erwidern: Eine Modernisierung muss mit und nicht gegen die Armen gemacht werden, die Planung der Stadtentwicklung muss alle einbeziehen!** Pläne zur Modernisierung der Städte folgen meist einem auf globale Investitionen ausgerichteten Entwicklungsmodell. Diese wirtschaftliche Entwicklung könnte ein Segen für alle sein, wenn sie den Armen, und das ist ja meist die Bevölkerungsmehrheit, den ihnen gebührenden Anteil zukommen ließe, den Platz zum Leben, zum Auf-

bau ihrer sozialen Netze sowie zur Sicherung ihres Einkommens. Entwicklungspläne müssen deshalb stets zusammen mit dieser Bevölkerungsmehrheit entwickelt werden.

**4. Erwiderung: Die Bodennutzung sollte sozialen und demokratischen Kriterien genügen, nicht Marktgesetzen!** Die neoliberale Marktverherrlichung sollte inzwischen eigentlich ad acta gelegt sein; letztlich ist sie eine Art magischen Denkens mit ökonomischem Primat, das ökologische und soziale Kriterien für die Bodennutzung vollständig ausschließt.

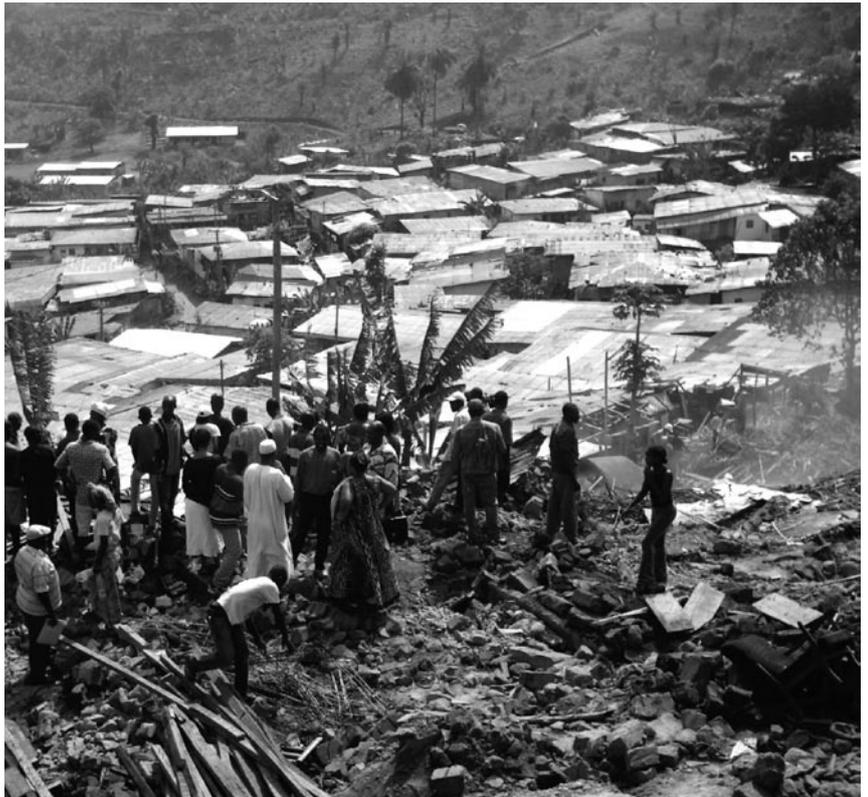
**5. Erwiderung: Städtische Armensiedlungen sind mit einfachen Mitteln wirksam zu verbessern; sie sind oft sehr kreative Orte der Selbsthilfe und Nachbarschaftshilfe und können einer der Entwicklungsmotoren der Städte sein.** Bestehende Siedlungen der Armen könnten verbessert und in die Stadt integriert werden. Diese Option ist in den meisten Entwicklungsplänen jedoch völlig ausgeklammert. Die Stadt könnte dadurch das kreative Potential der Armensiedlungen für eine nachhaltige Stadtentwicklung nutzen.

**6. Erwiderung: Hauruck-Lösungen zur Austreibung der Armut sind kontraproduktiv.** Armut ist nicht mit Gewalt zu beseitigen. Der mit den Vertreibungen praktizierte Armuts-Exorzismus vermindert die Armut nicht, er vertieft und verlagert sie. Dabei werden ökonomische Werte und soziale Netze zerstört, enorme soziale und politische Kosten verursacht und wird letztlich die Entwicklung der Stadt beeinträchtigt.

**7. Erwiderung: Die meisten Armenviertelbewohner sind bereits seit mehreren Generationen Städter. Die neu Zugewanderten haben ihre Migration in die Stadt in der Regel gut durchdacht. Eine gewaltsame Rückführung wäre für sie katastrophal.** Die Migration in die Städte ist selbst mit solch brachialen Mitteln wie Vertreibungen nicht zu bremsen; dies hat sich überall auf der Welt erwiesen. Die Vorteile eines Lebens auf dem Lande hervorzuheben ist naiv und letztlich arrogant, weil angenommen wird, besser zu wissen als die Armen selbst, was für sie gut sei. Die Entscheidung der heutigen Stadtbewohner/innen für ein Leben in der Stadt ist meist gut durchdacht und überdies irreversibel. Dies sollte respektiert werden.

## Schlussfolgerungen

Es ist nicht fair, die städtischen Armen für die schlechten Lebensbedingungen, die schlechte Lage ihrer Siedlungen und die Rechtsunsicherheit, unter der sie leben, verantwortlich zu machen. Ebensowenig sollten sie dafür bestraft oder gar kriminalisiert werden, sich informelle Lösungen zur Verwirklichung ihres Rechts



auf eine Wohnung in der Stadt zu suchen. Stattdessen gebührt die Schuld für die Misere, unter der die städtischen Armen zu leiden haben, den für das Bodenrecht, für die Planung sowie für die Wohnbaupolitik Verantwortlichen.

Nachhaltige Lösungen des Problems der städtischen Armut setzen voraus, dass das Recht aller auf ein gutes Leben in der Stadt fundamental respektiert wird, dass die Potentiale und die vielfältigen Errungenschaften lokaler Eigeninitiative in den städtischen Armutssiedlungen anerkannt werden, dass deren Bewohner/innen in die Planungen zur Stadtentwicklung demokratisch einbezogen werden und dass ihre Wohnrechte geschützt sind.

Es ist nicht zuletzt die Wahrnehmung der städtischen Armenviertel im kollektiven Bewusstsein, an der angesetzt werden muss, um deren Bewohner/innen endemisch sich wiederholende Vertreibungen zu ersparen, um ihr Bleiberecht und das Bleiberecht ihrer Siedlungen in der öffentlichen Meinung zu verankern und um ihnen ihr „Recht auf Stadt“ zuzugestehen.

Es sollte unsere ganzen Anstrengungen Wert sein, dass der Lebensraum der städtischen Armen mit seinen selbstorganisierten Strukturen nicht einfach als auszumerzender „Slum“ wahrgenommen wird, sondern als selbstgeschaffene Lösung für ihre Lebensnotwendigkeiten, als Ausdruck ihres Überlebenswillens, ihrer Hoffnung und ihres Erfindungsgeistes.

▲  
Yaoundé, Cameroon; forced evictions in 2007: inhabitants observing the destruction of part of their neighbourhood from a hill / *Vertreibungen in Yaoundé 2007, Bewohner beobachten die Zerstörung von Teilen ihres Stadtviertels*; Photo: Jean Vespa, collectif des déguerpis

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# Urban Planning Hypocrisy in the 'City of Unity' – Forced Evictions in Abuja, Nigeria

Deanna Fowler

## Planerischer Dünkel in der 'Stadt der Einheit' – Slumzerstörungen und Vertreibungen in Abuja, Nigeria

Die Entwicklung der nigerianischen Bundeshauptstadt Abuja, die ab 1976 als "Stadt der Einheit" für diese außergewöhnlich vielfältige Nation geplant wurde, war 30 Jahre lang von planerischer Vernachlässigung, Korruption und Missmanagement gekennzeichnet. In dieser Zeit wurde der Masterplan von Abuja missachtet, verstümmelt und durch informell errichtete Bauten und Siedlungen überformt – stillschweigend geduldet oder gar unterstützt durch die Autoritäten. Ungeachtet dieser Vergangenheit trat der von 2003-2007 für den Bundesdistrikt der Hauptstadt zuständige Minister Nasir Ahmad el Rufai mit dem ehrgeizigen Plan an, die Unantastbarkeit des Masterplans jetzt bedingungslos zu verteidigen und befahl ausgedehnte Slumzerstörungen und gewaltsame Vertreibungen, von denen in vier Jahren über 800.000 Menschen betroffen waren. Er schaffte es, sich in der öffentlichen Meinung in Nigeria für diese im Ausland kaum beachtete massenhafte Menschenrechtsverletzung eine breite Unterstützung zu verschaffen, indem er beklagte, die Bevölkerung Abujas sei inzwischen weit über das einst vorgesehene Maß hinaus gestiegen – was offiziellen statistischen Daten klar widerspricht – und ankündigte, anders als seine korrupten Vorgänger werde er keine Rechtsüberschreitungen mehr dulden und dem ursprünglichen Masterplan konsequent Geltung verschaffen. Gleichzeitig ignorierte er aber den im Masterplan formulierten Hinweis, dass der Erfolg der Stadt entscheidend von der angemessenen Verfügbarkeit bezahlbaren Wohnraums abhängen würde. Während er also vorgab, den Grundgedanken der „Stadt der Einheit“ zu verteidigen, machte er klar, dass Arme in dieser Stadt nicht willkommen sind.

The Federal Capital Territory of Abuja was conceived during the 1970's as a capital that would serve as a unifying force for Nigeria's 250 different ethnic groups suffering from a tumultuous and often violent recent history. Lagos, the predecessor to Abuja as capital, had been widely regarded as too crowded, too chaotic, and too politically volatile. Nigeria attained independence from Britain in 1960, but the following 15 years witnessed several coups and a civil war. In 1970, General Yakubu Gowon initiated consideration of a move to a new federal capital, but he was overthrown in 1975 by General Murtala Mohammed. It was General Gowon's attacker and successor who set in motion the plan for a new capital (Elleh, 2001:93).

### A New Capital

In 1975, in one of the few acts of his six-month rule before assassination, General Murtala Mohammed appointed the Justice Akinola Aguda Committee to evaluate Lagos' role as the federal capital and to search out possible sites for a new capital city (Elleh, 2001: 93; Federal Military Government of Nigeria, 1976). As stated in the subsequent Abuja Master Plan, the Aguda Committee noted the following rationalisation for the move from Lagos:

- "The City of Lagos is incapable of functioning as both a Federal Capital and a State Capital, due to the problems of inadequate land space for development commensurate with its status as the Capital of Nigeria.
- Lagos is identified with predominately one ethnic group. A New Capital in a more central location would provide equal access to Nigeria's great diversity of cultural groups.
- A New Capital is desirable that would be secure, ethnically neutral, centrally accessible, comfortable and healthful, and possess adequate land natural resources to provide a promising base for urban development.
- A New Capital is needed as a symbol for Nigeria's aspirations for unity and greatness." (IPA, 1979:27). The committee recommended the capital be moved to Abuja: a site which was in the centre of Nigeria and was sparsely populated. The new Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja was created by the Federal Capital Territory Decree No. 6 of 1976 and Abuja was carved out of three states: Kwara, Niger, and Plateau (Federal Capital Territory Act of Nigeria, 1976; Sabo-Ago, 1984).

In 1977, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) commissioned International Planning Associates (IPA) to develop the Abuja Master Plan, which provided a basic platform for the first "25-year-plus" period of Abuja's development (IPA, 1979: i). The



Figure 1:  
Nigeria, 36 Federal States  
and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja (AGIS, 2006); FCT = grey area

Master Plan's self-stated purpose was to provide "a review of relevant data, the selection of a Capital City site, the preparation of regional and city plans and an accompanying design and development standards manual" (IPA, 1979: i).

Initially, the federal government intended to resettle all existing residents of the FCT to the neighbouring states from which Abuja had been culled. However, by the time the Abuja Master Plan had been drafted and approved by the FCDA, a full resettlement plan had been discarded as too expensive, disruptive, and unnecessary. The Abuja Master Plan recommended the resettlement of an estimated 50,000 inhabitants living within five kilometres of the planned Federal Capital City (FCC) site, in addition to areas including "the game reserve area; the reservoir watersheds; the plains areas adjacent to the Capital City containing the airport; and the key access points to the Federal Capital Territory." (IPA, 1979:228, 230).

By 1984, the resettlement process was complete for those FCT residents who were offered and had opted to move out of the FCT to neighbouring states (Abumere, 2001). However, the resettlement process was never fully completed for those who were to be resettled outside of the FCC area to other parts of the FCT. As of 2008, COHRE and SERAC estimated that there were 65 settlements in which indigenes – a term commonly used to refer to people living in the FCT prior to its creation – remained in areas originally intended to be resettled (COHRE and SERAC, 2008:38).

### The Unruly Growth of the New City

The Abuja Master Plan warned the FCDA that a carefully crafted housing delivery mechanism, able to ensure affordable housing for Abuja's residents, was vital to the success of the city. The Master Plan stressed that in cities around the world, the lack of "satisfactory housing in sufficient quantities to meet demand for housing has frequently resulted in the development of unplanned slums, housing shortages or both." (IPA, 1979:171). A primary challenge therefore, was "to arrive at a satisfactory balance between residential quality and the ability of households to afford that quality." (IPA, 1979:173).

Additionally, the Abuja Master Plan noted a number of problems and inefficiencies in the Nigerian housing market of the late 1970's, including:

- "Failure to mobilize all available financial resources, including both public and private sectors
- Setting of unrealistic standards of housing quality not matched to the experience, desires, and capabilities of the population to be served

- Failure to give access to credit to the population – both producer and consumer-to-be-served
- Inability to preserve and use properly located and easily developed land in an efficient manner
- Building industry shortcomings represented by such equally unsatisfactory options as high-priced foreign contractors and imported materials versus inexperienced small-scale builders with an uncertain supply of indigenous materials
- Preoccupation with building technology rather than delivery of affordable housing." (IPA, 1979:171).

To meet the challenge of effective housing delivery, the Master Plan suggested addressing these problems, as well as implementing a number of strategies, including, among others:

- developing a housing program free of "the housing preconceptions and standards imported from Europe and elsewhere..." (IPA, 1979:172, 173).
- paying attention towards culturally appropriate housing, including models based on traditional multiple family housing units because the single family housing units "typical... of the United Kingdom and North America, may prove to be unsatisfactory in the predominantly extended family circumstances in Nigeria." (IPA, 1979: 173).
- providing government subsidies towards housing for a portion of civil servants (IPA, 1979:174).

Regarding housing subsidies in particular, the Master Plan noted that "...even with interest-free mortgage financing and with 25 percent of income devoted to housing, higher than recommended by Federal policy – 90 percent of the civil servants cannot afford to buy housing as it is currently being constructed. The cost to the Government of providing such a house, or even a somewhat "modern" smaller house of 60 square meters with an estimated cost of N10,000, to a large segment of the population, would require substantial direct subsidy. The income projections... indicate that a large proportion of the NFCC residents would require such subsidies" (IPA, 1979:174).

One of the few policies advised by the Master Plan that the government actually undertook to implement was publicly constructed and subsidised housing for civil servants. By 1994, the FCDA and the Federal Housing Authority had constructed some 23,571 housing units and were subsidising 98.5-99.9 percent of costs to residents, as the units would not have been affordable to those on government salaries otherwise (Ukoha and Beamish, 1997; Morah, 1993). Housing construction standards remained unrealistically expensive, despite Master Plan projections and proffered solutions. Furthermore, the government did not ration-

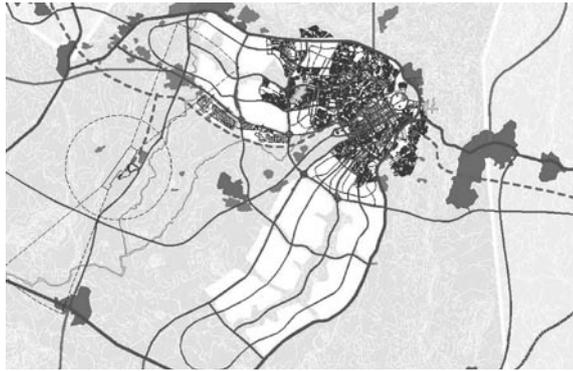


▲  
Figure 2:  
Neighbourhood unit design  
concept, Abuja (IPA, 1979)



▲  
Figure 3:  
Federal Capital Territory  
and capital city site  
(AGIS, 2006)

▶ Figure 4: Abuja 2003 - built up areas, undeveloped master plan areas (white areas) and part of existing informal settlements (dark grey areas) (AS&P, Albert Speer & Partners 2003)



ally prioritise resources towards those who could least afford adequate housing. Ignoring the Master Plan's analysis of viable subsidy policies, 50 percent of subsidies to public housing went to the most expensive 20 percent of units, while only 8 percent of subsidies covered the least expensive 40 percent (IPA, 1979: 179-180; Elleh, 2001:76).

By 1991, when the Seat of Government officially moved from Lagos to Abuja along with 200,000 public sector employees, there was already an affordable housing shortage due to inefficiently directed housing subsidies, the failure to decrease housing prices by using local labour, materials, and realistic housing standards in public construction; the failure to create an enabling environment for private construction of housing that would be affordable to the majority of Abuja residents; inefficient land allocation processes; and insufficient compensation to landowners for confiscated land (Adejuwon, 2001; COHRE and SERAC, 2008: 21,22, 98-100). Successive FCDA administrations have not taken sufficient action to reverse this crisis. In fact, urbanist Nnamdi Elleh wrote in 2001: "The sad truth is: the middle class cannot afford any property at all in any part of the city, not to mention people in the lower classes" (Elleh, 2001: 75). During 2005 and 2006, in a move taken in apparent or perhaps wilful blindness to the growing housing crisis, the FCDA privatised 24,844 government-subsidised housing units (Ojedokun, 2005).

From the city's inception, there was one housing option that was affordable to the majority of Abuja's non-indigene residents, albeit an option that did not provide tenure security. Indigene residents of the FCC and surrounding areas who had not been resettled, maintained tenure over their customary land. The FCDA allowed them to remain, although it confiscated much of the indigene farmland over time. In terms of Nigeria's Land Use Act, compensation is given based on the value of "unexhausted improvements" to the land, such as buildings or existing crops, rather than the productive capacity of the land. Compensation rates

rarely sufficed to cover the cost of purchasing a similarly productive plot of land. Indigenes, who had traditionally been farmers, effectively lost their source of income.

However, indigene communities addressed this lack of income while also meeting one of the most urgent needs of the new capital. Indigenes began selling and renting low-cost, adequate housing to non-indigene residents or allocating plots of land on which non-indigenes could build within their communities. This led to the rapid expansion of existing settlements and the growth of approximately 65 informal settlements.

However, non-indigenes have not had secure tenure in the informal settlements because indigenes did not attain prior consent from the FCT Minister for these transactions, as is required by law for any sale, sub-lease, mortgage or transfer of land occurring in the FCT. (FCT Act, 1976 and Land Use Act, 1978).

### **A campaign of forced evictions**

Various FCDA administrations have generally ignored the growth of informal settlements within and around the FCC or have haphazardly targeted settlements for forced eviction. There were half-hearted attempts to implement a policy of integration for some settlements that had become enveloped by the city, so that these settlements with poor service facilities and dirt roads could be upgraded and be granted legitimacy. This included the 1992 project to integrate Garki, which is now widely regarded as an unsuccessful project regularly used by FCDA officials as proof that integration policies should not be attempted. Although when questioned in 2006 about why it was unsuccessful, planners and FCDA officials identified specific problems of poor implementation rather than any inherent incompatibility with the policy for Abuja. (COHRE and SERAC, 2008:49-50) Beginning in 2003, however, FCT Minister Nasir Ahmad el Rufai began an unparalleled campaign of destruction. Various local and international organisations, such as the Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP), the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), the Justice, Development and Peace Commission (JDPC), the Social and Economic Rights Action Center (SERAC), and Women Environmental Program (WEP), have estimated that the Rufai administration forcibly evicted 800,000 people from informal settlements from 2003 to 2007. The estimate from COHRE and SERAC is based upon "visits to demolished settlements, analysis of media reports of demolition exercises, analysis of overhead images, and interviews with village leadership, support organisations in Abuja, and FCDA officials" (COHRE and SERAC, 2008:39).



▲ Figure 5: The expansion of Kuchigoro settlement (AGIS, 2007)



The FCDA carried out forced evictions of non-indigene homes and indigene homes rented out to non-indigenes in a manner directly in contravention of national and international law. The FCDA did not adequately consult with communities, did not attain court orders prior to evictions, did not provide adequate, formal notice prior to evictions and did not provide compensation or resettlement to those evicted. The evictions left residents homeless or living in overcrowded households. The evictions were sometimes carried out at night, in inclement weather, and with violence. Evictions rendered victims vulnerable to further human rights violations such as violence and rape. Evictions also obstructed residents' existing access to water, sanitation, health, and education facilities. The Rufai administration carried out forced evictions in at least 31 of 65 identified informal settlements. (COHRE and SERAC, 2008: 39)

Forced evictions continued in 2008 under Rufai's successor, FCT Minister Dr Aliyu Modibbo Umar. In December 2007, Modibbo Umar declared in a town hall meeting that, "Demolition will continue if [development] contravenes the Master Plan. ...[I]f you contravene in any way, we do not owe you compensation." (Umar, 2007). Modibbo Umar reinitiated the forced evictions in May and June 2008, evicting residents of Gosa Sariki and Gosa Toge. The evictions were carried out with violence and police shot at protestors, injuring three men and killing one man (COHRE, 2008).

In October 2008, President Yar'Adua dismissed Modibbo Umar as FCT Minister, along with 19 other ministers (Chesa, 2008). It is unclear what steps current FCT Minister, Adamu Aliero will take towards addressing the affordable housing shortage crisis in Abuja and whether he will resort to forced evictions also.

### The illegal demolition policy

Regardless of the legal status of residents' occupancy, Nigeria is obliged by international law to ensure that anyone threatened with eviction has access to legal protection, will not be made homeless by an eviction,

and will be guaranteed certain procedural protections. A forced eviction, as defined in General Comment No. 7 of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, is "the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection."

General Comment No. 7 also requires that: "States parties shall ensure, prior to carrying out any evictions, and particularly those involving large groups, that all feasible alternatives are explored in consultation with affected persons, with a view to avoiding, or at least minimizing, the need to use force. Legal remedies or procedures should be provided to those who are affected by eviction orders." (CESCR, 1998:para 14)

General Comment No. 7 also lists procedural protections that must be ensured, including:

- "a) an opportunity for genuine consultation with those affected;
- b) adequate and reasonable notice for all affected persons prior to the scheduled date of eviction;
- c) information on the proposed evictions and where applicable, on the alternative purpose for which the land or housing is to be used, to be made available in reasonable time to all those affected;
- d) especially where groups of people are involved, government officials or their representatives to be present during an eviction;
- e) all persons carrying out the eviction to be properly identified;
- f) evictions not to take place in particularly bad weather or at night unless the affected persons consent otherwise;
- g) provision of legal remedies; and
- h) provision, where possible, of legal aid to persons who are in need of it to seek redress from the courts" (CESCR, 1998: para 16).

Nigeria acceded to the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in 1993. However, as the treaty has not been domesticated, Nigerian courts

◀◀  
Figure 6:  
Karimo settlement prior to demolition (AGIS, 2007)

◀  
Figure 7:  
Karimo settlement after demolition (AGIS, 2007)

▲  
Photo 2:  
Karimo settlement one month after demolition (Teschner, 2007)

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are not enabled to base a ruling upon the obligations contained in the treaty. Nevertheless, Nigeria has ratified and domesticated the African Charter, which also guarantees the right to adequate housing, including the prohibition against forced evictions. In fact in October 2001, the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights found that Nigeria had violated Articles 14, 16, and 18(1) of the African Charter due to forced evictions committed against the Ogoni. The Committee stated: "At a very minimum, the right to shelter obliges the... government not to destroy the housing of its citizens and not to obstruct efforts by individuals or communities to rebuild lost homes. The State's obligation to respect housing rights requires it, and thereby all of its organs and agents, to abstain from carrying out, sponsoring or tolerating any practice, policy or legal measure violating the integrity of the individual or infringing upon his or her freedom to use those material or other resources available to them in a way they find most appropriate to satisfy individual, family, household or community housing needs..." (ACHPR, 2002).

Nigerian domestic law provides very few explicit housing rights protections. Chapter Two, Article 16 (2) of the Nigerian Constitution requires that: "The State shall direct its policy towards ensuring... (d) that suitable and adequate shelter... are provided for all citizens." However, as the Constitution also declares that Chapter Two provisions are not justiciable, this provision has largely been taken by various levels of government as an occasional aspiration rather than an obligation.

Nevertheless, Article 6 (6)(b) provides that judicial powers "shall extend, to all matters between persons, or between government or authority and to any persons in Nigeria, and to all actions and proceedings relating thereto, for the determination of any question as to the civil rights and obligations of that person." Based on Article 6 (6)(a) and (b), SERAC and COHRE have argued that "no person should be evicted without an order of a Court of competent jurisdiction." (COHRE and SERAC, 2008:88).

The Fundamental Human Rights contained in the Constitution provide various protections including, the rights to life, to dignity of human persons, to privacy of the home, to freedom of movement. Articles 43 and 44, protect the right "to acquire and own immovable property" and require compensation to be paid if property is acquired compulsorily.

Despite justiciable protections against forced evictions within domestic law and the African Charter, victims of the Abuja forced evictions have little hope for legal

remedies in a Nigerian court. In an interview, an Advocate who had been evicted from his home in one informal settlement, who had subsequently rebuilt and had then been evicted from another informal settlement, who had seen his office destroyed despite his having a Certificate of Occupancy from the FCDA, and who had resorted to sleeping in his car, stated that he had not taken legal action because: "The judiciary is in the pocket of the Presidency. Injunctions don't stop anything anyway." (anonymous interview, 2006).

This mistrust of the independence of the judiciary and frustration with the ability of the government to ignore court rulings is merited by a number of examples, not least the fact that Nigeria has not, to date, addressed the 2001 African Commission ruling by providing redress to the Ogoni. In fact, in a recent example, SERAC has submitted a case to the African Commission regarding forced evictions in the Maroko community of Lagos State. SERAC's Executive Director, Felix Morka, stated "Maroko Evictees have pursued their claims in the Nigerian national courts and other independent bodies for more than 8 years but have yet to obtain any relief, remedy or redress, making legal action in Nigeria both futile and unduly prolonged." (Megbola, 2009).

## The corruption of the Abuja Master Plan

Within policymaking spheres in Nigeria, there has been insufficient attention paid to the human rights of Abuja residents, the legality of the campaign of forced evictions, or even the utility or futility of a campaign of forced evictions for a City of Unity. FCT Minister El Rufai hijacked the public narrative around Abuja's development and very existence. Throughout his tenure, he consistently misrepresented the scope and content of the Abuja Master Plan to justify illegal evictions by his administration.

Under FCT Minister El Rufai, the FCT administration began to manoeuvre their rhetoric regarding the Abuja Master Plan in a manner that has employed fear tactics to convince residents of Abuja, national-level policymakers, and Nigerians around the country that the growth of the city was out of control, that it would soon become 'another Lagos', and that draconian measures were needed to bring the city's development back into compliance with the purported strictures of the Abuja Master Plan.

In 1999, Assistant Information Director for the FCT, Ikoku Okonkwo told the *Baltimore Sun*, "There's a lot of space here, very much unlike Lagos." The *Sun's* reported noted: "Abuja's population is already a

million... [b]ut people are lost in an area 2 1/2 times as large as Lagos,... teeming home to 14 million." (Lewthwaite, 1999).

Yet four years later, FCT Minister El Rufai and other FCT officials reversed the rhetoric. The Daily Sun reported that FCT Minister El Rufai had warned that Abuja, "has started showing disturbing signs of becoming more like the rest of Nigeria as its population rockets, from 350,000 in the early 1990's to about 6 million today." (Awowole-Browne, 2006). The Rufai administration repeatedly placed Abuja's population at 6 million, an estimate that was grossly divergent from the results of the 2006 census, which found that there were 1.405 million residents of the Federal Capital Territory (Henry, 2007). Undoubtedly, the census figures are not entirely reliable and the census process in Nigeria has been legitimately criticised. For example, the Mail&Guardian noted that, "Nigeria has never succeeded in determining its actual population, relying on estimated figures over the years." (Hakeem, 2006).

Nevertheless, assuming that the FCT population is greater than 1.4 million, but less than 6 million people, Abuja is not experiencing an unexpected population surge. The planners who developed the Abuja Master Plan, in fact, projected the Federal Capital City would reach a target population of 1.6 million people by the year 2000 and would grow to house a further 1.6 million people. Phases 1-3 of the city were planned to house 1.6 million and Phase 4 was planned to house a further 1.6 million people. The Master Plan advised that further population growth beyond the 3.2 million in the Federal Capital City (250 km<sup>2</sup>) could be accommodated in satellite towns within the Federal Capital Territory. Note that the 2006 census figures report 1.4 million people in the entire Federal Capital Territory.

Although Abuja has been developed in a manner that has often gone directly contrary to the provisions of the Abuja Master Plan, it has not done so in terms of its population growth. There is no reliable evidence to show that Phases 1-3 of the FCC had surpassed a population of 1.6 million people by the year 2000 or that the total FCC population surpassed 3.2 million.

Although, the Rufai and Umar administrations have suggested that residents of Abuja are to blame for the unruly growth of Abuja, and must therefore pay the price and forfeit their legal rights, Rufai and Umar have failed to take responsibility for the colossal failures of successive FCDA administrations to address the recommendations in the Abuja Master Plan.

For instance, the Abuja Master Plan provides specific recommendations towards improving housing conditions in a cost-effective manner, which have been and are being ignored. A summary overview of these options, includes:

- "Efficient plot layout and appropriate standards of infrastructure permitting upgrading of standards as economic capability increases
- A range of housing options for all income groups, from detached housing, to flats, to traditional multi-family compounds, or rooming houses and shared-services accommodations
- Increased reliance on local construction materials, reduced levels of finish and careful management controls to assure that costs of construction are reduced and maintained at lowest possible levels
- Sites and services approaches, use of shared services and self-help/self-contracted construction to lower costs." (IPA, 1979:17).

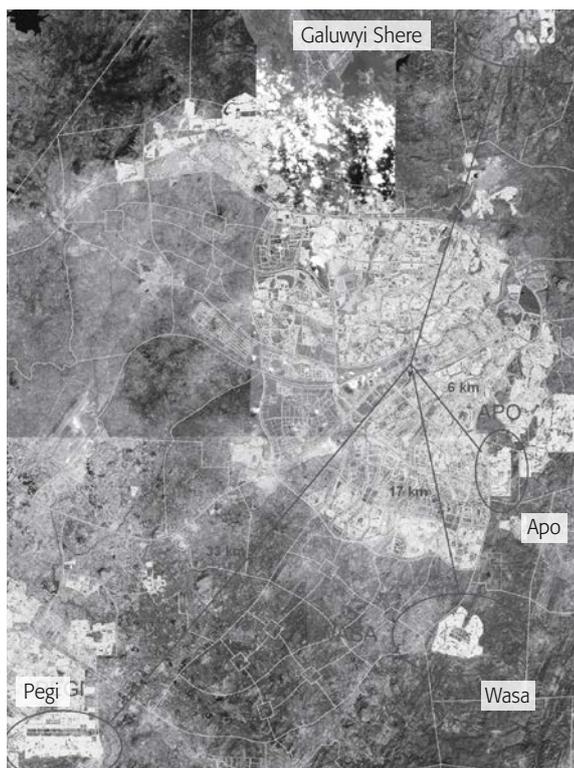
The FCDA continues to ignore Master Plan recommendations in its current policy attempts to eradicate informal settlements. Aside from the demolition plan, which was certainly never envisaged by the Master Plan, the FCDA has also undertaken a revitalised resettlement plan for indigenes remaining in the FCC and surrounding areas. The FCDA also attempted a sites and services scheme to which evictees could apply.

The resettlement of the first seven settlements was planned to be finalised by the end of December 2006, but sites remained unfinished more than a year later. The project remains incomplete. Indigenes have expressed a number of concerns regarding the Galuwyi Shere, Wasa and Apo resettlement sites, including the failure of FCDA officials to take into account: multi-family dwelling customs, the now-varied livelihoods of many residents whose children will likely not earn their primary income from farming, and disputes over land resources that may arise between those being resettled and those whose land was confiscated to create the resettlement sites (COHRE and SERAC, 2008). Many indigenes have vociferously voiced their preference for staying on their current land and participating in an in situ upgrading scheme to integrate their communities within the city; a scheme which could allow them to retain cultural heritage sites, keep leadership structures intact, and remain close to livelihood opportunities other than farming as the Galuwyi Shere and Wasa resettlement sites are located at some distance from the FCC (COHRE and SERAC, 2008). Although an in situ upgrading program would almost certainly be more efficient and affordable than a large-scale resettlement program, the FCDA has consistently refused to discuss this as an option.

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►  
Figure 8:  
Resettlement sites (Galuwyi Shere, Apo and Wasa) and relocation site (Pegi) with layout plans and cadastral zones superimposed on an aerial photo. The image also shows that Phase 4 of Abuja is vacant, following waves of forced evictions. Layout plans for Phase 4 were not available (AGIS, 2007).



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The FCDA also introduced a sites and services scheme in Pegi to which evictees from informal settlements could apply. From late 2005 to 2008, only some 100 households settled at Pegi. The scheme requires applicants to pay 21,000 naira in administrative fees and 600 naira per square metre of land. Additionally, applicants must build a home within two years, with their own resources, based on the FCDA's minimum housing standards. These standards are considerably more expensive than the basic housing found in most informal settlements, which is primarily of cement block or mud brick with corrugated zinc roofing. Even before building costs, access to a 500 square metre plot would cost approximately 321,000 naira, which is entirely out of the reach of the 70 percent of Nigerians who earn less than one dollar a day. (COHRE and SERAC, 2008:11). Not only is the scheme unaffordable for its intended applicants, but the FCDA had not fulfilled its promises to develop the "services" part of the scheme by providing roads, schools, health clinics, and access to water and sanitation facilities at the site by 2008. (COHRE and SERAC, 2008) No rational person could be expected to undertake such a considerable expense of building a home without the government first fulfilling its plan to build a road to get to the site.

The FCDA's sites and services scheme can by no measure be considered an appropriate form of redress for victims of forced eviction, nor can it be considered a viable housing alternative to informal settlements for those who cannot afford housing in the FCC.

## The 'City of Unity' remains an aspiration

Nnamdi Elleh, in "Abuja: The Single Most Ambitious Urban Design Project of the 20th Century" laments various Nigerian leaders' revisions to the Master Plan, particularly following the 1985 coup by General Babangida, which included "planting numerous military barracks around the nation's citadel of democracy" and "moving the executive mansion closer to the base of Aso Rock" in order to provide "a fortress hiding place for a paranoid military dictator" (Elleh, 2001: 48, 49, 50). Elleh says, "Under Babangida and Abacha, architecture, power, and ambiguous concepts of national security treacherously converged into inseparable military decrees which raped the democratic consciousness of the Nigerian people, the psyche of the nation, mother Nature, and mother Africa.... Unlike projects like Brasilia and Chandigarh, where planning and architecture are often blamed for the ills of the cities, at Abuja we must blame the failure of the Nigerian leadership instead of architecture and planning" (Elleh, 2001: 49, 50).

Two years after these words were published, FCT Minister El Rufai embarked on an ambitious project of destruction that became a rival in the scale of its reach, its inhumanity, and its futility with Operation Murambatsvina, the demolition project of Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe, which destroyed the homes and businesses of an estimated 700,000 people (Tibaijuka, 2005).

The difference between El Rufai's project of destruction and the urban planning vandalism of other Nigerian dictators is that El Rufai gained public support and legitimacy for his project by claiming to uphold the 'sanctity' of the same Master Plan that he was corrupting. While claiming to protect the 'City of Unity', he made it clear that the poor were not welcome in that city.

Nevertheless, in a sign that a change of rhetoric and policy might be incipient, the Nigerian Senate released a statement on 3 February 2009 regarding its investigation of the Nasir Ahmad el Rufai. The Senate declared that all demolitions undertaken in the FCT without an Urban and Regional Tribunal were illegal and unconstitutional (Folasade-Koyi, 2009). Although the Senate ordered compensation for the demolition buildings, it is possible that early reports on the Senate findings refer solely to compensation for those who held some form of secure tenure. It remains to be seen whether the Senate will ensure any form of redress to the approximately 800,000 non-indigene residents of informal settlements that were forcibly evicted or influence a return to the real Abuja Master Plan.

# Coping with Forced Evictions: Adaptation Processes of Evicted Slum Dwellers in Dhaka

Kirsten Hackenbroch, Mohammad Shafayat Hossain, Md. Asif Rahman

## Umgang mit Vertreibungen – Strategien vertriebener Slumbewohner in Dhaka

Seit Jahrzehnten sind die Slums von Dhaka, der 12 Mio. Einwohner zählenden Metropole Bangladeschs, von staatlich veranlassten Räumungen betroffen. Die Verfassung, die Gesetze sowie Sektorpolitiken sprechen davon, das Eigentum aller Bevölkerungsschichten vor unrechtmäßiger Enteignung zu schützen. Dennoch werden Slums für Infrastruktur, Stadtgestaltung oder profitable Immobilienprojekte geräumt. Oftmals werden die Bewohner nur kurz vor der Räumung informiert und können ihren Besitz nicht mehr in Sicherheit bringen. Nur in wenigen Fällen kommt es zur Entschädigung. Bisherige Umsiedlungs- und Rehabilitationsprojekte gingen oft nicht auf die Bedürfnisse der städtischen Armen ein: sie versuchten diese wieder aufs Land umzusiedeln oder sie erwiesen sich letztlich als Wohnprojekte für die Mittelklasse. Slumräumungen ohne Rehabilitation haben teils existenzbedrohende Folgen für die Bewohner und ihre Strategien zum Überleben. So ist die Nähe zwischen Wohn- und Arbeitsplatz zentral für viele Slumbewohner, die sich keine hohen Transportkosten leisten können. Nach der Räumung verlieren viele wegen Wohnortwechsel ihren Arbeitsplatz; andere nehmen zur Arbeitsplatzsicherung prekäre Wohnverhältnisse in Kauf. Der Artikel zeigt, wie Slumbewohner ihre livelihood-Strategien nach einer Räumung anpassen und welche Faktoren für ihre Wahl ausschlaggebend sind.

The mega-city Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, with a population of about 12 million (WORLD BANK 2007: 1), has experienced rapid urban growth during the past decades. Rural-urban migration is the main contributor to this rapid urban expansion, with 300,000 to 400,000 new migrants coming into the city every year. As a result, the number of slum and squatter settlements increased considerably. Nowadays around 5,000 of these communities, ranging from clusters of only a few households to areas with up to 100,000 inhabitants, accommodate 37% of Dhaka's total population (CUS et al. 2006: 20p.). These settlements, however, occupy only 5% of the city's total land area with an average population density of 220,000 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> (CUS et al. 2006: 39p.), by far one of the highest in the world. Most of them lack security of tenure. They are constructed on land designated for infrastructure projects, on land not suitable for housing purposes or on land with plans for real estate development<sup>1</sup>.

Despite various legal commitments, forced evictions are still a common practice in Dhaka. The authorities evict slum dwellers frequently from public-owned land without well-advanced notification and without provision of adequate resettlement or rehabilitation schemes. This article analyses the impacts of forced evictions and how they disrupt urban livelihoods. It further explores the ways evicted slum dwellers in

Dhaka managed to cope with this experience and how they adapt to their new living environments<sup>2</sup>.

## Slum evictions in the context of urban livelihoods

Forced evictions persist a considerable 'shock' for slum dwellers' urban livelihoods. According to CHAMBERS and CONWAY (1992) "a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets [...] and activities required for a means of living". Shocks in the context of the livelihood framework can be defined as "extreme events that a household does not have the resources to withstand" (SANDERSON 2002: 123). The availability of assets (i.e. social, physical, human, financial and natural assets) can buffer households against these shocks (SANDERSON 2002: 116) – the better a household is able to cope with shocks, the more sustainable its livelihood is.

In the case of forced slum evictions without prior notification to the residents and without the provision of adequate rehabilitation, the assets of slum dwellers may be affected in various ways. The immediate loss of shelter and belongings is by far not the only effect on the livelihoods of evicted slum dwellers. The impacts are manifold, starting with the loss of the location the livelihoods may have been based on. The need to find a new location or to remain in the de-

**1** For further data on land and housing in Dhaka refer to WORLD BANK 2007.

**2** The article is based on a field survey carried out in June 2008 by the authors. We would like to thank the staff members of Ain o Salish Kendro, Centre for Urban Studies, Coalition for the Urban Poor and Shelter for the Poor, who were always approachable for our questions and needs for discussion. They were especially helpful in providing documents and arranging interviews with slum dwellers and focus groups. Finally we would like to thank those evicted slum dwellers who shared their sorrows and stories and behaved so friendly with us.

stroyed place brings other implications. If the location is changed:

- it could entail the loss of work through higher transportation costs or increased travel time;
- and, even if the affected people bear these higher costs for transportation and increased travel time in order to maintain their work place when settling in a more distant place, the income available for other necessities will be reduced;
- finally, the social capital built up in the evicted community is also irrecoverable lost.

Eviction forces slum dwellers to decide on a new residential location. Slum resettlements in the urban fringe are badly received, as the urban poor prefer locations close to city centres, where livelihood opportunities are available and transportation costs are little or none (PAYNE 2002: 152; BROWN, LLOYD-JONES 2002: 193). In order to circumvent transportation costs, the proximity between living and working places is most important. If alternative dwellings in proximity to the work place are not available or accessible, household members either have to accept high transportation costs and thus restrictions on their household income or will experience the loss of their current jobs (PAYNE 2002: 152). The preference of living close to the city centre causes many urban poor to settle on undeveloped land having high development values or on

pavements being highly visible to policemen or other forces. Therewith they accept increased vulnerability by being exposed to a higher risk of evictions (PAYNE 2002: 152).

Building social capital within a slum community might require a long-term process, but is an important aspect of the urban poor's livelihoods, leading the way to various livelihood opportunities through social and informal networks. During eviction, however, the parts of social capital not linked to family networks are destroyed resulting in increased vulnerability of the respective households (BROWN, LLOYD-JONES 2002: 191). PHILLIPS (2002:137) identifies the mobility of urban population as a reason for weak social capital. Slum evictions require inhabitants to show a high degree of mobility when changing their residential location, which at the same time means they have to establish new social networks.

### Review of slum evictions in Dhaka

The People's Republic of Bangladesh has ratified various international conventions and made several national commitments concerning the right for shelter. The constitution of Bangladesh acknowledges the right to shelter in Article 15(a): The state's fundamental responsibility should be "to attain, through planned economic growth, a constant increase of productive forces

Korail, the largest slum area in Dhaka



and a steady improvement in the material and cultural standard of living of the people, with a view to securing to its citizens the provision of the basic necessities of life, including food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care [...].” Furthermore, Article 30 protects the property of a person against appropriation without legal backing. The National Housing Policy (1993, revised in 1999 and 2004) recognises that slum settlements should be upgraded with security of tenure and the government should avoid forcible relocation or displacement of slum dwellers as far as possible. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper recommends that housing of the poor be integrated into poverty reduction programmes, and priorities “vertical housing and implementation of programmes for resettlement of slum dwellers, disadvantaged, destitute and shelter less poor” (SHAFI 2005: 134). The draft National Urban Policy (2006) suggests changing the attitude towards slum areas by recognising them as integral parts of urban areas, and seeks to improve the lives of slum dwellers through slum upgrading and slum improvement. It also emphasises the need for tenure security. Elaborate resettlement guidelines are required in the case of necessary relocations (in case of ‘untenable’ slums, i.e. on land that is not considered suitable for housing for example due to hazardous location, accompanied health and environmental risks or contrary public interests) in order to reduce the impacts on and sufficiently compensate the livelihoods of the affected people. The draft policy further suggests creating special zones for low-income settlements.

Despite these commitments, many urban poor living in slum and squatter settlements are constantly under the threat of forced evictions by government institutions. Almost during every national government since 1975, slum dwellers suffered from evictions (COHRE, ACHR 2000, RAHMAN 2001: 51pp). A major eviction drive occurred in 1999, when 42 slum areas were cleared between May and August. The government at that time aimed at clearing all slums in Dhaka as it found them responsible for the city’s law and order problems, considered them as “unhygienic” and “dens of terrorists” and wanted to recover the rightful ownership of the land, partly for office construction of government institutions (ASK 2000: 8). Some programmes were launched to resettle slum dwellers in rural areas. However, it was found that many of the evicted slum dwellers whose livelihoods were based in Dhaka were not willing to move back to the villages but preferred to stay within the city in proximity to their places of work (ASK 2000: 9). Another project to resettle slum dwellers in six-storey buildings in Bashantek, in the north of Dhaka, was approved in 1997. But it can be observed that to date it has not been fully im-

plemented and it turned out that slum dwellers were not the beneficiaries of the housing projects.

Since the large-scale evictions in 1999 there has been no considerable change in government’s attitude towards slum dwellers. A survey conducted in 15 slum areas of Dhaka in 2002/2003 found that 41% of the respondents were living under constant fear of eviction, while another 24 % of the respondent were “somewhat fearful” (PAUL 2006: 572). Slum evictions accelerated during the present caretaker government regime, which is in place since January 2007. About 12,000 families from 29 different slum settlements were displaced in January and February 2007 (CUP 2008). Even in the first quarter of 2008, despite a decision of the caretaker government to stop slum evictions, five slums with a population of about 17,000 families were evicted by various government institutions (CUP 2008). The main reasons for the slum evictions of the past years were development of the land for construction of roads, reclamation of drainage channels, need of the land for housing projects, beautification of city areas or the aim to remove illegal encroachments.

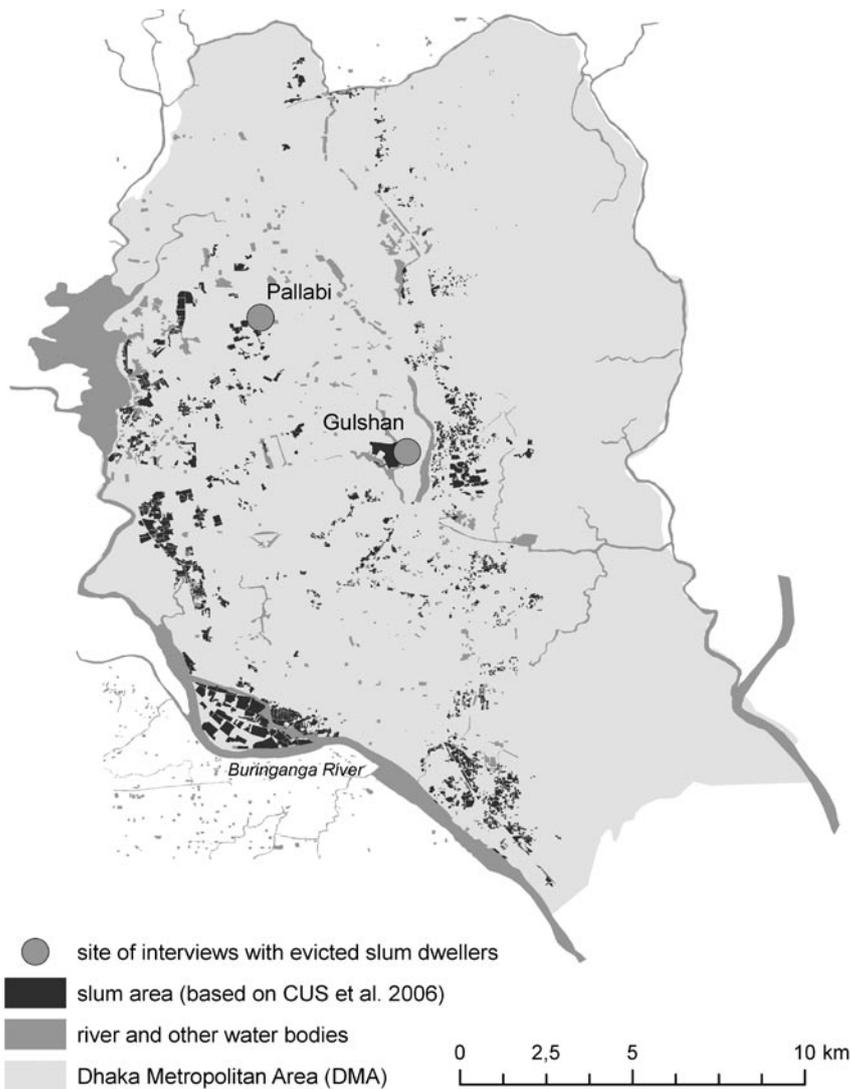
**Rahima, female, 35 years, currently not working, Pallabi**

...shifted location after eviction and had to accept loss of her work places

*“We had been living there for 17 years. My husband’s and my businesses [the husband owned a shop for selling waste materials<sup>3</sup>, she was employed at another one] were running well and we earned enough to manage our family. Our three children were attending school. But now? Look at us, my husband is struggling with his business; they also destroyed our shops there, leaving me unemployed. My husband is trying hard to restore his business, but can hardly manage because he lacks the money to invest. No one wants to rent a shop without high advanced payment. [...] It’s hard to pay for the high house rent here; the price of the essentials booming up daily, but the income is reduced from TK 6,000 to TK 4,000<sup>4</sup>. We also could do some vegetable gardening in the old location, but there is no space. The children had to leave school and are now trying to help their father. [...] We can’t seek any help from other people as after living here only for 9 months we don’t know enough people. It is difficult to build up strong social bonds, some families also leave the place after two or three months due to high house rent. [...]”*

**3** Recycling of waste materials is an important commercial activity in Dhaka. Between the collection of waste materials and the production of new materials various intermediaries are involved. For example, some sell bags of collected waste to small businesses that are engaged in sorting the materials.

**4** In February 2007, the time of eviction, 6,000 TK equalled €68, in June 2008, the time of the interview, 4,000 TK equalled €38.



(c) Kirsten Hackenbroch, Oliver Gruebner 2008

▲  
 Figure 1  
 Dhaka Metropolitan Area  
 and the location of the two  
 study sites

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Some NGOs are working to protect the rights of the poor and shelter-less people. Among them, the Coalition for the Urban Poor (CUP) mobilises slum dwellers to protect their rights by forming rights-protection committees. Furthermore CUP records the statistics of evicted slums and registers slum dwellers who previously experienced eviction as potential beneficiaries for future resettlement and rehabilitation schemes. Ain o Salish Kendro (ASK), a human rights organisation, and Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), succeeded in stopping planned evictions by filing public interest litigation writs in court. In several cases they obtained stay orders from court suspending the evictions planned by the respective government institutions, unless proper rehabilitation and resettlement are provided (ASK 2000: 3; expert discussion ASK). Furthermore, various institutions, like the Centre for Urban Studies or the mentioned Coalition for the Urban Poor, are engaged in formulating resettlement strategies, preparing rehabilitation plans and identifying suitable lands.

Following the strong opposition of different NGOs, human right organisations and civil society, the present caretaker government established a high-level committee for "the rehabilitation of slum dwellers of Dhaka" – despite evictions still being carried out by various governmental institutions. The committee aims at rehabilitation of previously evicted slum dwellers and therefore is currently developing resettlement schemes, identifying unused government lands suitable for relocation and establishing statistics of previously evicted slum dwellers. (expert discussions ASK, CUP)

## Adaptation processes and new livelihood strategies of evicted slum dwellers in Dhaka

The previous account of evictions in Dhaka reveals that these are still a common problem, threatening slum dwellers' livelihoods considerably. Adequate resettlement and rehabilitation schemes are far from being implemented, therefore the question remains how the slum dwellers react to the shock of eviction and follow strategies of adaptation. The following findings are based on interviews and focus group discussions with slum dwellers who previously experienced eviction, conducted by the authors in June 2008 at two locations in Pallabi and Gulshan (see figure 1). Reasons for the evictions were infrastructure projects such as road construction or lake-side walkways, as well as housing projects for middle-income groups. All the evictions were carried out by government institutions, mostly on governmental land. All evicted slum dwellers stated that they had not received any notice of the eviction until a few hours before and thus could not secure all their belongings.

The slum dwellers currently settling in Pallabi were evicted from other locations of Dhaka city either in 2002 or in January/February 2007. Their new neighbourhood consists of one-storey kaccha houses, i.e. the Bengali term for housing structures made of temporary building materials such as bamboo, cheap wood and scraps, or tin houses, i.e. made from corrugated iron sheets. One room of about 10 m<sup>2</sup> is normally occupied by a family of five or six persons for a rent of about 10-12 € per month. Water is available through community tanks and community pipes. However, the connections are illegal and residents pay high amounts per month to local suppliers. The same accounts for electricity, which is provided in a similar way. There are some community toilets and bathrooms, but these are in a bad condition.

The slum dwellers currently settling in Gulshan area were evicted from the same location in January 2007.

Although the evictions were carried out with the aim of developing the lake side, no further action has been taken by authorities; therefore the land is still accessible to the urban poor. After a few days, many of the residents therefore returned to the same location as squatters. This also influenced the quality of the neighbourhood: most houses consist of left materials such as tin, plastics, polythene sheets, cloths and straws. Due to the temporary nature of their houses all interviewees found it hard to survive during rainy season and cold winter months. Before eviction the population density was high, but as not all former residents returned the density today is still moderate. In the absence of water supply facilities the residents use the water collected from adjacent Banani lake for their daily necessities, and some also collect water from the nearby residential houses and mosques. The sanitation facilities are devastating: the community toilets were demolished during eviction and the slum dwellers constructed a temporary toilet above Banani Lake – the same lake used for the water supply. Electricity is currently not available.

**Location decision after eviction:** The evictions experienced did not necessarily lead to the adaptation of a less vulnerable residential strategy. In some cases, maintaining the workplace was considered more important than a safe residence. Immediately after eviction, the slum dwellers tend to move to temporary residences either at the evicted location or at the place of relatives or friends. These are normally occupied only for a few days, up to a month. Afterwards the slum dwellers settle permanently. Some choose privately owned land, which they deem less vulnerable locations. Private landowners generate income from renting space to slum dwellers, so they normally do not evict slum dwellers without proper notice. In some areas, however, people do not leave the place where they were evicted from and thus accept further exposure to the threat of eviction. For them, this seems to be a better option than losing their work places. This strategy was mainly found among slum dwellers of Gulshan. Gulshan model town and the adjacent Banani model town<sup>5</sup> are high-income residential areas and, as such, provide a variety of livelihood opportunities to the urban poor, e.g. as housemaids, rickshaw pullers, sweepers and construction workers.

**Change of work places and increased flexibility:** The necessity to change the working place is a common problem following evictions. Highly vulnerable work places are those which are based on a specific location or 'immobile', e.g. operating or working in small shops or workshops or being a housemaid in a nearby high-income location. These activities cannot

easily be followed up if the household moves to another location. Especially those slum households who got evicted from the high-income neighbourhoods of Gulshan try therefore to stay in the same place or in a nearby place even after eviction in order to secure their jobs. Hence they accept the permanent threat

**Asiron, female, 28 years, currently working as a housemaid, Gulshan**

...stayed at the location after eviction in order to not lose their work places

*"For the last 16 years we have been living in this slum. We came here because there is a high demand for housemaids in the surrounding neighbourhoods. I am working as a housemaid in Banani [adjacent high-income area] and my husband is a construction worker. [...] We were first evicted from this site in January 2007. We didn't receive any notice before the eviction. They treated us very badly and burnt our houses. We lost all our furniture and house materials when they ran the bulldozer over our house. I was helpless. [...] For four days we stayed under the open field, nobody cared for us. Then we gathered some plastic, tins and old cloths to build a temporary house in the same place, with the help of some neighbours. We have no other place to go to and we cannot risk losing our jobs. We have to stay here. [...] The social networks are not as good as before, because of the constant threat of eviction there is some tension and sometimes we quarrel very badly. [...] I don't know when we will be forced out of here again. They even evicted us again two months ago. All the times they are saying they will build a walkway here, but there is no sign of it. The people living in these apartments need us, but they don't want us to live here. [...]"*



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**5** The development of Gulshan and Banani as model towns started in the 1960s. Both neighbourhoods were designated for upmarket residential purposes; Gulshan also became the main location for embassies. Rapid development of the neighbourhoods, especially since the 1990s, led to transformation of the originally low-density residential areas into medium and high-density apartment blocks. Furthermore, the Gulshan and Banani are no longer solely residential areas but became a centre of commercial activities, leading to further high-rise developments and densification. Both neighbourhoods are among the highest-income areas of Dhaka.

◀ Gulshan, Dhaka, residences build up again after eviction

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Islambagh squatter settlement, Dhaka



of subsequent eviction and sub-standard living conditions in self-made houses built from remaining materials in order to keep their working places.

As outlined in literature (e.g. PAYNE 2002), distance and transportation costs are decisive elements for slum dwellers livelihood strategies. Many slum dwellers suffer from loss of jobs due to increased transportation costs: "My wife was engaged as a housemaid at a house near our previous place of living, but from here it's too far, so she couldn't continue. My son was also engaged as a shopkeeper at a nearby shop, but it's also too far" (Afjal, male, rickshaw puller, Pallabi). As a direct consequence of eviction, slum dwellers that operated small tea stalls, grocery shops or workshops within the evicted slum area lost their work places and thus their entire business belongings and machines. They experienced problems in setting up the business again. The experience also prompted some slum dwellers to adapt their livelihood activities to better cope with displacements by changing from 'immobile' to 'mobile' or 'flexible' income generating activities: "[...] they also evicted my husband's shop, now he is selling tea and cigarettes on a temporary stall [...]. We don't have the ability to rent a permanent shop" (Rehana, female, engaged in some small home-based industry, Pallabi).

Loss of job had a direct impact on children's education. Due to cuts in the monthly household income, many households are no longer able to send their children to school and some children even have to start working in order to contribute to the household income.

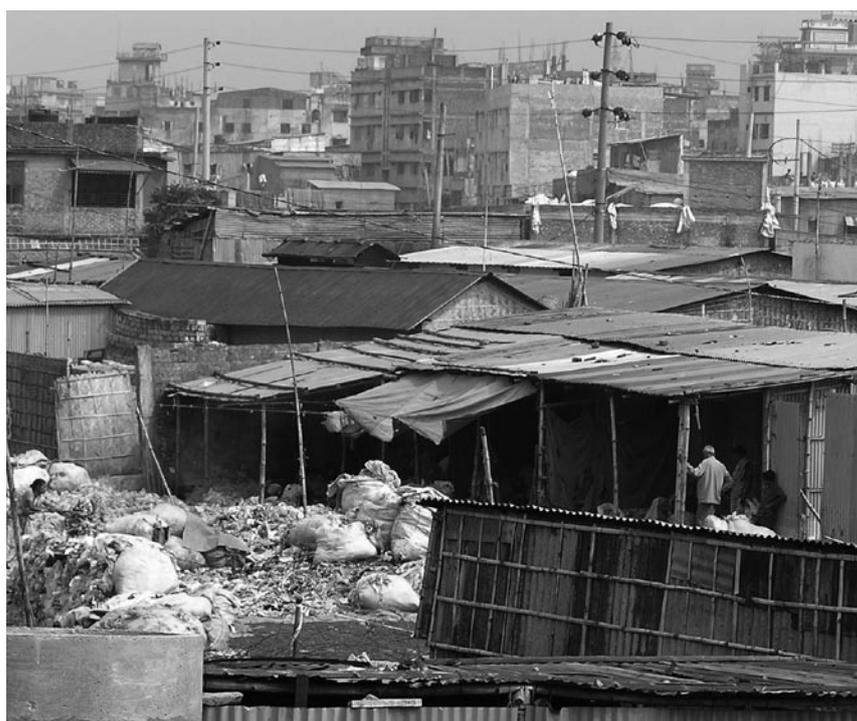
In a slightly better position are households whose income generating activities are based on 'mobile' jobs like rickshaw pulling or street vending. Those respondents show a higher adaptability to change the location and do not fear loss of job in case of another eviction as their jobs can be carried out everywhere. Nonetheless, they also experience problems if in the new area there are different customer patterns: "The people living in the slum [that got evicted] were the main renters of my husband's rickshaw vans. But due to eviction he lost many of his customers. So he is now finding it difficult to manage money for the daily necessities of the family" (Rubina, female, currently not working, Pallabi).

As a result of the change of income generation activities the income of evicted slum dwellers decreased significantly, even more than a year after eviction. The average household income before eviction was about €61 (with exchange rate of February 2007) and in June 2008 was about €43 (with exchange rate of June 2008). Furthermore, evicted slum dwellers stated considerable losses of furniture, TVs and cooking ware.

**Social capital:** Social networks within the slum community are highly valued by respondents, who received help through these networks in times of crisis. Social capital turns out to be especially important during the first days after eviction. Almost all respondents stated that they moved in with relatives for the first couple of days. At new places they find it difficult to adapt to the new communities and build up new networks. The slum dwellers who got evicted in 2002 stated that they had established good social networks at the new place, while the newcomers from 2007 found their social networks not as good as in the old location. They told that it takes some time to build a good relation with a new community and complained about the high fluctuation within their community, which further limits the establishment of new social networks. Even those residents in Gulshan that stayed at the place of eviction experienced deterioration of social networks. This was mainly attributed to the pressure of poverty: "All people are busy to survive. We don't find time to have a good social gathering." (Hashem Ali, male, owner of a small tea stall, Gulshan)

## Conclusion

The study proved that livelihoods of the urban poor are highly location-specific and relocation from these sites causes severe disruptions. The importance of location is stressed by the observation that many urban





◀  
Korail slum area and  
Gulshan model town,  
Dhaka

poor continue to live with the threat of eviction. They prefer staying within proximity of their work places than moving to distant locations where they risk losing their current jobs.

The experience of eviction therefore does not lead to the adoption of long-term and sustainable livelihood strategies, but, as BROWN and LLOYD-JONES (2002: 189) also observed regarding the general characteristics of urban livelihoods, to the adoption of short-term survival strategies, which are opportunistic rather than planned. The urban poor lack the resources to adopt livelihood strategies which buffer them well enough against abrupt and unexpected shocks. Instead they have to rely on whatever opportunity there is to secure the immediate survival of the household – even if this includes living under a constant threat of eviction. Given the fundamental need for income generation to sustain an urban living, as well as the high land values of Dhaka city leading to social exclusion of the urban poor from large parts of the city, free decision making regarding location and long-term strategies is rather limited.

It is widely recognised that future resettlement schemes need to incorporate the importance of location for the urban poor's livelihoods. The large-scale resettlement schemes at the urban fringe that were

and still are discussed by planning authorities in Dhaka will not be adequate in this regard. It can be expected that the urban poor will not respond to these schemes or will move back to locations within the city, including pavements, where livelihood opportunities are available. As providers of a large amount of services to the higher income population they will also be needed in these locations.

The policy makers and local authorities of Dhaka Metropolitan Area need to recognise the need for integrative urban development. Resettlement locations in proximity to work places and distributed over the whole city of Dhaka need to be identified by policy makers and local authorities. Furthermore, relocations of the urban poor have to be reduced to unavoidable cases. Care needs to be taken that relocations do not result in 'urban cleansing' of prime housing sites, in the end benefiting the real estate developers and higher income groups (GHAFUR 2008). Only an integrative urban development of Dhaka would enable the urban poor to carry on with their livelihood activities in a 'city for all'.

All photos: authors.

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# Community-driven Alternatives to Eviction in Cambodia

Thomas Kerr, Somsak Phonpakdee

## Basisorganisierte Alternativen zu Vertreibungen in Kambodscha

Seit 1998 wurde in Phnom Penh ein Viertel aller Bewohner irregulärer Siedlungen vertrieben, um Platz für kommerzielle Bauvorhaben zu machen. Nur wenige erhalten eine Entschädigung. Umgesiedelt in Hütten-siedlungen ohne Infrastruktur am Stadtrand haben sie keine Möglichkeit mehr, ihren Lebensunterhalt zu bestreiten. Da Proteste bei direkt anstehenden Vertreibungen oft wirkungslos sind, hat sich eine Bewegung armer Stadtbewohner entwickelt, die schon früh initiativ wird und versucht, über Verhandlungen „Win-Win“ Lösungen für alle Beteiligten zu erreichen. Dies setzt eine Verhandlungsfähigkeit der lokalen Gruppen voraus. Dafür bilden sie Spargemeinschaften und Netze, die Informationen über die Siedlungen und über mögliches Land zur Umsiedlung sammeln. Als Alternative zur Vertreibung werden basisorientierte Umsiedlungen und in situ upgrading angestrebt. In Phnom Penh waren upgrading Ansätze weitestgehend unbekannt, bis mit lokalen Spargruppen, einem Sanierungszuschuss des Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF) und mit Unterstützung der Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) ein Pilotprojekt in der Ros Rey Siedlung durchgeführt wurde. Auch anderswo konnten so Kosten für Abriss und Umsiedlung vermieden und lokale Netzwerke erhalten bleiben. Im Falle der Toul Svay Prey Siedlung, wo 129 Familien einem Abwasserprojekt weichen mussten, identifizierten diese das Grundstück, auf das sie bereit waren umzusiedeln. Die Stadt stellte das Land sowie eine Entschädigung zur Verfügung, UPDF gewährte Baukredite und die Bewohner selbst führten ihre Umsiedlung durch. Seit 2002 entwickelt die Stadtverwaltung gemeinsam mit UPDF, ACHR, UN-Habitat sowie den lokalen Spargruppen City Development Strategies als Analyse- und Planungsinstrument. Upgrading wurde 2003 zu einer Regierungsstrategie erklärt. Hunderte Armenviertel wurden seither saniert anstatt vertrieben zu werden. Trotz der hier vorgestellten upgrading Ansätze kommt es in Kambodscha auch weiterhin zu massenhaften gewaltsamen Vertreibungen aus Armenvierteln, unter schwerwiegender Verletzung der Menschenrechte, wie der jüngste Bericht der UN-Sonderberichterstatterin für das Recht auf Wohnen, Raquel Rolnik zeigt.

*„The urban poor in Phnom Penh are not destitutes; they are not helpless. They are people who are capable of solving their own problems and controlling their own destiny. What is required is for NGOs and the city to understand what they are doing to improve their own lives and settlements and to support it. When people start making improvements to their own communities, the process empowers them to do many other activities.“*

(Arif Hasan, from the OPP in Pakistan, on a recent visit to Phnom Penh)

Development plans which determine what's going to happen where in a city are often billed as technical documents, which only technical people can understand and whose preparation is a purely technical exercise of arranging roads, zones, drainage and access with the greatest efficiency. Of course, planning a city's growth does have a technical dimension, but the fact is that development plans are highly political and should be treated as such. They're not engraved in stone, they're printed on paper that can be scrunched up and thrown into a wastepaper bin. Every aspect of those plans is negotiable.

## Introduction: Eviction is preventable

In many places and in many ways, the urban poor continue to be treated like blocks of color on a development map, to be lifted up here and pasted down again there - not like human beings with real needs, real families and real aspirations, living in real communities. Needless to say, not many urban decision-makers are interested in asking them what they'd like to do or making an investment in finding solutions to their housing needs that are „win-win“, because that takes a long time to do.

**Almost all the eviction happening today is preventable.** None of the misery eviction brings or the wrongful planning decisions, disregard for equity or misdirected development imperatives behind it are inevitable. The solution for eviction lies in finding strategies which allow people to be part of the planning which affects their lives. This might involve legitimizing the rights of poor people to stay where they are now, or it might involve relocating them to land which allows them to continue developing their lives - or myriad other options in between.



◀◀  
Photo 1:  
"The urban poor are not  
helpless..."

◀  
Photo 2:  
114 families living in the  
road outside The National  
Pediatric Hospital in Toek  
La'ok 14, Phnom Penh,  
achieved a collaborative  
resettlement agreement to  
new land at Kok Khelang,  
in the airport suburb of  
Pochentong.

This can happen in a thousand different ways, but it requires protracted negotiations and substantial power - or political clout - among the people's groups that are negotiating. And that only comes if people are organized. There are actually many, many intermediate options which offer alternatives to forced eviction - alternatives which work for both the city and the poor. These options are being explored, refined, added to and scaled up right now, in cities across Asia.

### **How community organizations are taking a longer view in their search for solutions to eviction**

All cities go through periods of intense development, when things change rapidly and new construction displaces a lot of people. These are forces which neither history nor housing rights activism have ever been able to stop. Organizations of the poor aren't so naive as to suppose this process will stop for them, but if it happens in ways that bring material improvements for some and causes impoverishment and suffering for many, something's badly wrong.

In the 1980s the movement to recognize social and cultural rights, of which the right to housing was prominent, led to a range of UN declarations being signed by governments around the world. Since then, the international development community has condemned evictions loudly and clearly, but what it hasn't done is made investments in finding workable alternatives to eviction.

A lot of the NGO activism back then was essentially defensive and took the form of organizing communities to resist specific evictions, filing court cases to stop demolitions, using those international covenants to spotlight housing rights violations or lobbying the multilaterals which were funding the projects causing evictions. These short-term, fire-fighting strategies

scored some important victories, brought the eviction issue into the public eye and kept it there. But the violence, fear and dislocation of an eviction is not the best place for clear thinking or for negotiating alternatives. Once a crisis has erupted, communities are on the defensive and the tools available to deal with the situation reduce sharply. The reality is that most good housing solutions don't come immediately.

So the question for these embattled communities was how to create an engagement that begins with a crisis, identifies the problems and then creates a more offensive, longer-term process of resolving them. Instead of passively waiting for the eviction squads to come and then scurrying to stop them, what if community organizations could find the space to focus on the longer-term goal of secure housing: prepare themselves, save their money, link into networks, gather information about their settlements, find alternative land, develop alternative housing plans and begin negotiating with their cities with realistic housing solutions which address issues of people's basic survival and city development.

Now if you have a tradition in which communities have linked together, done all this homework and opened up this kind of dialogue with their municipal officials, then negotiations will start much earlier, at the first tremor of tenure insecurity, long before anybody even mentions eviction. If this kind of community organization and dialogue are in place, they can resolve most eviction-creating problems as a matter of course, so the dramatic cases of forced eviction will diminish. And in many cases, this is what has happened.

Cambodia makes a very good example of this. While the country's towns and cities continue to experience wave after wave of large-scale eviction, the country's growing poor community movement continues to

test, develop and scale up a wide range of strategies to negotiate long-term secure land and housing options which represent the best alternatives to eviction.

### Evictions in Phnom Penh:

Since 1998, over 15,000 families - a quarter of the city's informal settlers - have been evicted from their settlements in Phnom Penh and removed to peripheral areas of the city. In a city with no formal policies to address the housing needs of the poor, a lot of land already occupied by poor communities is being taken over for tourist complexes, „city beautification“ and commercial developments. The large infrastructure projects being developed on an ad-hoc basis in the city, by bilateral and multilateral organizations, are also big eviction causers. A few communities have managed to access support in the form of funds for relocation, housing or infrastructure, but most just get pushed around in this process, victims rather than beneficiaries of these official and unofficial plans.

Photo 3 / Photo 4:  
Akphivat Mean Cheay project, a voluntary resettlement of the former Toul Svay Prey roadside community in Phnom Penh to new land at Akphivat Mean Cheay. First experience of community-driven resettlement in Cambodia.



It doesn't have to be like this. In most planner's minds, the development needs of the city and the housing needs of the poor are not reconcilable. As a result, most urban development solutions tend to be planned by one group which gets all the benefits, but victimize and impoverish the other. In fact, cities around Asia are gradually realizing that when space is created for local governments, poor communities, NGOs and other stakeholders to talk to each other and plan together, they can design „win-win“ solutions which work for the poor and for the city.

For the last ten years, the network of community savings groups in Phnom Penh, the Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF), the Municipality of Phnom Penh and ACHR have worked closely together to understand the larger forces behind these evictions which are determining how the city develops and to explore ways of managing this change process in more equitable ways by promoting first a people-driven relocation process as an alternative to eviction, and later an in situ community upgrading process as an alternative to the less-than-perfect relocations that have swept the city more recently. An important part of this process has been developing tools and processes within poor communities which strengthen their position as they negotiate for access to secure land and infrastructure.

### First eviction breakthrough in Phnom Penh: Community-managed relocation done in partnership with the municipal government

The UPDF came into existence in response to an urgent need for housing finance when 129 families in the roadside settlement at Toul Svay Prey found themselves threatened with eviction, to make way for a municipal drainage project. Through their community saving scheme, the people organized themselves and negotiated their own planned, voluntary resettlement to new land at Akphivat Mean Cheay. The community's efforts were helped by some exposure trips to India (where they saw how other poor communities had negotiated alternatives to eviction) and by the enthusiastic District Chief of Chamkarmon District.

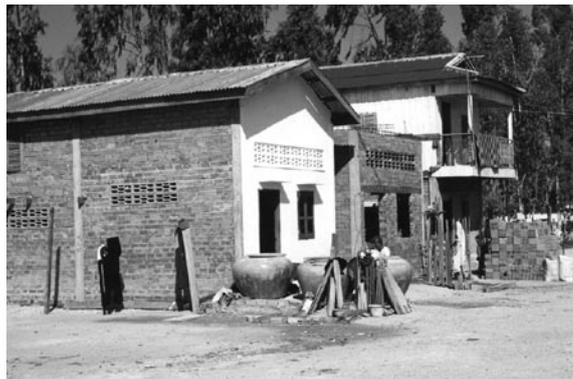
The Akphivat Mean Cheay relocation project was training for everyone involved, and was the city's first chance to see how effectively poor communities can plan and undertake a voluntary resettlement process which works for everyone. The project allowed the city to proceed with its drainage project at the same time it provided a secure, healthy and well-located community for people that project had displaced. The project was officially inaugurated by the Prime

Minister on April 20, 2000 and made a strategic first case for the UPDF because of the collaboration it involved:

- **The community** searched for alternative land and chose the new site from nine options.
- **The Municipality** purchased the land for the people, using funds from the drainage project budget, and will grant each family individual land title when they have repaid their UPDF loans.
- **The Urban Resource Center's young architects** helped the people draft the layout plan for the new community, which included 54 square meter plots for all the families, a community center and several water points.
- **The UN-Habitat project** provided land-filling and basic infrastructure through a system of community contracts, in which local community people (instead of outside contractors) were paid to construct roads, storm drains, pit latrines, water pumps, plant trees and pave the lanes.
- **The Chief of Chamkarmon District** helped negotiate the whole process.
- **The UPDF** provided housing loans of US\$ 400 to each of the 129 families
- **The people** built their own houses, most using the „core house“ model (with loft) they had developed with young architects from the URC and which was affordable to most families.
- **The Community Savings Network** turned each step of the process into training and inspiration for communities around the city, through a constant stream of exchange visits.
- **The community's women's savings group** collects loan repayments daily, weekly or monthly, depending on people's earning, with 20% of the repayment going into mandatory saving, as a pad against any repayment problems. Repayments for the whole community are made all in one batch once a month to UPDF.

The new formula established in the Akphivat Mean Cheay project (in which the city provides the land and some compensation, the UPDF gives housing loans and the people manage everything themselves) turned out to be a major breakthrough in the city and several more community-managed and government-managed resettlement projects of a similar nature followed. The existence of the UPDF and the availability of its modest loans to communities continued to grease the wheels of informal communities' negotiations with the authorities and to help them plan and carry out these relocation projects, as a better alternative to looming evictions, in collaboration with the Municipality, international agencies and NGOs.

**Bur relocation is not always the best option:** Despite the implementation of these important relocation projects, less than half of the 15,000 households evicted in Phnom Penh over the past ten years have been resettled. A small percentage of them are doing all right at relocation sites they've chosen and planned themselves, but the overwhelming majority are still camping out in shacks without water supply, toilets, roads or flood protection in remote resettlement col-



◀ Photo 5: Community-driven resettlement of 88 families evicted from their community along the busy road 271, to make way for a mayor road-widening project.



◀ Photo 6: Kraing Angkrang 2 project, Phnom Penh: 278 families burned out and evicted from their rooftop settlement on top of Block Tan Paa rejected the city's resettlement offer to one of the remote resettlement colonies and found land closer to sources of employment.

### Relocation isn't cheap!

When you add up the real costs of properly resettling displaced families, it's not cheap. For example, the cost of resettling thee 129 families at Akphivat Mean Cheay, including the cost of purchasing and developing the new land (and including UN staff costs, overheads and consultancies) came to approximately US\$ 330,000, or about \$2,500 per household. At that rate, resettling the remaining 65,000 poor households in Phnom Penh's informal settlements would cost a staggering US\$160 million. And that figure doesn't include any of the enormous costs shouldered by the families themselves: moving costs, lost investment in their old housing and infrastructure, new house construction costs, lost income and increased transport costs at the new site. Who would ever call this a „sustainable“ option?

### **What does community upgrading look like? Phnom Penh's first experiment in 100% people-planned and people-constructed comprehensive settlement upgrading in Ros Reay is inaugurated in May 2003**

The 72 tightly-packed houses in Ros Reay are part of a large neighborhood of over 1,000 households behind the French Embassy, most settled here in 1979, immediately after the Pol Pot period. Ros Reay has bad flooding problems during the rainy season, so building a drainage system was the community's first upgrading priority. Because Ros Reay was chosen by the city's community savings network to be the first pilot comprehensive upgrading project, the community became a lively classroom of training-by-doing, where every step of the process became learning for the whole network and the whole city.

The first step was to survey and map the settlement, which community people did themselves, with groups of „upgrading apprentices“ from communities in other districts. On the map, they plotted all the houses, trees, water points and problem areas, and used this to discuss what needs improving. Once they'd decided what improvements to make, they estimated the costs and drew up a budget, which was agreed upon in a city-wide meeting in January 2003.

Municipal officials and community people from around the city attended the ground-breaking ceremony, where the first \$500 handed to the community was matched by \$500 in cash contributions from community members. They set to work the next day, dismantling the fences to enable the lanes to be straightened a bit and to make room for laying the underground sewage and storm drain system, which involved enormous labor.

Each family was responsible for digging the ditch in front of their house. Even pregnant women pitched in, and people returning from day jobs dug by lantern-light into the late night, under the energetic guidance of Ros Reay's leader, Keo Yin, whose husband, a construction subcontractor, provided technical assistance with slopes, pipe sizes and man-hole design. The lanes were then paved with concrete, trees and flowering shrubs were planted along the lane-edges and the houses and fences were freshly painted in white, blue and green.

#### **What did upgrading Ros Reay cost?**

- US\$ 3,600 - Laying the sewage and storm-drainage network and constructing 53 manholes.
- \$ 7,100 - Concrete paving of lanes (339 m) with half-meter planting strips at sides.
- \$ 100 - Planting 122 trees.
- \$ 1,200 - Repairing fences, painting 57 houses, 39 fences.
- \$ 12,000 - Total cost of the project (\$ 167 per household)

#### **And who paid?**

- **Labor:** approximately 2,200 person-hours of labor, all provided by community members.
- **Technical help:** A community member with contracting experience designed the system, set levels and supervised construction.
- **Budget:** \$ 500 cash contribution from community members and an \$11,500 grant from UPDF.

onies that are far from employment opportunities, support structures, schools and clinics. Resettlement has deprived these families of the means to develop themselves, deepened their poverty, compromised their health and their survival. The government's commitment to provide alternative land to evicted families has been important, but as Phnom Penh kept developing and land conflicts increased, many began to worry that for lack of any better idea, resettlement was becoming the only option, the city's automatic response to most land conflicts that come up in the city's development. Plus, the UPDF had been able to provide modest housing and income generation loans to only a fraction of these families, to help them rebuild their lives at resettlement sites they purchased and developed themselves or at the big government relocation colonies at the outer edges of the city.

### **Another option is community upgrading: Improving poor communities where they already are is cheaper, easier, better for the poor and better for the city they live in than the impoverishing cycle of eviction and resettlement outside the city**

In fact, most of the city's poor settlements are on land which is not needed for public purposes like roads, flood control projects or government buildings and could be very nicely upgraded and turned into healthy, clean and beautiful neighborhoods for a fraction of the cost of upgrading. A big investment has already gone into these settlements, whose central locations and built-in social support structures are vital to poor people's survival. So instead of bulldozing them, what if people were given a chance to improve their settlements (in the same place or on land close by) and turn slums into beautiful neighborhoods, proud parts of the city?



◀ Photo 7 / Photo 8: Before and after: Here are two photos of the main street in Ros Reay, Phnom Penh, before the improvements and after, with the drains and road and planting strips in place.

As cities around Asia have learned through experience, helping people to secure their land and upgrade housing and living conditions inside the city, rather than throwing them out, is in the best interests of the city, the poor and the whole urban economy. Slum upgrading is poverty reduction, urban development and eviction-busting at its best.

Asian cities now have many good examples of community upgrading, but in Phnom Penh five years ago, upgrading was still a new concept. Nobody knew how it worked, what it looked like, who does the work or how much it costs. A few individual communities and UN-HABITAT projects had made some improvements here and there, but these scattered efforts hadn't shown what can happen when the whole community (not just a few pit latrines or a wooden walkway) gets a face lift. So the UPDF and the community network decided to start creating a stock of local examples of how community upgrading can work, for people to see and learn from.

### 1. Environmental improvement grants:

The UPDF's environmental improvement grants were the fund's first response to the needs of poor communities in the city to make improvements to their environmental conditions and basic services, and the city's first peek at community-managed upgrading. The network of communities in each district surveyed the environmental problems in their settlements and then helped communities work up simple project plans for constructing toilets, pumps, wells, sewers, walkways and water supply systems, up to a ceiling of \$700 per project and \$12,000 for the whole city. The low ceilings meant that the communities and the districts had to economize, negotiate, compromise and prioritize the most urgent projects - which was in itself learning for everyone. The first 22 projects were completed within six weeks, and they showed clearly that people can

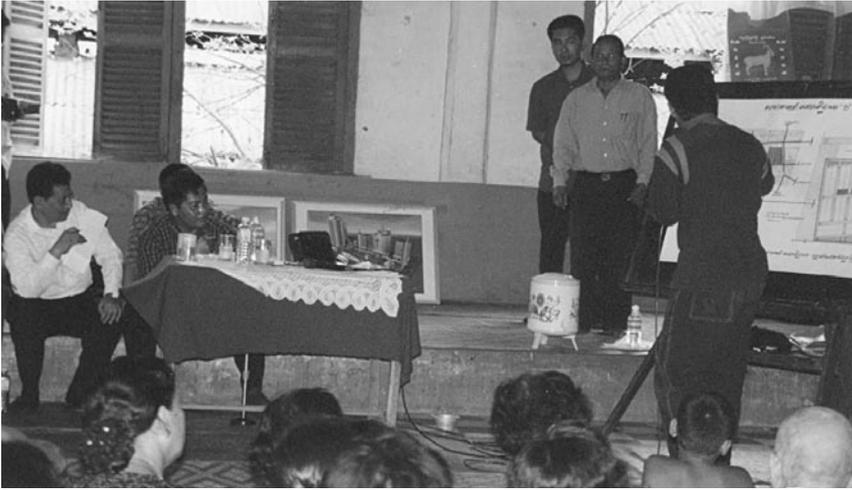
improve their own communities better, cheaper, faster and more appropriately than any government department or contractor when they are given the chance to manage the process themselves. The hands-on experience from this first round of environmental improvement projects gave people the confidence to negotiate another \$40,000 from the UN-Habitat project to support their next round of projects.

### 2. Upgrading „Training by doing“ with CDS:

In most planner's minds, the needs of the city to develop and the needs of the poor to have decent, secure housing will always be in conflict. As a result, most urban development solutions tend to be planned by

#### The magic hat trick

Eviction - and the suffering and impoverishment it causes - is a symptom of a city without any clear vision for its development and without any idea how to deal with the housing needs of its poorest citizens. But with just a little modest finance, some fresh ideas and a little delicate negotiation, the UPDF has shown that it is possible to conjure up new possibilities for the poor and a new development direction in a city where none existed before. Five years ago, the UPDF proposed this new upgrading policy, and now that abstract idea has taken concrete form, in the shape of hundreds of upgrading projects around the city - and in provincial cities around the country. People can now see something happening, something that is possible, something that is real, something that gives form to the idea that a city like Phnom Penh can continue to develop, while still making room for the poor. The size of these upgrading budgets is extremely small, but the size of hope, the energy, the confidence, the security and the new culture in which people come together and work together after the project is finished is enormous.

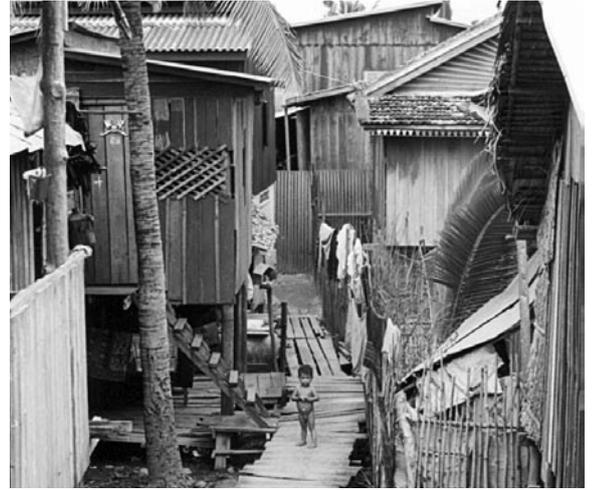


▲  
Photo 9:  
Roteh Pleong ("Railway B"),  
Phnom Penh: Land-sharing  
plan presented by the  
community in a big public  
meeting as an alternative to  
forced eviction.

▶▶  
Photo 10:  
Roteh Pleong ("Railway  
B"), Phnom Penh: On-site  
community redevelopment  
using a "land-sharing" strat-  
egy to redevelop people's  
housing on a 25% part of  
the site and return the rest  
to the city.

one group which gets all the benefits, but victimize and impoverish everyone else. In fact, cities around Asia are gradually realizing that when space is created for city governments, poor community organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders to talk to each other and plan together, they can bring a little more balance into the development process and they can design „win-win“ solutions which work for the poor and for the city.

The City Development Strategy (CDS), which was launched in 2002 as a joint program of the Phnom Penh Municipality, ACHR, UPDF, UN-Habitat, URC and the community savings network, offered a chance to understand the changes happening in the city, to bring the various actors in the city's urban development process together and to explore ways of managing this change process in a more effective, more equitable way. The CDS involved an extensive process of research, surveys, discussion, joint planning, training and implementation, using Cities Alliance funds.



**But this CDS wasn't all talk:** One of the most important goals of the CDS process was getting Phnom Penh's poor communities more involved in planning, by getting them to work with their ward, district and city officials and NGO allies to implement real solutions to problems of land, housing and infrastructure - within their own constituencies. To do this, community-managed „comprehensive upgrading“ projects were launched in three poor settlements in the city, as a form of „training by doing“, to show how different upgrading strategies can be used to transform run-down informal settlements into beautiful, secure neighborhoods.

**Second eviction breakthrough in Phnom Penh: Community upgrading becomes government policy and a new housing alternative takes root**

On 24 May, 2003, the UPDF celebrated its fifth anniversary with a large gathering in Phnom Penh which drew together over 5,000 poor community members

**Community upgrading support from UPDF**

UPDF's support for upgrading goes directly to poor communities with strong savings groups and active sangkat (ward) networks, and it goes in such a way that communities manage every aspect of the process themselves, from planning to implementing to managing the money. The UPDF's financial support to the upgrading projects takes two forms:

• **Grants for infrastructure upgrading.** The upgrading grants are calculated on the basis of \$70 per family, up to a ceiling of \$5,000 per community. No more than 2 sangkats in each khan can propose upgrading projects each month, with a limit of 3 upgrading projects per khan per month. These ceilings have been imposed partly because funds are limited, but also to get the networks to prioritize those communities most in need first.

• **Housing improvement loans** of up to a maximum of \$500 per household, at 8%, repayable in 3 years.

**Upgrading progress so far (as of May 2008):  
In Phnom Penh:**

- Number of communities: 122
- Number of beneficiary households: 13,984
- Total amount of upgrading grants: US\$ 234,144
- Total amount of housing loans: US\$ 971,908

**In 11 provincial cities:**

- Number of communities: 44
- Number of beneficiary households: 8,406
- Total amount of upgrading grants: US\$ 76,074

from around the city and from ten provincial cities, friends from other Asian and African countries, representatives from local NGOs, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies and officials from the highest levels of the local and national government. The event was organized with support from the Municipality, the community savings network, ACHR and Slum Dwellers International (SDI), who jointly decided to use the celebration to promote the strategy of on-site community upgrading, as an alternative to eviction and relocation to distant sites. The gathering was a chance to showcase the work poor communities had done with community upgrading, and to invite the government to support a concrete proposal from the UPDF and the communities to upgrade 100 of the city's informal settlements in the coming year.

The government's response to this proposal surpassed everyone's expectations. In front of the big gathering, the Prime Minister, Mr. Hun Sen, announced that his government had agreed to the proposal and promised to provide secure land tenure to all those settlements.



◀ Photo 11:  
Chev Kim Heng, Vice  
Governor of Phnom Penh  
inaugurating a community-  
driven upgrading project.



◀ Photo 12:  
Street vendors in Phnom  
Penh.

**From eviction to resettlement to upgrading to land tenure: these policies haven't come out of any book, they've come from people who are writing the rules as they go along.**

As the most recent waves of real estate investment and eviction have driven still more poor communities from their land in the city, a lot of people are asking, Why should poor communities keep messing around with this savings and credit stuff, why not get out in the street and start protesting? But if you look back over the past 13 years, almost all the significant steps forward for the city's poor have had their roots in the savings and credit movement and the community-driven-with-partnership development model it has promoted.

Before 1997, the government's only idea for how to deal with squatters was to demolish their shelters and drive them away with soldiers and machine guns. It was the city's federation of savings groups that first surveyed the city's poor settlements, designed model houses and began the negotiations with the city that eventually led to Phnom Penh's first community-managed resettlement project, as an alternative to eviction. In that pilot project, the people chose the new land and the city bought it for them. That resettlement project set a new precedent, and from then on, even when evictions did happen, almost all had some kind of resettlement.

Then, a few years later, when the next wave of investments whipped the development pressure on land even higher and the scale of evictions and removal of poor communities to remote resettlement sites was getting out of hand,

it was the same network of savings groups that proposed - and won - a new community upgrading policy for the city, as a more humane alternative to these poorly planned and impoverishing relocations.

It was also this same network of savings groups that negotiated the city's first land sharing project at Borei Keila, in which 1,776 families got brand-new flats in 7-story blocks on the same land, free of charge, and another 1,454 families from Dey Krahom got brand new shop houses free in the city's first fully-planned private-sector-financed relocation project. Both of these have become models for resolving other community-vs-development conflicts without eviction. Even still, the evictions haven't stopped, and the next frontier is secure land tenure.

Nobody is saying that the practice of savings and credit was the single causal factor in bringing about these important and overwhelmingly positive changes for Cambodia's urban poor. But people got together, developed their own idea of what they wanted, built up their resources to finance it (first internally through their savings groups and then externally through the UPDF), and then got the government to go along with this new game they'd made up - not all at once, of course, but gradually, step by step.

►  
Photo 13:  
Street scene in Ros Reay,  
Phnom Penh.



Photo 14:  
Street redevelopment  
in Ros Reay community  
upgrading project.



▼  
All photos:  
Asian Coalition of Housing  
Rights

This article on eviction in Cambodia is drawn partly from the October 2003 special eviction issue of „Housing by People in Asia“, the newsletter of the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR), and partly from the more recent May 2008 newsletter of the Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF) in Phnom

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### Somsak Phonpakdee

Program Coordinator, Urban Poor Development Fund (UPDF). UPDF, the country's principal ongoing support system for the urban poor, was set up in March 1998 as a joint venture of ACHR, the Municipality of Phnom Penh and the city's network of community savings groups. UPDF has since become a national institution, supporting well-linked networks of poor communities in over 20 Cambodian towns and cities.

This breakthrough was only possible because of the work poor communities in Phnom Penh had already done and the strength they had already built over ten years through their organizing, saving, surveying, network-building and carrying out all kinds of development activities.

In the five years since the „100 slums upgrading policy“ was announced in 2003, over 200 poor communities in Phnom Penh have taken advantage of the space the new policy creates for people to plan and implement improvements to their lives and living environments. The process has had its ups and downs, but as the city watches increasing numbers of communities transform themselves from squalid „befores“ into healthy and livable „afters“, enthusiasm for the next phase of upgrading is high.

Community upgrading is usually understood as a means of improving just the physical aspects of poor settlements, by providing improvements to housing, infrastructure and environmental conditions. Cambodia is among a growing number of examples in Asia where a much more comprehensive version of community is working as a powerful democratizing process. Because people decide what works best for them, and because the situation and set of needs in each community is different, community upgrading can take many different forms, including upgrading or „reblocking“ on the same site, land sharing, community-managed relocation or upgrading of communities within government resettlement sites. The first step is for a community to survey and discuss its settlement and its problems, and then to develop a community improvement plan, which includes both immediate upgrading plans and broader, longer-term development plans - plans which can include physical, economic and social aspects, depending on the community's ideas.

This more ambitious version of upgrading includes the physical stuff, but it also involves the upgrading of people's land tenure, status in the city and legitimacy as citizens, upgrading their relationship with the local government, upgrading their capacities to manage their own development, upgrading their knowledge, their organizational and management skills, their ability to collaborate and their confidence. These are the political aspects of upgrading - a democratic process in which the physical and the political go together. Groups of people organize themselves, mobilize their resources, make their plans and carry out their upgrading projects. And in the process of doing things, they change their relationship with local development partners and build better partnerships with their city.

In cases where communities come in the way of planned civic projects, he pledged the government's help in securing relocation sites that are nearby, close to job opportunities. This represented an important turnaround in poor people's housing in Phnom Penh, using a strategy which improves rather than destroys the city's existing stock of informal housing, and was an acknowledgement from the highest level of government that Phnom Penh's informal communities provide a much-needed stock of housing for the city's workers which nobody can afford to replace.

The upgrading projects that had already been implemented, like the one at Ros Reay, were small, but they had proved that even with so many problems, poor settlements can be improved and people themselves can manage the improvement work themselves. This new policy was a chance to scale up this settlement improvement into a city-wide process and gave a very big boost to the UPDF's efforts to make community-driven upgrading the city's main strategy for addressing the housing needs of its poor. The upgrading policy makes people the main actors, but they work in close partnership with their networks, the Municipality and their sub-district councils to survey, discuss, prioritize, plan, develop upgrading proposals and carry out the work, with funding and technical support from UPDF and other organizations.

# Forced evictions in Cambodia make thousands of people homeless

Raquel Rolnik - UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing - 30 January 2009

„More than 130 families were forcibly evicted during the night of 23 and 24 January 2009 from Dey Krahorm, in central Phnom Penh to make way for a private company to redevelop the site. „The forced eviction was carried out in the middle of the night, without prior notice and the shelters belonging to this poor community were torn down and destroyed. This situation has grave consequences for all the victims, but particularly the women and children. Reports also state that prior to the eviction, the community suffered intimidation and community representatives and members were also subjected to criminal charges.

„It is regrettable that the ongoing negotiations with the residents were abandoned, casting aside a valuable opportunity to reach a just and lawful solution to this longstanding dispute. It is now of utmost importance that the rights of the residents to fair compensation for their lost homes and property and the provision of adequate alternative housing are fully respected.

„Unfortunately this is by no means an isolated case, and the increase in forced evictions throughout Cambodia is very alarming. Reports indicate that tens of thousands of poor people have been forcibly evicted and displaced, pushing them into homelessness and further destitution.

„In Cambodia, a consistent pattern of violation of rights has been observed in connection with forced evictions: systematic lack of due process and procedural protections; inadequate compensation; lack of effective remedies for communities facing eviction; excessive use of force; and harassment, intimidation and criminalization of NGOs and lawyers working on this issue.

„Forced evictions constitute a grave breach of human rights. They can be carried out only in exceptional circumstances and with the full respect of international standards. Given the disastrous humanitarian situation faced by the victims of forced evictions, I urge the Cambodian authorities to establish a national moratorium on evictions until their policies and actions in this regard have been brought into full conformity with international human rights obligations.“

The former Special Rapporteur on adequate housing conducted a mission to Cambodia in 2005 and presented a mission report on his findings and recommendations (E/CN.4/2006/41/Add.3). Concerns on forced evictions in Cambodia have been shared through a large number of communications by the Special Rapporteur with the authorities. These communications remain unanswered to date.

For more information on the work and reports of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, go to: [www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/housing/index.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/housing/index.htm)

For more information or interviews, call + 41.22.917.91.77 or email [<srhousing@ohchr.org>](mailto:srhousing@ohchr.org)



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# London 2012 – Displaced by the Olympics

Carolin Bender

## London 2012 – Vertrieben von den Olympischen Spielen

Im Zusammenhang mit den Olympischen Spielen 2012 in London sollen Stadterneuerungsprojekte im sozial benachteiligten East London die Lebensbedingungen vor Ort verbessern. Statt einer Aufwertung des Stadtviertels besteht jedoch die Gefahr, dass das Projekt zu Gentrifizierung führt und so sozial schwache Gruppen noch stärker marginalisiert. Diese Fallstudie schildert die Erfahrungen einer Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft, die umgesiedelt wurde, um Platz für den Olympischen Park zu schaffen. Die Untersuchung beleuchtet die damit verbundenen Prozesse und erläutert mögliche Auswirkungen des Projektes auf andere Gruppen im Stadtviertel. Ausgehend von einer Darstellung der Wohnungsbaugenossenschaft "Clays Lane Housing Coperative" werden in diesem Beitrag die Versäumnisse im Umsetzungsprozess aufgezeigt und wird abschließend untersucht, inwiefern die Umsiedlung eine weit reichende Belastung für sozial schwache Gruppen darstellt. Ausgehend von den Erfahrungen der Bewohner von Clays Lane kommt der Artikel zu dem Schluss, es sei eher unwahrscheinlich, dass die Olympischen Spiele und das damit verbundene Stadterneuerungsprojekt dazu beitragen werden, die Situation einkommensschwacher Gruppen in East London zu verbessern. Es ist im Gegenteil damit zu rechnen, dass das Projekt zu einer Verschärfung der räumlichen Fragmentierung und damit zu sozialer Polarisierung führen wird.

*The impact of mega-events on host communities has been the topic of many heated debates. Some argue that mega-events are thoroughly positive since they pose great economic opportunities, can be used to re-imagine a city, facilitate improvements of public infrastructure and enhance social capital through boosting voluntary activity.*

(Hiller 1998; Ritchie 1984)

Others criticise that potential benefits are often not realised or outweighed by detrimental side-effects. According to this line of argument, mega-events are said to limit public dialogue by restricting citizens' rights to participation and dissent, to facilitate the privatisation of public space leading to spatial fragmentation and social polarisation, and to distribute costs and benefits asymmetrically with the burden disproportionately born by the poor (BROUDEHOUX 2007; LENSKEYJ 2002). This is most drastically illustrated by the link between mega-events and evictions. As a range of studies demonstrates, mega-events have frequently led to the displacement of marginalised communities: Residents have either been directly evicted to make room for the construction of the event venue and the related infrastructure (WANG 2006), to accommodate visitors (OLDS 1998), or to 'beautify' the area in preparation to the event (GREENE 2003). In other cases residents have been displaced indirectly through rising housing costs driven by property speculation in connection with mega-events. Empirical evidence for these processes is widely available: COHRE

alone lists 27 mega-events – including World Bank/IMF summits, beauty pageants and major sporting events – which led to forced evictions and displacements of predominantly marginalised people such as low-income groups, Roma, squatters or the homeless (COHRE 2007:215-218).

In this context, the question arises how the 2012 Olympics are going to affect East London. East London has been one of the most deprived areas in the UK for years and continues to be characterised by income poverty, low levels of health and education as well as high levels of crime and unemployment (OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER 2007:115-126). An attempt to address this multi-dimensional concentration of poverty is now being undertaken through a massive regeneration project connected to the 2012 Olympic Games. According to the organisers, this project will create 32,000 new job opportunities and 9,000 new homes in the vicinity of the Olympic Park. Combined with new public facilities, transport links and £7 billion in private investment funds (DCMS 2008:3-4), East London is thus planned to undergo a process of 're-branding' into "a place of choice that people can take pride in" as one interviewee put it.

At the same time a study commissioned by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport recognises that the proposed regeneration project bears the risk of further marginalising vulnerable groups in the East End through a process of "gentrification and polarisation"

(EDCOMS 2007:13). This is a legitimate concern, since the site for the Olympic Park in East London has been acquired through a compulsory purchase order leading to the displacement of more than 200 businesses employing 5,000 staff (LDA 2008), an estimated 1,000 residents, one community of Roma and one of Irish Travellers, several sports facilities, the Manor Garden allotments, a church and an informal market. This article provides a case study of one of the displaced groups, the Clays Lane community, a former Housing Cooperative, to illuminate the broader dynamics at play and to give an indication of how other groups in East London are possibly going to be affected by the Olympic Games. Drawing on literature that has been discussed elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> this article will first outline the background of the Clays Lane Housing Cooperative, then highlight shortcomings in the relocation process and lastly explore if the displacements have further marginalised vulnerable groups.<sup>2</sup> This article reaches the conclusion that, judging by the experience of the Clays Lane community, it is likely that the Olympics and the associated regeneration project, instead of benefiting the deprived communities in the area, will result in an exacerbation of spatial fragmentation and social polarisation.

### Background of the Clays Lane Housing Cooperative

Two years after London had lodged its bid for the 2012 Olympic Games as a catalyst for the regeneration of East London, the London Development Agency

issued a Compulsory Purchase Order in 2005. Even though 450 objections were raised against it, resulting in a lengthy public inquiry (INSPECTORS REPORT 2006), the Compulsory Purchase Order was eventually confirmed in December 2006 and the Olympic site was cleared and sealed off in October 2007.

One of the different groups and facilities which were displaced through the process was the Clays Lane Housing Cooperative: Clays Lane had been built in the late 1970s and had been operating as an independent Cooperative Housing Association run by an elected management committee from 1982 until 2005 (INSPECTORS REPORT 2006). During more than 20 years of operation, it constituted the second largest housing cooperative in Europe with a capacity to accommodate up to 500 people in mostly shared houses of four, six or ten bedrooms. The ideology of the cooperative focused on participation and cooperation, which meant that activities such as the sharing of skills amongst residents were actively encouraged. Residents also had to participate in at least six of the monthly courtyard meetings per year that constituted the democratic base of the cooperative. Furthermore, the courtyards served as social hubs as they had been designed to facilitate maximum interaction and engagement (FLUID 2005). Through these different measures, a strong sense of community had been developed within the cooperative and many residents relied on their housemates and neighbours as a social support network.

**1** For a discussion on the link between mega-events and evictions refer to: COHRE, 2007, Fair play for housing rights: Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights, Geneva: COHRE. An excellent overview outlining the debate on evictions in the name of development can be found in: DWIVEDI, R. 2002, Models and methods in development-induced displacement. *Development and Change* 33 (4):709-732.

**2** This article is based on an MSc dissertation submitted to the London School of Economics in August, 2008. The case study draws on interviews with key stakeholders such as residents, city officials and NGO workers, whom the author would like to thank for their help and contributions. Since the research was conducted according to principles of strict confidentiality, the interviewees shall remain anonymous.



◀ Suburban housing area in London – the right to stay put?  
Photo: K. Teschner

▶  
Clays Lane - satellite image  
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The cooperative therefore provided a stable environment for the many vulnerable groups who came to live there. Vulnerability in this context is defined as "a high degree of exposure and susceptibility to the risk of crises, stress and shocks, and little capacity to recover quickly" (RAKODI 2002:14). According to the livelihood framework (RAKODI 1999; MOSER 1998), vulnerability results when a household commands over low levels of natural, physical, human, social, political or financial capitals and thus finds it difficult to cope with external shocks.

In the case of Clays Lane, this meant that the cooperative housed a variety of people who displayed different characteristics of vulnerability which would often overlap and reinforce each other. For one, all residents of Clays Lane were 'vulnerable' in as far as that the cooperative, by policy, only admitted people who could demonstrate "a genuine housing need" (FLUID 2005:11). Consequently, the 'threat of homelessness' was one of the primary reasons why people had moved to Clays Lane in the first place (ibid:26). A second dimension of vulnerability affecting the residents was income poverty and an unemployment rate which was almost three times the national average at the time (ibid:40; GUARDIAN 2008). Thirdly, the estate housed many people with health problems, which reflected in an unusually high proportion of people with disabilities (FLUID 2005:24). Furthermore, a large number of non-British nationals residing in Clays Lane found themselves in a vulnerable position as they did not know their rights, had language difficulties, and found themselves socially isolated. And lastly, Clays Lane sheltered people who wanted to avoid the attention of the state, such as illegal immigrants or squatters. These people were vulnerable as they had no recognised rights.

While residents displaying one or more of these characteristics are essentially those targeted by the regeneration project, they were in many cases detrimentally affected and have come to find themselves considerably worse off due to the development.

## The process of displacement

According to many residents the displacement process displayed numerous flaws. In fact more than 74 tenants of the 424 official residents were so dissatisfied with the process that they raised official objections at the public inquiry against the compulsory purchase order (INSPECTORS REPORT 2006:53-54). While the objections cover a range of valid concerns, two key issues stand out and can illustrate how residents and particularly vulnerable groups fared through the displacement process.

Firstly, it remains doubtful whether the design team really exerted themselves to avoid displacements wherever possible. Leading up to the identification of Clays Lane as the location for the Athletes Village, the planners only produced a small chart of less than half a page weighing the advantages and disadvantages of 3 possible locations against each other (PRIOR 2006:14). In this context the impact assessment of the demolition of the Clays Lane estate amounts to a short mention of "community disruption" in said table. Additionally, the design seemed to be somehow flexible: In January 2006 the location for the Athletes Village was shifted from Clays Lane towards Stratford City, with Clays Lane now being allocated for support facilities, a sporting venue and an access road (INSPECTORS REPORT 2006:57). Residents thus questioned, considering the peripheral location of Clays Lane on the Olympic site, if the displacements could not have been

avoided altogether and critiqued that “the LDA has not set out a compelling case to show that [Clays Lane] is genuinely required” (ibid:57). The objections, however, were dismissed in the public inquiry. While the inspector admitted that the original selection of the Clays Lane estate for the allocation of the Athlete’s Village was not well documented, he reversed the burden of proof. According to him there was “no legitimate evidential basis to undermine the original assessment” (ibid:304) and no evidence that the demolition of Clays Lane could have been avoided when the layout for the Olympic park was changed (ibid:305-306).

This approach contravenes guidelines by Human Rights Organisations, which explicitly demand that “states shall ensure that evictions only occur in exceptional circumstances. Evictions require full justification given their adverse impact on a wide range of internationally recognised human rights” (COHRE 2006:129). The failure to do so deprived the residents of their right for a thorough assessment of alternatives and shows that the impact on the Clays Lane community was not a prominent consideration for the planners. This raises suspicions that Clays Lane might have been displaced rather arbitrarily.

A second critical aspect in the displacement process was the way information was shared. Throughout the public inquiry many residents voiced concerns about a lack of information, particularly regarding the ongoing planning process and the relocation options available to them. However, a more significant example of the way information was handled emerged in the interviews. Here the residents related how a guide compiled by the NGO on the rights of non-British citizens was barred from distribution by the authorities for fear that the issue might become politicised. In a political climate in which a public debate was evolving around non-British nationals committing crimes in Britain without being deported (DAILY MAIL 2006, WOODWARD 2006), the authorities did not want to be seen facilitating access to social housing for non-British citizens. However, the decision to prioritise a political agenda over the rights of non-British citizens had highly detrimental consequences for residents. As one of the interviewees related: “People like one of my friends were frightened... She thought that she would be homeless.” Not knowing that they had a right to be re-housed, many people hastened to leave the estate and ended up in “quite desperate situations”, to quote another of the interviewees. While it is not entirely clear how many people made their decision unaware of their entitlements, it has been established that a considerable proportion of the residents went into

private accommodation (SNU 2008:5) that provides comparatively worse tenure arrangements and living standards at a higher cost. According to a follow-up survey, merely 5% of those in private accommodation felt that they had been given a proper choice over their accommodation (ibid:11).

This incident also illustrates another critical aspect in the relocation process. The organisational setup throughout the relocation process was compromised, in that the NGO appointed as “Independent Tenant Advisor” was far from independent. Since the NGO was paid directly by the authorities, they were understood as “the landlord’s advisor really” tasked to assist the authorities in moving the residents.

Thus, the international guidelines were disregarded again and the rights of the displaced tenants violated: Human Rights organisations demand that residents have a right to an “effective dissemination by the authorities of relevant information in advance, including ... proposed comprehensive resettlement plans specifically addressing efforts to protect vulnerable groups” (COHRE 2006:131). It is also highly questionable if the compromising setup did fulfil the requirement of “the provision of legal, technical and other advice to affected persons about their rights and options” (COHRE 2006:131).

### After the displacements

But not only have the rights of the displaced been disregarded, the displacement process has also further marginalised the aforementioned vulnerable groups. This emerges from a comparative evaluation by the residents about their circumstances before and after the displacements: Residents’ assessments of their new accommodation were documented in a survey which was undertaken between November 2006 and April 2008 on behalf of the authorities. And while the findings of the study are limited as the survey only captures 45% of the residents, the survey nevertheless provides a broad indication of the general level of satisfaction and highlights some key issues.

According to the study, 73% of the respondents stated that they were satisfied with their new home (SNU 2008:9). However, when asked for an overall judgement whether their present circumstances were better or worse than at Clays Lane, 39% felt worse off and 12% saw no difference (ibid:14). This discrepancy is due to two reasons: On the one hand, it emerged in the interviews that especially residents who had been living in 10-bedroom houses were very happy about not having to live in shared accommodations anymore

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The shape of things to come - River Thames and traces of city development  
Photo: K. Teschner

and felt that their living conditions had improved substantially. However, at the same time housing costs increased significantly. On average residents are now paying £112 per week (SNU 2008:14) compared to the weekly housing costs of £47-67 at Clays Lane. And while the increase in housing costs was supposed to be cushioned through a compensation payment of £1555 (ibid:8), at an average increase of £45 per week the payment can only absorb the increase for a limited amount of time. Consequently, in the long run the increase has to be borne by the residents. Seeing that most tenants had been struggling financially at Clays Lane already, many will be severely affected by the doubled, sometimes even tripled, housing costs. It is thus not surprising that 71% of the respondents stated that they were now having difficulties to live within their income (ibid:13).

Apart from the financial consequences, the displacements also had particular effects for people with health problems such as learning difficulties or substance abuse issues. On the one hand, many who were initially very nervous about leaving their familiar surroundings seem to have settled in well and to appreciate their new independence as part of a self-development process. However, others were overstrained by the demands of their new situation: As emerged in the interviews, some residents could not deal with the responsibility of managing their bills and compensation payments and ran into huge debts. Others found themselves socially isolated. While keeping and making friends in their new accommodation was a problem for many residents irrespective of their

health (SNU 2008:13), those with learning difficulties or substance abuse problems seem to have been hit hardest by the loss of their social network at Clays Lane. This concern was raised frequently in the interviews: Residents believe that losing the social support of friends and neighbours has seriously impaired the coping strategies of residents and in some cases even resulted in homelessness.

Another group which was particularly affected by the displacements were non-British nationals. On the one hand, some saw the relocation as a very positive development, since it allowed them access to the British social housing system. Consequently, those who can afford the increase in housing costs consider themselves better off now. However, many others, who were unaware of their entitlements and exited the housing system, are highly dissatisfied. Generally, those who are now living in private accommodation, of which a considerable number are presumably non-British nationals, were unhappy: Nearly 75% felt they had not received adequate support throughout the relocation process (SNU 2008:7), 76% thought they had not been given a proper choice over their new accommodation (ibid:11), and 77% considered themselves worse off after the displacement (ibid:14). Their main concerns seem to be vulnerable tenancy arrangements, considerable cost increases and social isolation.

However, worst affected by the displacements have been the informal residents. While this aspect of the process is very difficult to establish, since informal residents were never officially recorded and are reluctant to talk about their experience for fear of legal repercussions, the story of one 'guest' at Clays Lane illustrates their case. Since he was not eligible to be re-housed by the authorities and unable to afford private accommodation, he bought a houseboat. He is now living on a canal not far from the Olympic park and has tied up his boat informally to a mooring in between many other boats. However, he anticipates that this will not last and he will be displaced by the Olympics again: Since the canal is zoned for 'riverside development', it is highly likely that gentrification and property speculation triggered by the Olympic Games will result in the development of the now neglected riverbank. This will lead to the displacement of the houseboat residents, who will have even fewer rights than the tenants at Clays Lane and limited grounds to oppose the process.

Overall, it thus emerges that, while some people have benefited from the displacements, others have been detrimentally affected and consider themselves worse off now. This is especially true for vulnerable groups



such as people on low incomes who are struggling with the increase in housing costs, people with substance abuse problems who lost their social support network, non-British nationals who were unaware of their rights and relocated to inferior private accommodation, and informal residents who find themselves further marginalised and deprived of security of tenure. The displacement of the Clays Lane residents thus seems to have aggravated the marginalisation of deprived groups.

## Conclusion

Overall the case study gives reason for concern: Not only has the 'right to development' of the displaced people been disregarded, other rights which could possibly have facilitated a "resettlement guided by an equity compass" (CERNEA 1997:1570) have been violated as well. The right to information, for instance, was subordinated to the economic and political concerns of the developer irrespective of highly detrimental consequences for the residents. Thus, the improvement of the well-being of the residents was demonstrably not the overriding principle guiding the development. This disregard for the entitlements of the displaced prevails on a structural level as well. Here it can hardly be argued that 'the right to remain' of the affected people has been weighed against the right of the general public to a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable city. In the case of Clays Lane, it can safely be assumed that the greater public good did not depend on the provision of temporary support facilities and a sporting venue in this specific location. Instead, the fact that the authorities hardly saw the necessity to justify the requirement of Clays Lane or thoroughly explore possible alternatives evokes the notion of displacements as a manifestation of an unequal distribution of power whereby the marginalised are randomly shifted around according to the interests of elites (DAVIS 2007:98). Consequently, the displacement of the Clays Lane residents must also be understood as a political process, raising concerns about entitlements, governance and power. This is further supported by the fact that the 2012 Olympics seem to have limited the public discourse in the same way as has been experienced in the context of other mega-events. Overall, opposition to the development was not appreciated: In the public inquiry of the compulsory purchase order for instance, legitimate concerns were brushed off. And even within its own ranks, the authorities did not seem to allow for dissent — or, as one of the interviewees put it: "Anybody who wants a career in politics in New Labour couldn't vote against this."

Against the background of these broader dynamics, it seems unlikely that the improvement of the well-being of other marginalised groups in East London will be a priority of the Olympic development. Instead, it is to be anticipated that the experiences of the former residents of Clays Lane will repeat themselves on a larger scale. Thus, it is likely that some groups are indeed going to benefit from the regeneration project and the connected improvements of public infrastructure. This is most likely to apply to people who have legal rights and can assert them, such as homeowners. However, as in Clays Lane, the improvements in circumstances will be accompanied by higher costs, such as higher council taxes or service charges, which might stretch the budgets of low-income households. Also, it is very likely, that other groups will be detrimentally affected by the development. This will probably apply to those who don't know their rights, can't assert them or whose rights are not recognised. Thus, tenants who are not protected by law against disproportionate rent increases will probably be displaced from their homes by rising housing costs. As in Clays Lane, the authorities knowingly accept these detrimental consequences for vulnerable groups and subordinate them to wider political interests. As an official put it: "There is a lot of people living in very cheap housing, some of whom have no choice. But economically it should stop: it's not a sustainable model in any event. ... There may be an increase in the rents. And some people will have to look elsewhere."

As a result of this approach and the failure to put in place an institutional framework to protect vulnerable people, it can be expected that the Olympics and the associated regeneration project will lead to further displacements of predominantly vulnerable groups. Since many of them are going to be further marginalised as a consequence of the displacement, the development could ultimately result in an exacerbation of spatial fragmentation and social polarisation.

However, since the official legacy framework is still to be developed by the authorities, much is as yet undecided and many detrimental effects can still be avoided. Accordingly, it is important that research into this development continues and attention is paid specifically to the protection of vulnerable and marginalised groups.

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# Transformation and Change in Downtown Buenos Aires. The new urban social question

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## Veränderungen im Zentrum von Buenos Aires - die neue Soziale Frage in der Stadt.

Buenos Aires erfuhr in den letzten Jahren eine gewaltige Umwandlung, vor allem in seinen südlichen Stadtteilen. Auf Grundlage einer seit 1998 durchgeführten Querschnittstudie in den Quartieren La Boca, San Telmo und Barracas werden diese Veränderungen analysiert. Die Prozesse der Stadterneuerung führen sowohl zu einer schrittweisen Umwandlung des öffentlichen Raums als auch zur Definition touristischer Enklaven. Dies trägt zur graduellen sozialen Veränderung bislang eher einkommensschwacher Stadtteile bei. Ärmere Mieter werden durch Arme mit regelmäßigeren Einkommen ersetzt oder müssen kommerziellen Investitionen weichen. Die verbreitete Besetzung leerstehender Gebäude wird zunehmend unterbunden, Armenhotels werden für Rucksacktouristen umgerüstet. Sichtbarster Punkt solcher Prozesse städtebaulicher Aufwertung ist das Großprojekt Puerto Madero mit neuen Luxuswohnungen und hochwertigen Dienstleistungen entlang einer ehemaligen Hafenzzone in direkter Nachbarschaft der untersuchten Viertel. Vor allem in La Boca und San Telmo wird klar, dass die Beschwörung des Kulturerbes treibende Kraft der eher ökonomisch motivierten Umwandlungsprozesse ist. Die Bewahrung des historischen Erbes ist ein weniger anrühiges Motiv für Umweldungsmaßnahmen als die nackte ökonomische Verwertungskalkulation, die sich hinter verschönernten Fassaden verstecken kann.

### 1

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### 2

Based on Herzer, Di Virgilio, Ostuni, Redondo and Rodríguez (2008) and Di Virgilio (2008).

### 3

For instance *Pasaporte de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires* published by the city's tourism sub-secretariat.

### 4

Quinquela Martín's paintings reflect this world and space.

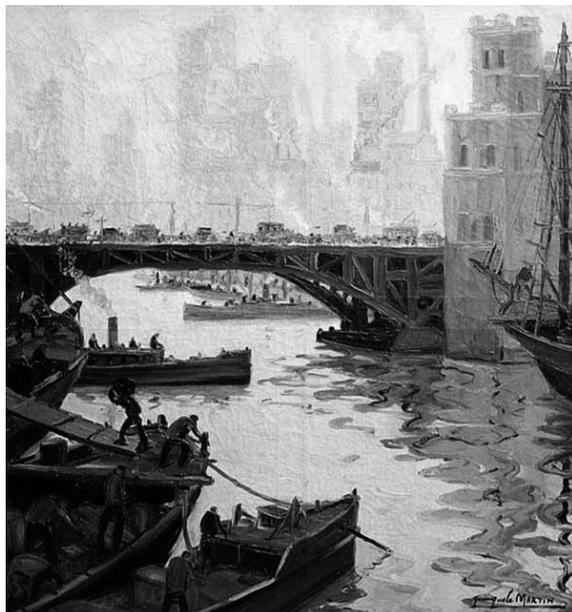
### 5

Such population loss has been typical of many city quarters that subsequently went through urban renewals, as shown by David Ley (1996) and Neil Smith (1996).

## Introduction

Since the 1970s, downtown areas in the cities of some central countries have gone through urban renewal. These quarters started attracting artists, new businesses and small and large companies, middle-income segments of the population, and others who have transformed the cityscape and have created in some cases serious issues for the low-income residents of these areas (Muñiz, 1998).

Gentrification principally involves two movements:<sup>1</sup> recovery of residential areas in the cities' central quarters



► Figure 1:  
Barracas Bridge in La Boca,  
Buenos Aires, painting by  
Quinquela Martín

and their occupation by middle and upper middle-income households and/or<sup>2</sup> a reinvigoration of commerce. Both contribute to the increase in the value of property. Residential and commercial gentrification can in some cases merge. However, commercial gentrification can take place without residential renewal. These processes result in increased building maintenance expenses that hurt owners, and cause rising rentals and property taxes. Some residents pay the increases, but others, both owners and/or tenants – including poor families who have lived in these areas for a long time – must leave their neighbourhoods (Wilson, 1992; Smith, 1996; Marcuse, 1986 and 1998). Most research on this issue has focused on these urban processes in the developed world but has rarely addressed them in Latin American cities. Our work summarises the main findings of a longitudinal study which began in 1998 in the La Boca, San Telmo and Barracas quarters in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It examines gentrification through an analysis of the affected households' characteristics – socio-economic level, living standards and employment – in order to determine which aspects of their life styles make them vulnerable to displacement. It also scrutinises the residents' perception of change as well as the local and national governments' interventions that encourage such developments. The purpose of our study was to increase the empirical evidence in this regard about Latin American cities, given the wide range of processes underway, and to contribute to the existing body of theory in this field.

## 1. Urban renewal processes in South Buenos Aires: the neighbourhoods under analysis

### La Boca

Historically, La Boca has been a peculiar emblematic neighbourhood. The characteristics of this neighbourhood, its people and the symbols that represent it have given it a certain personality that is quickly captured when reviewing newspaper reports, tourist brochures or cultural guides to Buenos Aires.<sup>3</sup> La Boca developed as a working class neighbourhood of European immigrants who, after merging with local society, moved to the city's middle class quarters. Initially, La Boca was strongly linked to the port activity at Riachuelo<sup>4</sup>, the centre of the local economy, and the daily lives of the families that lived and worked there. Gradually, these areas also became part of the list of icons that identified this neighbourhood.

Between 1947 and 1991 Boca lost 40% of its population<sup>5</sup>, suffered a severe degradation that intensified in the 1970s when the port was decommissioned and many factories<sup>6</sup> in the neighbourhood were progressively closed. As the neighbourhood shed its social and economic role, in the 1990s the city government launched a neighbourhood revival project including the building of river embankments<sup>7</sup> to take advantage of the quarter's prime location close to the city's centre. Simultaneously, higher income groups entered the neighbourhood to purchase low cost old warehouses, shipyards and homes for re-conversion and subsequent use, mainly for commercial and cultural activities.

Since the beginning of the renewal process, working class households have seen their existence threatened by the increasing value of the properties where



◀ Photo 1:  
Low cost rental housing  
in La Boca, Buenos Aires.  
Photo: K. Teschner 1993



◀ Photo 2:  
Historical buildings in La  
Boca, Buenos Aires



◀ Photo 3:  
Tourism zone balconies  
in La Boca, Buenos Aires.  
Photo: K. Teschner 2007

Area / neighbourhood	Population	% of total population	Apartments	% of all apartments	Inhabitants/apartment
<b>Ciudad Autónoma of Buenos Aires</b>	2,965,403	100.00	1,352,488	100.00	2.19
<b>La Boca</b>	73,581	2.48	17,847	1.31	4.12
<b>San Telmo</b>	46,277	1.56	12,996	0.96	3.56
<b>Barracas</b>	73,377	2.47	28,367	2.10	2.59

Source: Population data and number of apartments from National Census 2001 (*Censo de Población y Vivienda, INDEC, 2001*). Percentages and relation inhabitants/apartment: Own calculation.

◀ Table 1:  
Population and apartments  
in the neighbourhoods  
under analysis, Buenos  
Aires, 2001

**6** Production historically focussed on shipbuilding, textile and food industries.

**7** Embankments protect the area from flooding.

**8**

This survey was applied to the same sample in 1998 and again in 2000.

**9**

Data collected in 2000. Source: Herzer, Di Virgilio, Ostuni, Redondo and Rodríguez, 2008.

**10**

In the case of 'highly vulnerable work conditions' two of three (or all) benefits of a formal employment are missing: Those workers may have stable jobs but no retirement and no social security plans, they may be neither permanently employed nor enjoy retirement payments or they are neither permanently employed nor do they enjoy social protection benefits. In some cases, they have none of those three benefits.

**11**

The data come from a survey with San Telmo and Barracas residents. A total 473 households (235 in San Telmo and 238 in Barracas) were quota surveyed. Data was collected at the end of 2005.

**12**

One of the first urban renewal initiatives was to declare, in 1979, the area comprised between Av. Independencia, San Juan, Paseo Colón and Peru Street as a historical conservation area.

they live, and the added vulnerability for their families this entails. Significantly<sup>8</sup>, the neighbourhood has lost 36% of its residents but it is impossible to ascertain why they left or where they went. However, when we examine the characteristics of the replacement population, we may conclude that the first stage of the renewal process was driven by higher rentals. A closer look, however, does not reveal significant differences in the characteristics of the buildings or their occupancy. Nor does the socio-economic profile of the households' heads seem to have changed, although they may hold better jobs than their predecessors. We may therefore presume that departing families have been substituted by other low-income, impoverished households who could no longer afford living in better neighbourhoods in the city.

Some characteristics of residents and households in La Boca:<sup>9</sup>

- 40% of the survey respondents face highly vulnerable work and living conditions.<sup>10</sup> 14% are unemployed.
- 60% of the household heads rent their homes. Squatters occupy 10% of homes (table 2). They mostly occupy private buildings.
- 74% of the residents have improved their homes over the last two years to be able to continue living in them. 61,5% of those residents are tenants, thus demonstrating their attachment to their place of residence, and 7,5% even had squatted the building. Nevertheless, the difficulty they face to obtain loans to buy their home severely increases their vulnerability to displacement. Only 24,9% of those improving their house own plot and building or the apartment.

*San Telmo*

San Telmo is the south-side quarter that is closest to the national and city political and government centres. Services and city infrastructure are appropriate, well maintained, and well above those elsewhere in the south side, despite some isolated signs of decline. This is a small historical quarter with many landmarks from the time when the city was founded and started developing. In the decade from 1980 to 1991 it gradually ceased to be a residential quarter. Many houses were torn down to use the land properties for other purposes, mostly apartment buildings and service activities. Simultaneously, other more precarious types of occupation appeared and grew in San Telmo, including boarding houses and squatting.

Characteristics of houses and households in San Telmo:<sup>11</sup>

- Houses are typically occupied by one family of 4 members on average.
- 19% of the homes are in poor state of repair, both construction and maintenance-wise. Among these, 23% are occupied by tenants while 66% by the plot and house owners.
- 28.9% of all residents are tenants (table 2). 52% of the tenants live in critically overcrowded quarters.
- 2% reside in tenements (usually with one room apartments and poor maintenance); 5% live in welfare hotels and low-income boarding houses.
- 80% of the household heads are economically active and 62% are payroll employees. 52% of the households are headed by skilled white-collar



► Photo 4: High income housing and private harbour, Puerto Madero urban renewal project, Buenos Aires, Photo: K. Teschner 2007



►► Photo 5: San Telmo coffee shop, Buenos Aires. Photo: K. Teschner 1993

employees; households headed by low-skill workers are less numerous.

- 21,6% of the neighbourhood's family heads are exposed to highly vulnerable work conditions.<sup>10</sup>
- 27% of the families earn a combined monthly income of less than 800 Argentinean pesos (about 267 US\$ in 2005).

### Barracas

Barracas was always a lively industrial neighbourhood, but successive crises and the gradual push to drive industry away from the city has led to the neighbourhood's decline and downgrading. Three clearly differentiated macro areas have emerged as a result. One is predominantly residential. Here renewal started earlier. The second is the industrial and service area, and the most deteriorated of the three. The third macro area includes the Villa 21-24 shantytowns and the popular Zavaleta quarter which developed from an informal resettlement area. Over the last two decades, this area has experienced the largest population growth in the entire neighbourhood.

#### Characteristics of households in Barracas:<sup>11</sup>

- 22.7% of the residents are tenants (table 2). 2% reside in tenements (usually one room apartments) and 1% in welfare hotels. 34% of the households live in overcrowded homes.
- 75% of the household heads are economically active, mostly payroll workers. 17% face highly vulnerable work conditions.<sup>10</sup>
- 30% of the families earn less than 800 Argentinean pesos (or 267 US\$) per month.

A shifting labour market has negatively impacted low-income people in these neighbourhoods, including impoverished lower revenue sectors. As a result, informal jobs have grown together with increasingly



◀ Photo 6:  
Tourist mall in remodelled slum building, San Telmo, Buenos Aires

formal land and home ownership. In San Telmo and La Boca, informal living conditions seem to be predominantly linked to rental situations. In Barracas, on the contrary, they tend to be linked to squatting. This evolution is clearly related to the renewal underway in San Telmo where squatters have been evicted and boarding houses turned into youth hostels. In La Boca, deteriorating rental buildings and other old housing, and the growth of highly precarious high-density slums along the riverbanks, are the other face of La Boca's tourist area.

Each of the three southern quarters has its own peculiarities, which are determined by their particular histories and the various stages and characteristics of their urban and social evolution. They are presently in different stages of renewal. In San Telmo, changes started at the beginning of the 1980s, much earlier than in Barracas or La Boca.<sup>12</sup> And although La Boca has been in transformation for over 10 years, changes are very slow and point to a clear case of commercial gentrification limited to the tourist enclave. In Barracas, changes started more

Area / neighbourhood	% Owner of ground and apartment	% Tenants/inhabitants in dependency	% Squatters	% No data
<b>Ciudad Autónoma of Buenos Aires</b>	69.0	24.7	4.4	1.9
<b>La Boca</b>	25.4	60.0	10.0	4.6
<b>San Telmo</b>	59.6	28.9	3.4	8.1
<b>Barracas</b>	69.3	22.7	7.6	0.4

Sources: Data for Buenos Aires *Ciudad Autónoma* from National Census 2001 (*Censo de Población y Vivienda, INDEC, 2001*) as show  
Data for San Telmo and Barracas are from a survey with San Telmo and Barracas residents end of 2005.

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◀ Table 2:  
Owner, tenants and squatters in the neighbourhoods under analysis





in pointing out “other” neighbours – new immigrants, criminals, occupants, characterised as “those who do not want to work” – in a context of increasing unemployment, neighbours who should be displaced so that the quarter can improve.

### Private sector initiatives...

Private sector actions to recover quarters through architectural and/or patrimonial interventions are also linked to cultural activities. Patrimonial policies have been more disseminated in the last five years, not only through specific urban interventions, but also through “awareness and sensitisation” campaigns. This is how patrimonial policies become cultural policies, which is first of all reflected by the fact that the San Telmo-Montserrat programme was transferred to the Culture Secretariat.

Although these policies started much earlier through architectural interventions, in the last years, cultural programmes have added to the process and tied cultural value and physical space improvement to urban heritage.

### 3. Multiple possibilities and incentives for local investments<sup>14</sup>

Urban renewal started in Buenos Aires as part of a broader mid-term plan to develop the river border from North to South. This plan meant the expansion of the central area by adding urban lands<sup>15</sup> – in a city where downtown lands were very limited – making it possible to deploy new commercial and residential uses for high-income activities.

At the same time, roads were built to strengthen the central area connection with the metropolitan region through highways and accesses to approach centre and border in a regional perspective as well as with other *Mercocities*.<sup>16</sup> The new urban works, together with riv-

to the tourists. They come from different parts of the world, speak different languages, and intermingle (at least for a while) with peddlers and people who live in the pension hotels and tenements of the area.

### Fair exhibitors...

On weekends, fairs – featuring craftsmen in La Boca and antiques in San Telmo – become a central piece. They gather fair exhibitors and several hundreds of tourists, who try to get glimpses of a past that is remote but close, and neighbours who are observed and who at the same time become observers themselves. Each one of these groups relates with the respective quarter's space, introducing their own uses and senses.

In the case of fair exhibitors and traders, the relationship stems from their job (putting away the goods, helping in the newsstand, etc.). In their stories, work is an element that binds the fair exhibitors to a territory where they do not live. They do not dwell in the quarter, but they belong there due to the activities they develop along the workday.

### Social organisations and heritage defence

In San Telmo and La Boca, importance of cultural heritage and quarter identity has become a debate topic among the quarter's traditional organisation leaders. There are those who want to preserve an assumed historical past and those who want to adapt and reinvent it aiming at luring private investment. Lower income population conditions are foreign to the sense of the collective history being reinvented. Progressive traditional organisations see changes as an improvement for neighbourhood living conditions, while *preservationists* view benefits not only as for the quarter's inhabitants, who are among the neediest in the city. However, both groups coincide

◀ Photo 7: Street scene in Barracas. Photo: K. Teschner 2005

**14** This was prepared based upon Rodríguez, Bañuelos and Mera (2008).

**15** We refer to the Puerto Madero zone.

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◀ Photo 8: Lanin street with artist intervention, Barracas. Photo: K. Teschner 2006





▲  
Photo 9:  
Loft apartments and services in remodelled factory, Barracas, Buenos Aires.  
Photo: K. Teschner 2006

**16**  
"Mercociudades", the network of cities that are part of MERCOSUR.

**17**  
Management and Participation Centres are city government decentralised organs.

**18**  
South / North refers to South and North Buenos Aires. Ave. Rivadiva – a west-east avenue – separates both parts. The Northeastern part of the town is the wealthiest; the Southern neighbourhoods are the poorest. See GCBA Web Portal, "Programa General de Acción de Gobierno 2005-2007" (General Government Action Programme 2005-2007), Buenos Aires City Government (GCBA).

**19**  
The Buenos Aires Urban Environmental Plan sees urban heritage as "the environmental, landscape, cultural and architectural richness of Buenos Aires, distributed and represented in numerous situations". This is a weighty argument to leverage and position the city as an attractive tourist product (Revista SUMMA, N° 203, December 2001:129).

erbank defences, generated changes which translated into land and building prices in the south quarters.

The national and municipal governments have played a relevant role as managers of necessary, albeit not sufficient, conditions for the emergence of economic, social and environmental transformations in these degraded city areas. The usual mechanisms in this process have been regulatory jurisdiction modifications, adaptation of regulatory frameworks, privatisation, and subsidised transfer of resources such as urban lands or public debt. The foreign direct investment experienced in the city as of the nineties would have been unthinkable without these public interventions.

Continuity in the targeting of the city's public expenditure along different local governments between 1988 and 2005, aiming at infrastructure works, is part of this context. Once the national crisis was overcome in 2004, the works foreseen in the CGPs – Management and Participation Centres<sup>17</sup> – investment plans took up 38% of the budget for the South as compared to 12% for the North. In 2005, this trend increased and the South took 52% of foreseen investment, against 8% in the North.<sup>18</sup>

Fiscal policies also contributed in producing territory through their interventions: the urban environmental plan, urban planning code and the corporations created in the nineties. They all made it possible to activate state-owned real estate resources through renovation and investment in infrastructure.

Two other policy lines contributed to more specifically define the character of urban renovation in the south area: tourist-cultural policies and housing policies aimed at lower income groups.

Tourism, linked to patrimonial revaluation, guides the south area renewal actions, as is evident in both local government and economic agent discourse. Natural, cultural and historical heritage are ever more attractive for the tourist experience (Gómez and Zunino, 2008).<sup>19</sup>

The other face of the logic of intervention, urban renewal and public investment in the south zone is the social situation of local lower income sectors not considered in the dynamics that have been triggered. Housing is one of the most visible aspects. Housing policies – in a contradictory way – settle on the one hand the government's political intention of promoting renovation of city central areas and, on the other hand, the pressure exercised by the needs and proposals of social organisations that represent the sectors affected by that same process.

In fact, several habitat local policies have been based on popular territorial mobilisation and organisation since the eighties. They multiplied in the context of the 2001 national crisis (shanty towns, government housing blocks, squatted buildings, La Boca tenements, hundreds of self-managed housing cooperatives).

Analysis of these urban regulations and policies shows that state intervention – both local and nationwide – on public real estate, infrastructure optimisation, regulatory transformations and investment decisions are the basis to promote some private businesses. Flexible planning and market culturalism are an ideological facet that moulds perceptions and characterisation of advantages and disadvantages that are unequally produced and distributed.

#### 4. Local identity resources

In recent years, the media have also echoed the changes in the city South by pointing at the commercial boom in the leisure, entertainment and tourism service segments, including commercial development in hotels and gastronomy. There has also been an unexpected residential trend in the case of San Telmo, the purchasing of real estate by foreigners. At the same time, these newspaper commentaries express and reinforce the mythicising discourse about the South zone by tying economic success to the testimonial site of our cultural identity and diversity. There, Boca is still the testimonial site paradigm of our history as *porteños*, as well as a tourist attraction.

In an article about one of the most important real estate developers in the San Telmo quarter that has targeted 90% of its supply to foreigners, it is said: "... the patrimonial architecture, the bohemian spirit and

the low cost of San Telmo properties are irresistible for foreign investors. In the last two years the number of real estate operations grew by 20 percent and the area became one of the main temporary rental zones for foreigners.<sup>20</sup> Thus, those who appreciated the San Telmo quarter when they came as tourists later came back as investors. Little by little, identity and diversity will coalesce with local attractions and commercial renovation success, thus legitimising patrimonial protection.

An important economic actor in El Riachuelo infrastructure plan in La Boca in the mid-nineties stated that the remodelling plan aimed at certain "thematic units", or, that is, at the tenements and Caminito "used as a link between the historical past and today, so as to recover the initial harmony between architecture and lifestyle that characterised Boca" (quoted in Plan Techint, 1992: 9 ff).

The "time tunnel" metaphor is used in San Telmo to describe its attraction: "Tourists, curious people and neighbours from all over the city travel in time when they enter the antique shops on Defensa Street, in downtown San Telmo". According to this note, "the Sunday stroll is an excuse to cover part of the city history. Besides being a trip to another century, it is a business that directly impacts – and gets feedback from – the Buenos Aires South zone recovery".<sup>21</sup>

The said revaluation is not due only to public policy, but also to private action by economic agents. In April 2005, there was a Latin American meeting of antique dealers in San Telmo. The splendour of commercial activity is also a sign that San Telmo is the old quarter of antiques – it is the quarter that gathers the largest number of antique dealers in all of Latin America. As the antique dealers' chairman said: San Telmo is a brand.

Relationships between history, heritage and identity join in a complex way. History and heritage are essential to build identity, because "the core of any individual or group identity is linked to a sense of permanence (...) being able to remember and recall something of our own past is what underpins identity" (Jelin, 2002: 25). Identity also constitutes history since "the present contains and builds past experience" (Jelin, 2002: 12). Quarter construction as a *cultural asset* reinforces a version of identity that means a feature abstraction and sense-fixing process, a monolithic version of history (crackless, rigid, inflexible) and a definition of what can be transformed into heritage (what tangible and intangible assets are worth preserving).

However, perceptions about patrimonial interventions underway differ according to affiliation (or lack of affiliation) to a neighbour organisation, and also differ among quarter leaders. A controversy exists in which the present is understood in the light of different versions of the past and different perspectives of the future.

## Conclusions

The urban renewal processes we studied have emerged from public-private interaction with the explicit purpose of promoting an increase in urban value processes. Since the early nineties, renewal has been part of a broader plan to develop the river border from North to South, but for the moment it has been focused on promoting tourist zones such as Caminito in La Boca, Plaza Dorrego in San Telmo and Pasaje Lanín-Arcos de Irigoyen in Barracas. This process was accompanied by the approval of the Strategic Culture Plan by the Buenos Aires city government, which emphasised low capital investment and promoted human and cultural resources. Renewal, at different scales and scopes, implied strain on lower-income population permanence in the studied quarters and important problems related to habitats.

Our analysis shows that implemented policies have contradictory results: on the one hand, new policies tend to revalue the real estate capital and land and, on the other hand, these policies do not consider alternatives to compensate for the negative effects of the social-urban dynamics that they have started.

The urban renewal of these quarters, at different stages and dynamics, requires capital investment and human capital generation. Cultural tourism promotion policies strongly supported the revaluation processes. On the one hand, tourist content is linked to some cultural factors such as the recovery or placement of theatres, museums, art galleries, etc. On the other hand, the symbolic capital represented by past culture is transformed into a commercial strategy, thus producing strong transformations of the urban space and related consumption.

This is how renewal becomes an economic-cultural strategy geared at satisfying a specialised consumption demand, as part of an alliance established between capital and culture to guide attention towards the least conflictive aspects of the strategy, namely, the cultural aspects, and avoiding the more thorny facets: those of economy.

## 20

El Clarín, 15 March 2005.

## 21

Quoted from "San Telmo, Desarrollo económico: abrieron 140 locales en los últimos diez años" (San Telmo, economic development: 140 shops opened in the last ten years), Clarín, 30 May 2004.

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# South Africa's Approach to Eradicating Informal Settlements – an urgent call for change

Marie Huchzermeyer

## Der südafrikanische Ansatz zur Beseitigung informeller Siedlungen – ein dringender Aufruf zum Paradigmenwechsel

Mit einem unzulässigen Verweis auf die Millenniumsentwicklungsziele der Vereinten Nationen verfolgt die südafrikanische Regierung das Ziel, bis 2014 alle informellen Siedlungen im Lande zu beseitigen. An Stelle einer Verbesserung der Lebensverhältnisse in den Slums, wie es die Millenniumentwicklungsziele vorsehen, interpretiert die südafrikanische Regierung den UN Slogan „Städte ohne Slums“ im Sinne deren Zerstörung und Verhinderung. Die UN verknüpfen mit „Cities Without Slums“ das Verständnis, die Situation von Slumbewohnern durch Zugang zu Bauland, durch Bleibesicherheit, Existenzsicherung und durch bauliche Maßnahmen zu verbessern. Breaking New Ground, das nationale Wohnbauprogramm Südafrikas von 2004, hebt ganz in diesem Sinne Upgrading-Ansätze hervor sowie sanfte Maßnahmen der Slumbeseitigung durch Verbesserung der Lebensverhältnisse. Im vollkommenen Widerspruch zu diesem Verständnis steht das Verhalten der Provinzregierungen und einzelner Kommunen. Ihnen geht es um den Abriss von informellen Siedlungen, eine Umsiedlung deren Bewohner an den Stadtrand, die Zerstörung ihrer Unterkünfte und die rigorose Verhinderung eines Wiederaufbaus. Beispielhaft für diese Art repressiven Vorgehens ist der Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan der Stadtverwaltung von Tshwane (Pretoria), der Abriss, Umsiedlung und die Unterbindung neuer informeller Siedlungen gar an private Sicherheitsfirmen auslagert. Damit werden Arme sehr wirksam daran gehindert, in die Stadt zu ziehen oder in ihr zu leben. Diese „Zero Tolerance“ Haltung findet zunehmend Eingang in Gesetzesentwürfe. Ein neues in KwaZulu-Natal erlassenes Gesetz würde Landbesetzungen grundsätzlich kriminalisieren. Die Basisbewegung Abahlali base Mjondolo in Durban klagt dagegen vor dem Verfassungsgericht, nachdem das Oberste Gericht in Durban ihre Klage – wohl aus politischen Gründen – zurückgewiesen hat. Trotz des noch offenen Verfahrens hat das nationale Wohnbauministerium alle Provinzverwaltungen dazu aufgerufen, ebenfalls Gesetze zur Beseitigung informeller Siedlungen und zur Verhinderung von Landbesetzungen zu erlassen. Somit zeichnet sich die Tendenz eines Rückfalls in repressive Ansätze ab, die an Apartheidzeiten erinnern.

Since 2001, the government of South Africa has promoted the eradication of informal settlements, first as a development challenge, and from 2004 onwards as a direct target to be achieved by 2014, with reference to the state's obligations in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Slum/informal settlement 'eradication' or 'elimination' (terms used interchangeably in the South African policy) have been promoted in policy and legislation since the early years of democracy (post 1994), with a consistent emphasis on the need to create the conditions under which the formation and expansion of informal settlements is no longer necessary. However, increasingly, South African provincial and municipal strategies for informal settlement and land invasion management are aiming to create conditions under which land invasion and the formation of new informal settlements are simply not possible, whether the need for them exists or not. Repressive measures are employed to forcefully 'eliminate and prevent the re-emergence of slums', the direct wording in 2007 legislation

passed by the KwaZulu-Natal legislature (KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, 2007) towards this end.

This paper uses the example of municipal practice in the capital of South Africa, Pretoria, and its municipal entity the 'City of Tshwane'. It comments on the Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan, its rhetoric, its approach and its actual achievements in keeping poor people out of the city by eradicating informal settlements and preventing their re-emergence. The paper first highlights the key features of the Plan, then situates this within South African housing policy and national legislation, and the approach promoted by the United Nations (UN), showing how the Plan contradicts the indirect preventative approaches entrenched in South African national policy and legislation and promoted by the UN. The paper then shows how a direct, repressive and negative approach to doing away with slums has crept into all spheres of South African government. The paper concludes with a call for a fundamental shift away from the stifling target of eradicating informal settlements by 2014.

## The objectives of City of Tshwane's Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan

The City of Tshwane's Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan is presented as a best practice in slum eradication by Gauteng Province Department of Housing (Thring, 2008). The justification for this is that the City of Tshwane has succeeded in curbing the number of informal settlements from 'approximately 60 in 2001 to 41 in 2007/8' (City of Tshwane, 2008:15), with a total reduction of informal structures from 127 512 in 2001 to 126 069 in 2007 (City of Tshwane, 2008:24), a reduction of 1 443 structures). At a first glance, the objectives of the Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan seem laudable. They include the '[p]rovision of temporary essential services in informal settlements (water and chemical toilets)' (ibid.:8), in addition to

- 'Encouraging the establishment of community-based organisations and other forms of non-governmental entities that can contribute to the efforts to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life'; and
- 'Institutionalising a participatory approach to sustainable human settlement development and management, based on a continuing dialogue among all actors involved in settlement development' (ibid.:9)

However, a close scrutiny of the Plan raises questions as to how these objectives are translated into practice. Implementation of the Plan is outsourced to several different service providers, and these are mostly security companies. Consistent with increasingly regressive developments regarding informal settlement control across South Africa, the service providers are by and large security companies: Bathlokamedi Security Services, USB Marines Security Services, Lenong Security Services, Gaman 12 CC Security Services; Joint Venure Security and Makaleng Construction Enterprises CC, etc. (City of Tshwane, 2008).

The problematic role of these companies in the informal settlement and land invasion management of the City of Tshwane relates to the other objectives of the Plan, namely 'Eradication of informal settlements'; 'Relocation of families from informal settlements into permanent serviced stands/houses'; and 'Monitoring and prevention of illegal land and building occupation' (ibid.:8). The Plan defines 'eradication of informal settlements' as 'total clearance/relocation of a community from an informal settlement into formalised stand/houses, voluntarily or through Eviction Order obtained from High Court of Law' (ibid.:7).

## Eradication, BNG and national legislation and the UN's approach: the positive, indirect and the negative, direct approach to doing away with slums

In 2004, the national Department of Housing developed a new housing plan (increasingly referred to by government as a new 'policy'), the 'Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements: "Breaking New Ground"' (Department of Housing, 2004a), abbreviated as 'BNG'. This policy acknowledges the absence in South Africa of any national programme for the upgrading of informal settlements, and introduces an innovative mechanism for Upgrading of Informal Settlements, further elaborated in Chapter 13 of the Housing Code (Department of Housing, 2004b). The Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan of the City of Tshwane acknowledges 'BNG' as a 'new influence' (City of Tshwane, 2008:5). However, it makes no mention of Chapter 13 of the Housing Code, the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme. Upgrading only is mentioned for the first time towards the end of Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan, under 'way forward'. There is no evidence that important principles of Chapter 13 of the Housing Code, listed below, have influenced Tshwane's approach to its informal settlements:

- Funding available for land rehabilitation (no ceiling) and funding available for land purchase (no ceiling) fundamentally redefines which informal settlements are suitable for in situ upgrading;
- This allows relocation to be a last resort, and to be voluntary, negotiated, agreed upon and suitable to the livelihoods of the affected households;

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Kennedy road settlement in Durban, South Africa, rebuilt area after shack fire; Photo: Abahlali baseMjondolo 2008.



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- Leasehold is promoted as the preferred tenure form to prevent down raiding or gentrification of the upgraded settlements.
- The subsidy or grant that municipalities apply for is community- or area-based, therefore inclusive, as it does not depend on subsidy qualification of individual households. (Huchzermeyer, 2006)

The legal foundation for doing away with 'slums' or informal settlements in South Africa rests in the 1997 Housing Act (Section 2(1)(iii)):

'national, provincial and local government must promote the establishment, development and maintenance of socially and economically viable communities and of safe and healthy living conditions to ensure the elimination and prevention of slums and slum conditions'. (my emphasis added)

The 1997 Housing Act represents an approach to elimination and prevention of slums/informal settlements which focuses exclusively on positive or indirect measures. These are directed at the structural causes of informal settlement formation and encompass improvement of land, services and housing provision. These interventions, if implemented at scale would reduce and eventually dissolve the need for informal housing solutions. Upgrading of existing slums or informal settlements forms a central part of this approach (therefore the importance of Chapter 13 of the Housing Code).

This positive, indirect approach to slum upgrading and prevention is endorsed by the United Nations through its Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and its response to Goal 7 Target 11 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to significantly improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 (United Nations, 2000). The slogan 'Cities Without Slums' is officially attached to this target, with an unfortunate divergence between this slogan and the target of significantly improving living conditions of 100 million slum dwellers, which is just over 10% of the estimated global slum population. UN-Habitat (2005) estimated that 924 million people were living in slums globally in the year 2000, a figure that is estimated to more than double in the first three decades of the new millennium and then double again every 15 years. UN-Habitat clarifies that 'Cities Without Slums' is not a target. UN-Habitat merely refers to 'the long journey towards cities without slums' (UN-Habitat, 2003:vii, 53).

Significantly improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers is considered to be achieved once this number has received relief in relation to any one of the UN-Habitat slum criteria: access to water; access to sanitation; improved structural quality of housing; reduced overcrowding; and improved security of tenure (UN-Habitat, 2005). A separate MDG target on halving the population without access to water and sanitation by 2015 (Target 10) compliments or supports the slum improvement MDG (7 Target 11).



▶ Temporary Relocation Shelter (TRA) in Delft, Cape Town, South Africa; Photo: Abahlali baseMjondolo 2008.

Yet, overwhelmingly South African cities practice direct and negative eradication of slums, as exemplified by the case of Tshwane. They rely on forceful means such as eviction and or forced relocation from and control over existing informal settlements, and criminalisation, arrests and forceful prevention of the formation of new informal settlements, even when it is clear that these settlements emerge out of benign responses to ever deepening housing need (Huchzermeyer, 2008).

These forceful approaches are discouraged by the UN and contested by grassroots movements and housing rights lawyers in South Africa.

According to UN-Habitat's Global Report on Human Settlements 2003: The Challenge of Slums (UN-Habitat, 2003) the actual target of improving the lives of 10% of slum dwellers by 2020 is to be achieved through the positive approach of 'participatory slum upgrading programmes that include urban poverty reduction objectives' (ibid.:vii). UN-Habitat lists 'unsuccessful' approaches to dealing with informal settlements. Among them is eviction, which it cites as common practice in the 1970s and 1980s. 'Squatter evictions have created more misery than they have prevented' (ibid.:104). Regarding the longer term goal of achieving Cities Without Slums, UN-Habitat acknowledges that measures are required to 'prevent the emergence of more slums'. However, within the same indirect or positive approach set out by the Housing Act 107 of 1997, UN-Habitat urges that slum upgrading programmes be combined with

'clear and consistent policies for urban planning and management, as well as for low-income housing development, ... [which] should include supply of sufficient and affordable land for the gradual development of economically appropriate low-income housing by the poor themselves, thus preventing the emergence of more slums' (ibid.:xxvii).

UN-Habitat (2003) takes a strong stand against a direct approach to slum eradication that would promote criminalisation of land invasions, relocations, evictions and controlled transit camps as measures for prevention of emergence or re-emergence of slums. The idea of security companies controlling informal settlements seems not to have entered UN-Habitat's imagination. UN-Habitat is even cautious of the term 'eradication' itself. In its index (ibid.), UN-Habitat associates 'eradication' with 'clearance' and 'eviction'. This captures the direct and negative approach which was applied by the Apartheid government in South Africa (Huchzermeyer, 2004). UN-Habitat states very clearly that

'eradication and relocation destroys, unnecessarily, a large stock of housing affordable to the urban poor and the new housing provided has frequently turned out to be unaffordable with the result that the relocated households move back into slum accommodation. ... Relocation or involuntary resettlement of slum dwellers should, as far as possible, be avoided' (UN-Habitat, 2003: xxviii).

### **Evidence of the negative, direct approach to slum eradication in all spheres of South African government**

At the national level, the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land (PIE) Act of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998) legitimately criminalizes the organisation of an invasion of land in return for money. PIE Act amendment bills were proposed by national Department of Housing in 2006 and 2008 (Republic of South Africa, 2006;2008). Among the proposed amendments, both bills aimed to tighten this provision so as to criminalize all organisation of a land invasion, even of the most desperate people, in the most benign form without exploitation or not in return for money. Both bills were turned down by Parliament for unrelated reasons. Justification given in the PIE amendment bills for this tightening of criminalisation is 'rapid increase in land invasions'. Yet, as indicated above, informal settlements have decreased in the City of Tshwane. There is no evidence of 'rapid increase in land invasions' in Tshwane. Instead, across its large cities, the country has witnessed eight years of consistent zero tolerance (in some cases via appointed service providers, mainly security companies) – a direct, negative and indeed repressive approach. Nevertheless under 'Risk Plan', City of Tshwane's Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan articulates its fear of 'mass invasion'. In the current context, this fear, as well as the unsubstantiated assumption expressed by national Department of Housing in its PIE Act amendment bills, is unjustified.

At provincial level, the KwaZulu-Natal Legislature pioneered provincial legislation on the 'Elimination and Prevention of Re-emergence of Slums'. This was proposed as a Bill in 2006, enacted in 2007 despite intense grassroots and housing rights opposition, and is currently being appealed on grounds of its contradiction with the Constitution and the BNG policy in Durban High Court. The appeal is brought by the Durban-based grassroots movement Abahlali baseMjondolo, backed by South Africa's leading housing rights lawyers, and was heard in the court on 6 and 7 November 2008 (see Abahlali baseMjondolo, 2008). Shortly before finalisation of this paper, a seemingly

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political judgement in favour of the Act was handed down. Abahlali baseMjondolo and its legal team are intent on appealing this judgement in the Constitutional Court. The act mandates all land owners to institute evictions, as did the notorious 1951 Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of the apartheid government (Republic of South Africa, 1951), which was repealed by the PIE Act in 1998. The 2007 KwaZulu-Natal Act further criminalizes landowners who fail to institute evictions, while then also mandating municipalities to institute the eviction procedures. The act criminalizes all invasion of land or unauthorised occupation, no matter how great the need and how under-utilised the land may be. It further requires fencing off of all vacant land and posting of security guards (KwaZulu-Natal Legislature, 2008).

At the National Conference of the ruling ANC party in the city of Polokwane in December 2007, with the election of a new, supposedly left leaning party leadership, a so-called 'Polokwane Mandate' was imposed on all provinces to 'develop appropriate legislation to

prevent the mushrooming of informal settlements' (Thring, 2008). This was followed up by a directive from the national Department of Housing to all Provincial Departments of Housing to enact such legislation by November 2008, in line with the KZN Elimination and Prevention of Re-emergence of Slums Act (2007) (Eastern Cape Department of Housing, 2008). It must be asked why national Department of Housing did not at least await the outcome of Abahlali baseMjondolo's court challenge, already underway in December 2007, to ascertain constitutionality of this legislation. By end October 2008, Gauteng Province had not yet shared its draft Informal Settlement Eradication legislation for comment, though engaging academics and housing rights lawyers in heated debate around the concept of informal settlement eradication. Nomfundo Gobodo (2008) of the NGO Legal Resources Centre is of the conviction that national policy and legislation provides an adequate framework for intervention in informal settlements, and that no provincial legislation is required. She urges instead that existing policy and legislation be implemented.

### **Durban High Court, 27 January 2009 Case no. 1874/08 Abahlali baseMjondolo Movement SA.**

Abahlali baseMjondolo have been to the Durban High Court this morning to hear the judgment being handed down by the KwaZulu-Natal President, Judge Vuka Shabalala. On the 6 November 2008 the Movement had applied to the Durban High Court for the KwaZulu-Natal Elimination and Prevention of Re-Emergence of Slums Act 2007 to be declared unconstitutional. Full details of the Act, and the reasons for our opposition to it, and can be found on the Movement's website at <http://abahlali.org/node/1629/>

The Judge President had decided that the judgment would be handed down today at 9:30 am; however the judge did not come himself and sent another judge to give his judgment.

The judge has dismissed the Movement's Application arguing that: „The province of KwaZulu-Natal must be applauded for attempting to deal with the problem of slums and slum conditions. This is the first province to have adopted legislation such as the Slums Act. The Slums Act makes things more orderly in this province and the Act must be given a chance to show off its potential to help deal with problem of slums and slum conditions. This Court can not strike the Act down before it has even being (sic) properly implemented.“

Our view is that shack settlements are communities to be developed and not slums to be eradicated. Our view is that the Slums Act is a clear return to colonial and apartheid style attempts to turn poverty into a security problem instead of a question of justice. Our view is that this Act is a clear attack on the poor and on our right to access the cities. Our view is that this Act is an attempt to develop the country in the interests of the rich by banishing the poor from the cities instead of doing the right thing which is to democratize the cities.

We are not alone in our views. Our comrades in the Poor People's Alliance have expressed their deep concern about this Act. The United Nations have expressed their concern about this Act. The international human rights organizations have expressed

their concern about this Act. Progressive NGOs and academics have expressed their concern about this Act.

However we do fear that those in government who seek to complete the removal of the poor from the cities, those who wish to sentence us to the prisons known as ,transit camps', will take this judgment as a green light for massive evictions. The Movement still believes that Amandla is still Awethu and that there is no one that can take that away from us. We will continue to protest against the government's ongoing attacks on the poor, against evictions called ,delivery', against government shacks called ,transit camps', against rural human dumping grounds called ,housing opportunities', against the failure to provide services to settlements resulting in fires, endless water queues, sickness and attacks in dark nights. We will continue to encourage discussion of these issues at all levels of our society. We will continue to form alliances to take our struggle on these issues forward.

Now that this judgment is out we can take the next step in the journey to the Constitutional Court. We are confident that the Constitutional Court will protect the rights of shack dwellers, rural and farm dwellers and the poor in general. We are confident that the Constitutional Court will give us a judgment prepared with elegance and grace.

It is the Movement's mandate to fight for the right to the cities. This is why we exist. The order that we are living under does not accept our humanity. it does not accept our presence in the cities. It does not accept our presence in discussions about the future of the country or even in discussions about our own future. Therefore we are determined to create a new order from below. We realize that this makes us out of this order. We accepted that long ago when we determined to be out of any order that excludes us from discussions about our future and evicts us from the cities. A luta continua.

**Abahlali baseMjondolo** <http://www.abahlali.org>

Municipalities have been practicing zero tolerance and slum eradication over the past seven years, even in the absence of provincial legislation. The past 4 years have seen blatant and consistent ignorance of Chapter 13 of the Housing Code (Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme). The City of Cape Town, encouraged by the NGO Development Action Group (DAG), recently embraced Chapter 13 of the Housing Code, piloting it in the Hangberg Informal Settlement on a steep slope in Houtbay (McGregor, 2008). City of Cape Town chose to execute its informal settlement and land invasion management (i.e. its zero control over new shack construction) in-house, through its Land Invasions Unit. Its reasons for this decision are cost-effectiveness and concern about legal and human rights compliance of the security companies' approaches (Sokupa, 2008). This has not concerned the City of Tshwane, which proudly presents the results of outsourcing:

- 'informal settlements in Ga-rankuwa ... have decreased significantly after employment of Lenong Security Services to monitor and prevent illegal invasion in this area';
  - 'After the employment of Joint Venture Security and Makaleng Construction Enterprises CC, to monitor and prevent any illegal invasion in [Shoshanguwe], invasion rate decreased significantly';
  - Winterveldt: 'The developer appointed his own security services to monitor and prevent illegal land invasion'.
- (City of Tshwane, 2008:19-21)

Priorities of the City of Tshwane are clearly reflected in the budget of its Informal Settlement and Land Invasion Management Plan:

- 'prevention of illegal land invasion': R8 million (needing additional 4 million)

Compared to a lower budget for

- 'water tanker service' (R7.5 million)
  - 'general works' (R0.52 million)
  - 'moving costs' (R0.66 million)
  - 'rental of property' (R0.26 million)
- (City of Tshwane, 2008:25)

This budget is closely tied to the 'expected outcomes' of the Plan, which all reflect the negative, direct and legally unsupported approach to doing away with slums: 'marking of all shacks'; 'registration of all individual shack owners'; 'monitoring and prevention of illegal land and building occupation'; 'clearing of informal settlements in the City of Tshwane' (City of Tshwane, 2008:26). Further, City of Tshwane's Plan articulates a fear of 'decreased number of security guards' to 'manage mass invasion' (Risk Plan – City of Tshwane,



2008:30). This begs the question: What does 'mass invasion' mean to the municipality? A flood of desperately poor people who, at all costs, must be prevented from entering the city? A sinister parallel emerges with exclusionary apartheid policy, a point that the current ANC government is unwilling to admit.

### Conclusion

There is an urgent need for a complete overhaul of informal settlement and land invasion management in South Africa, to align with a positive and indirect approach, as underpinned by the Constitution, the 1997 Housing Act, the MDGs and as supported by UN-Habitat. This needs to aim at reducing and dissolving the need for informality and for land invasion, therefore addressing critical structural constraints such as the unequal access to urban land, the market-based and exclusionary planning and land tenure framework, the deepening poverty and unemployment, the exceedingly slow and skewed socio-economic transformation, rural under-development and slow and sometimes reversed housing and service provision. These are complex challenges and mostly outside of the ambit of the national Housing Department and its provincial and municipal counterparts. Informal settlement eradication targets imposed on housing departments are counter-productive, stifling any attempts at the necessary intersectoral collaboration. Instead, provinces and municipalities need to be driven by mandates to test and broaden the boundaries in every direction, constantly redefining what is possible, rather than falling back to long discredited repressive approaches of the apartheid era.

▲  
New TRA complex in Delft, Cape Town, South Africa; Photo: Anti Eviction Campaign 2008

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# Review of Mike Davis' 'Planet of Slums'

Richard Pithouse

**1**  
Hal Foster, 'Bigness', London Review of Books, Vol. 23 No. 23, 29 November 2001, [www.lrb.co.uk/v23/n23/fost01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v23/n23/fost01_.html), accessed 6 July 2007.

**2**  
George Katodrytis, [www.eikongraphia.com/?p=1318](http://www.eikongraphia.com/?p=1318), accessed 6 July 2007.

**3**  
Mike Davis, 'Fear & Money' in Dubai New Left Review, 41, September – October 2006 <http://newleftreview.org/?view=2635>, accessed 6 July 2007.

**4**  
Keith Breckenridge alerted me to this telling anecdote.

**5**  
Partha Chatterjee, *The Politics of the Governed: Reflection on Popular Politics in Most of the World Permanent Black*, New Delhi, 2004.

►  
Photo 1:  
Kennedy Road settlement in Durban, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.  
Photo: Abahlali baseMjondolo 2008.

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Visions of the future, presented as aspiration or inevitability, exercise tremendous power over certain kinds of decision making in the present. In cities where local elites are able to imagine a convivial future for themselves and where the economy is based on local consumption as well as production or extraction for export, the vision of the future is, above all, the idea of a 'World Class City'. This is the idea that guides and justifies the decisions of the technocratic elites organized in 'partnerships' across governments, donor agencies, NGOs, the academy and corporations. Their decisions produce broadly similar results around the world – the exclusion and eviction of the poor, the commodification of public space and public investment in projects for private profit such as conference centers, casinos, hotels, shopping malls, golf course estates, major sports events and so on at the direct expense of public investment in public housing, public facilities and public space. Rem Koolhaas tells us that it is time to get real and the reality is that shopping is "the last remaining form of public activity."<sup>1</sup>

It has become clear that the most perfected instance of the aspirant World Class City is Dubai. It is often asserted or assumed that "New York was the city of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and now Dubai will be the city of the 21<sup>st</sup> century."<sup>2</sup> Some celebrate Dubai as a fantastical futurism floating unanchored above the old world of historically shaped and still contested place. Others, like Mike Davis in a commanding polemic in *New Left Review*<sup>3</sup>, see it in dystopian terms – feudal absolutism, government run as business and phantasmagoric, architectural megalomania for the super rich all sustained by indentured labor, physically segregated and expected to be invisible to bourgeoisie eyes. But this previously unimaginable power of the fetish of the commodity thrives on all too familiar traces of past oppression. For instance former administrators of the apartheid migrant labor system have been key actors in the designing and running of Dubai's biometric version of apartheid.<sup>4</sup> And of course Dubai is very much tied to regimes of accumulation mediated through smaller islands of similarly themeparked cybermoder-



nity in places like Bombay, Lagos and Johannesburg. In recent years the lives and struggles of ordinary people in the still obviously historically conditioned places in these cities have often slipped off the agenda of the metropolitan left, a left that by virtue of its privileged location in global coloniality has a more extensive reach than any other. And in what Partha Chatterjee usefully calls “most of the world”<sup>5</sup> shack settlements are the urbanism of the contemporary moment and, if things stay the same, the future. The shack settlement may not be hegemonic in the sense that Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri insist that immaterial labor is hegemonic despite it being much less common than industrial labor. But, just as more people work with the material than the immaterial, vastly more people live in shacks than in cities where the very poor are kept away on the other side of a border.

Mike Davis has confronted the metropolitan left with this reality. He has been largely silent on the thinking and politics of people living in shack settlements, but he has issued an influential - although seriously flawed - challenge to the widespread omission of a serious consideration of the material realities of the billion people living in shacks.

In early 2004 he published an article in *New Left Review* titled *Planet of Slums*. It was primarily based on the 2003 UN Habitat report *The Challenge of the Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements*, a report which draws heavily on World Bank research. Davis heralded the report as “the first truly global audit of urban poverty” and an “authoritative warning about the global catastrophe of urban poverty” and commended it for “breaking with traditional UN circumspection and self-censorship to squarely indict neoliberalism.”<sup>6</sup> His article was famously pessimistic about the prospects for progressive politics in shack settlements and concluded with the view that “with the Left still largely missing from the slum, the eschatology of Pentecostalism admirably refuses the inhuman destiny of the Third World city.”<sup>7</sup> There was an obvious methodological flaw at the base of the assessment. The UN’s research, drawing heavily as Davis casually notes on the World Bank, is interested in measuring certain aspects of the bare life and not the political life of the poor. The fact that none of the many politics of the poor appear in the research of the institutions of contemporary imperialism does not mean that they do not exist.<sup>8</sup> And, as even a quick Google search shows, they most certainly do exist in places like Caracas, Cité Soleil, Durban, Sao Paulo and so on.

Nevertheless not all of Davis’s readers accepted his political pessimism as if it were some kind of law of the slum. Slavoj Zizek famously responded by arguing that:



“The slum-dwellers are the counter-class to the other newly emerging class, the so-called ‘symbolic class’ (managers, journalists and PR people, academics, artists etc) which is also uprooted and perceives itself as universal (a New York academic has more in common with a Slovene academic than with blacks in Harlem half a mile from his campus). Is this the new axis of class struggle, or is the ‘symbolic class’ inherently split, so that one can make a wager on the coalition between the slum-dwellers and the ‘progressive’ part of the symbolic class? The new forms of social awareness that emerge from slum collectives will be the germs of the future and the best hope for a properly ‘free world’.”<sup>9</sup>

In 2006 Davis published a book based on the *New Left Review* article which received an even more extraordinary reception from the metropolitan left with gushing reviews, a few of which seemed to be perversely thrilled at his apocalyptic account. Jeremy Harding began his more sober review in the *London Review of Books*, by noting that “If any of us has seen the places in the developing world that Mike Davis catalogues remorselessly in *Planet of Slums*, it was probably from an aeroplane.”<sup>10</sup> It is clear that many and perhaps most reviews have been written as a first confrontation with the reality of urbanization in most of the world. For this reason the extraordinary reception of this book is, in part, a useful corrective to the Eurocentricism that cripples the analysis of much of the metropolitan left. For instance it is encouraging to note that this review directly confronts its readers with the fact that “About a billion people worldwide operate in the informal sector. Davis tells us they constitute ‘the fastest-growing . . . social class on earth’.”<sup>11</sup> In other words Davis’s statistics, flamboyantly pulled into the gathering rush of his text from a dazzling range of literature as he hurtles to his apocalyptic conclusions, have provided an important reality check for the metropolitan left.

The World Bank and the UN can produce statistics with a global reach that no unfunded and more local intellectual commitment to particular shack dwellers’ struggles could ever match. And most reviews have, correctly, focused on the fact that Davis has provided

◀ Photo 2: Shack fire in a South African shack dweller settlement. Photo: Abahlali baseMjondolo 2008.

**6** Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* *New Left Review*, 26, March-April 2004, <http://newleftreview.org/?view=2496>, accessed 6 July 2007.

**7** Davis, *Planet of Slums*, 2004

**8** Davis goes so far as to assert that the UN Habitat report “follows in the famous footsteps of Friedrich Engels” (2006:20) but UN Habitat is far from being a progressive or even politically neutral force. It has been seriously criticized in Nairobi (for instance see Robert Neuwirth’s *Shadow Cities* New York, Routledge, 2006) where it is headquartered and elsewhere, such as in Durban, South Africa, where it has given warm support to the housing project of the local municipality despite that project being based on systematically illegal and violent evictions that leave many people homeless or dumped in box houses in bleak rural ghettos.

**9** Slavoj Zizek, ‘Knee Deep’ *London Review of Books* Vol. 26, No. 17, 2 September 2004 [www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n17/zize01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n17/zize01_.html), accessed 6 July 2007.

**10** Jeremy Harding, ‘It Migrates to Them: The coming megaslums’ *London Review of Books*, Vol. 29, No. 5, 8 March 2007 [www.lrb.co.uk/v29/n05/hard01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v29/n05/hard01_.html), accessed 6 July 2007.

**11** Harding, *It Migrates to Them*, 2007.

**12** Jan Breman, ‘Slumlands’ *New Left Review*, No. 40 142, July/August 2006, <http://newleftreview.org/?page=article&view=2631>, accessed 6 July 2007.

**13**  
Harding, *It Migrates to Them*, 2007.

**14**  
David Cunningham, 'Slumming It: Mike Davis's grand narrative of urban revolution', *Radical Philosophy*, No. 142, March/April 2007 [www.radicalphilosophy.com/default.asp?channel\\_id=2188&editorial\\_i...](http://www.radicalphilosophy.com/default.asp?channel_id=2188&editorial_i...), accessed 6 July 2007.

**15**  
Cunningham, *Slumming It*, 2007.

**16**  
Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri *Empire*, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge 2000.

**17**  
Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri *Multitude*, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge 2004.

**18**  
Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums*, Verso, London 2006, p. 60.

**19**  
Davis 2006, p. 76.

**20**  
And in South Africa key people in or associated with left NGOs have, notoriously, and in an exact echo of the practice of the state/party, called shack dwellers' movements 'criminal' in the media when they have politely declined their money and their often racialized assumptions of a right to authority. See *What Happened at the SMI?* <http://abahlali.org/node/462#comment-662>, accessed 6 July 2007.

**21**  
Davis 2006, p. 16.

**22**  
Tom Lodge *Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945* Ravan Press, Johannesburg 1983, p. 16.

**23**  
See Iain Edwards Cato Manor, 'June 1959' in the superb collection *The People's City: African life in Twentieth Century Durban* edited by Paul Maylam and Iain Edwards, University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1996 pp. 102-144.

what Jan Bremmer writing in *New Left Review* called a "properly global portrait"<sup>12</sup>. Harding observes that observes "Planet of Slums "howls with figures" and declares that:

"This constant production of numbers – and a seamless access between continents – offers us the world as a single, intelligible place defined by the universal laws of accumulation and deprivation. Any sense that slum cultures and slum cities might have a specific character, beyond the common lot of misery, is tenuous. No book will give readers the impression of covering greater distances, even if they will feel by the end as though they'd been cooped up in a narrow, featureless room. Homogeneity, Davis would argue, is what late capitalism does: already a billion people live in roughly the same extraordinary way in roughly similar environments."<sup>13</sup>

David Cunningham, writing in *Radical Philosophy*, recalls that in a review of Davis's justly celebrated book on L.A., *City of Quartz*, Marshal Berman had argued that "the efforts of the comfortable to lock out the poor is more vivid than his descriptions of the poor"<sup>14</sup> and acknowledges that:

"While Davis's approach may entail certain undeniable risks – a flattening out of differences in both history and social-spatial form – it is in fact, precisely the inherently totalizing and comparative project pursued in *Planet of Slums* that gives it its distinctive power. For in the social world of an emergent global capitalist modernity, the 'grandest narratives' just always are 'histories of money' in some fundamental sense."<sup>15</sup>

From a situated reading there is certainly tremendous value in this totalizing history of money. For instance, given that shack dwellers are routinely pathologised by local elites and the transnationalized Northern NGO/academic/donor complex as being responsible for their suffering by virtue of their own inadequacies, the remarkable scope of Davis's analysis does shift the blame in useful directions. But it remains the case that the lived experience against which readers who know something about life and struggle in particular shack settlements will measure the degree to which these statistics accurately represent the lifeworlds they seek to describe is necessarily a question of local resonance.

In Durban a book like Hardt and Negri's *Empire*<sup>16</sup> (and even more so *Multitude*)<sup>17</sup> can only be read as fiction in so far as it aspires to the global, and as alien in so far as it really describes the particular. But most of *Slums* reads like a welcome acknowledgement of the real lives of a part of humanity often rendered invisible

in leftism orientated around the Northern left. Davis is particularly good when he identifies and addresses the reality of the two great curses of shack life – shit and fire. And he is just as good when he addresses the way in which post-colonial elites have aggressively adapted racial zoning to class and tend to withdraw to residential and commercial themeparks from which they engage in an ongoing struggle against the poor for control of the cities. Their strategies can include forced removal to bleak ghettos outside of cities, mass evictions (particularly in the lead up to major international events), brutal police repression of shack dwellers' movements and active collaboration with international NGOs and donors acting to co-opt and demobilize resistance.

But it is also true that Davis's global picture doesn't always look right. This isn't always a mere question of differences of perspective. At times Davis just hasn't pulled his avalanche of information out of the library with sufficient care. For instance, readers familiar with South Africa will be astonished at Davis' confusion of formal state built and serviced townships with informal self built and largely unserved shack settlements.<sup>18</sup> And he is simply wrong to argue that shack settlements are always owned by slumlords. That is certainly not necessarily the case in Durban. And one can only assume that his unreferenced claim that "the militant NGOs so instrumental in creating the World Social Forums"<sup>19</sup> are an exception to the relentless NGO tendency to cooption, clientelism and bureaucratization of popular struggle comes from an uncritical reading of the marketing put out by these NGOs. The experience in South Africa has been precisely the opposite – in Africa the WSF is an NGO project and not a popular movement project and the more left the NGO the more likely it is to seek to co-opt movements of the poor by excluding critical voices and buying off compliant leaders with a view to subordinating them to the imperatives of the NGO with the objective of staking apparently credible claims for its own power in spaces like the WSF.<sup>20</sup>

Moreover, the thinking of people who live in shacks is entirely absent from this book. Davis does pose the question about the extent to which shack dwellers may or may not have the capacity for historical agency but misses numerous opportunities to indicate that the very question is profoundly and perversely prejudicial. For example he occasionally makes mention of various riots and protests but never enquires into what the rioters and protesters were thinking. The riot appears as a natural phenomenon. Similarly his, again naturalizing, description of Soweto as "having grown from a suburb to a satellite city"<sup>21</sup> leaves out the history and political agency of the shack dwellers'

movement, Sofasonke which in 1944 led more than ten thousand people to occupy the land that would later become Soweto.<sup>22</sup> And he makes no attempts to show that shack dwellers have often been cultural innovators within popular cosmopolitanisms. He could, for example, have pointed to the large gay section of the Cato Manor settlement in Durban where homosexual marriage was pioneered in South Africa in the 1950s<sup>23</sup> or, for that matter, noted that so much popular American music stems from a shack dweller – Woody Guthrie.<sup>24</sup>

However there has been more serious critique. Harding is rightfully tough on Davis's Third Worldist idealization of states before structural adjustment. And Cunningham notes, with reference to Robert Neuwirth's cautions in this regard<sup>25</sup>, that the use of the word 'slum' is risky given its origins in Victorian fear of a metropolitan savagery in the new 'urban jungle'. But perhaps the strongest version of this line of critique has come from Tom Angotti writing in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.

Angotti is deeply skeptical of Davis's claim to Marxism and sees his book as being much closer to the neo-liberalism against which it rails. He rejects the use of the word 'slum' outright arguing that it has racialized connotations that are used to justify 'slum clearance', argues that Davis's "apocalyptic rhetoric feeds into longstanding anti-urban fears about working people who live in cities", laments the presentation of shack dwellers as atomized and apolitical and castigates Davis for the absence of any discussion of "the progressive and often radical urban movements struggling against evictions and displacement and for better living conditions."<sup>26</sup> It is certainly the case that in South Africa the UN Report which initially inspired Davis's book has been misused by the state to wage a major assault on shack settlements in the name of slum clearance. There is a clear danger that the apocalyptic aspects of Davis's book could be misused in the same way. Angotti also makes pointed reference to Janice Perlman's 1976 favela study *The Myth of Marginality* which, Angotti explains, argues that the idea of absolute marginality "allows strangers from afar to paint monstrous pictures of huge undifferentiated neighborhoods filled with hopeless underemployed masses".<sup>27</sup> He concludes that Davis has succumbed to a reactionary, racialized and fearful anti-urbanism.

This bleak assessment is a fair assessment. Davis makes some profoundly bizarre and clearly racialized statements in this book, especially towards the end. For instance, prostitution is the only named cause

cited as an explanation of the AIDS pandemic in parts of Africa and we are even told, by way of a right wing tabloid newspaper, that in Accra, Ghana, "75 percent of the waste of black polythene bags in the metropolis contains aborted human fetuses."<sup>28</sup> There is no attempt to approach this ludicrous statement critically or to ground it empirically. But things really fall apart when he concludes the book with a look, largely through imperial eyes, at Kinshasa. Commenting on his climatic reference to "Kurtzian horror" after a "frenzy of apocalyptic rhetoric"<sup>29</sup> Cunningham observes that "The accumulated historical force of this allusion threatens to tip Davis's account into a profoundly unintended discourse of 'primitivism' and 'third world savagery.'"<sup>30</sup> In his comments on Kinshasa Davis notes in passing that the city has been "officially expelled from the world economy by its Washington overseers"<sup>31</sup> and makes a couple of comments about the damage done by the IMF's successive structural adjustment programs. The civil war is just noted in passing and even then the comment comes, and not untypically, via USAID. Davis uncritically cites an anthropologist declaring the 1991 "popular pillaging of factories, stores, and warehouses" to be "perverse". But the real horror is reserved for the "fear of sorcery" (described as 'renascent' and as 'perverse') which has led to "the mass-hysterical denunciation of thousands of child 'witches' and their 'expulsion to the streets, even their murder.'" "USAID researchers", we are told, "blame the industry of self-made preachers".<sup>32</sup>

This image of a general 'Kurtzian' horror is accepted uncritically, despite its powerful resonance with the most base anti-African racist stereotype, and Davis sees no reason to label USAID, who work to legitimate state murder, as well as rapacious modes of extraction to the metropole and the very policies that in his view have produced the 'planet of slums' in similarly pejorative ways. They appear as neutral eyes, white eyes dutifully confronting the horror out there in dark Africa.<sup>33</sup> When he does make the quick gesture (extremely rare in this book) of briefly citing a local intellectual, who speaks (with an unremarked on but strikingly different assessment to Davis) of "an economy of resistance" conferring "honor on the poor", he describes him, in high colonial fashion, as "an authentic Kinois".<sup>34</sup>

In his epilogue Davis notes that the American military is planning to fight its future wars in urban slums and calls their thinking in this regard "the highest stage of Orientalism, the culmination of a long history of defining the West by opposition to a hallucinatory Eastern Other...(a) delusionary dialectic of securitized versus demonic urban spaces."<sup>35</sup> He has inadvertently concluded his book with its own epitaph.

- 24** Joe Klein, Woody Guthrie: A life Random House, New York 1980.
- 25** Robert Neuwirth, *Shadow Cities: A billion squatters, a new urban world* Routledge, New York, 2006.
- 26** Tom Angotti, 'Apocalyptic Anti-Urbanism: Mike Davis and his planet of slums', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 30, No. 4, December 2006, p. 961.
- 27** Angotti, *Apocalyptic Anti-Urbanism*, 2006, p. 962.
- 28** Davis 2006, p.135.
- 29** Cunningham, *Slumming it*, 2007, p.16.
- 30** Cunningham, *Slumming it*, 2007, p.16.
- 31** Davis 2006, p. 191.
- 32** Davis 2006, p. 197.
- 33** It is telling that although Davis describes the World Bank's professional staff as the contemporary avatar of the colonial civil service and ascribes the growth of the slum to neoliberal policies he never problematizes the fact that he relies so heavily on the work of the Bank and other institutions of contemporary imperialism. He seems to lack the conviction to take his analysis seriously which would, amongst other things, require him to approach most of his sources with a large degree of suspicion rather respectful collegiality. A simple count of the positive and negative adjectives that he uses with regard to shack dwellers and researchers in imperial institutions gives a clear indication of who he fears and who he respects.
- 34** Davis 2006, p. 198.
- 35** Davis 2006, p. 206.

# Neue Bücher / Book Reviews

## Architektur

**Schwertfeger, Friedrich: Hausa Urban Art and Social Background, LIT Verlag, Berlin 2007, 380 S., ISBN 3-8258-5643-7, € 48,-.**

Friedrich Schwertfeger, Professor an der Ahmadu Belli University in Zaria (Nord Nigeria), ist sicherlich die größte Autorität unter den Forschern auf dem Gebiet der traditionellen Architektur in Nigeria. Maßgeblich ist seine Forschung zu den Hausa Homesteads in Nord-Nigeria, die er 1976 begonnen, 1985 abgeschlossen und 2007 schließlich in Buchform veröffentlicht hat. Im Rahmen seiner Forschung hat er über 800 Häuser aufgemessen, sowie Bewohner und Handwerker befragt. Schon wenige Jahre nach Abschluss seiner Forschungsarbeit waren ein Großteil der reich dekorierten Familiengehöfte verfallen oder verwahrlost, was den Wert seiner Dokumentation aus traurigem Anlass erhöht.

dungen aller vorkommenden Dekorationsmotive, Indices usw. Ein vorbildlicher Forschungsbericht aus Zeiten, als Forscher noch die notwendige Zeit für eine gewissenhafte Ausarbeitung und Dokumentation ihrer Unterfangen mitbrachten – und gleichzeitig eine Grundlagenliteratur, zu der es über das Thema keine Alternative gibt.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Schefold, R.; Nas, P. J.M.; Domenig, G.; Wessing, R. (eds.): Indonesian Houses, Survey of Vernacular Architecture in Western Indonesia, Vol. 2, KITLV Press, Leiden 2008, 716 S., ISBN 978 90 6718 305 5, € 39.50.**

Dies ist der zweite Band einer Publikation (der erste wurde 2003 veröffentlicht, von der Niederländisch-Königlichen Wissenschaftsakademie gefördert). Er ist Teil einer 'Leiden Series on Indonesian Architecture'. Während der erste Band nur wenige Fallstudien anbot und mehr dem theoretischen Rahmen gewidmet war, ist dieser zweite Band eine reiche Sammlung an Fallstudien west-indonesischer traditioneller Architekturen. Bemerkenswert ist, dass fast ausschließlich Sozialwissenschaftler (Ethnologen) hier zu Werke sind; von 21 Autoren sind nur 3 Architekten. Dies bietet eine reiche Perspektive in Sachen Kultur, Lebensweise, religiöser Praktiken, und dem materiellen Ausdruck in der gebauten Architektur.

Das Buch bietet eine erstaunliche Bandbreite regionaler und sub-regionaler Architekturen, die von Aceh, Karo, Minangkabau, Siberut, Nias, Rejang, Jambi, Palembang, Kerinci, Südsumatera, Enggano, Rundhäusern, Sunda, Baduy, Betawi, nomadenartigen Behelfsarchitekturen, Hausbooten bis zu den Kampungen von Jakarta reichen. Die Artikel sind mit Fotos illustriert (leider oft nicht die besten Aufnahmen und Wiedergabequalität, aber wichtige und gute Motive!) und einige Beiträge haben detaillierte architektonische Perspektiv- und Grundrisszeichnungen (recht unterschiedliche Qualität).

Was den Leser überwältigt, ist die kulturelle Vielfalt (und auch die Dokumentation der schon publizierten Forschungsberichte zu diesem Thema). Hauptaussage des Buches bleibt, dass heute noch vieles von dem hier dokumentierten "live"

zu sehen ist. Aber in einigen Jahren wird alles verschwunden sein, und diese Dokumente und Forschungsarbeiten werden zu den letzten Zeugnissen dieser sich wandelnden Kulturen gehören. In den meisten hier dokumentierten Gebieten wird heute nicht mehr traditionell gebaut und ein modernisierter Hausbau dominiert das Bauge-schehen. Der letzte Beitrag im Buche deutet an, dass pop-art ähnliche Zitate sich häufig in privaten wie öffentlichen Bauten finden, aber dies ist offensichtlich noch kein Indiz für Kontinuität. Ob es dazu kommen wird, wird offen gehalten. Die Leser sind gespannt, wie es mit Java und Ost-Indonesien weitergehen wird. Die nächsten Bände der Reihe? Sehr zu empfehlen!

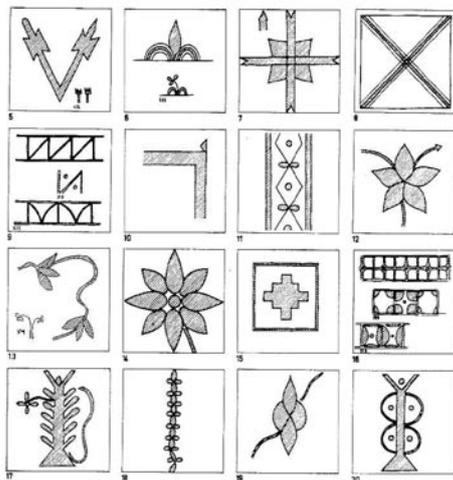
*Florian Steinberg*

## Stadtentwicklung

**Gangler, Anette (ed.): Oases Settlements in Oman, Edition esefeld & traub, Stuttgart 2008, 106 S., ISBN 3-9809887-3-5, € 49,-.**

Diese Publikation dokumentiert Ergebnisse eines langjährigen Forschungsprojektes der Universität Tübingen zusammen mit verschiedenen anderen Institutionen. Das baugeschichtliche Erbe Omans, in Deutschland noch weitgehend unbekannt, ist aufgrund des Wasserreichtums in den Bergen und der strategischen Schlüssellage am Eingang des Golfs überdurchschnittlich alt und reich. Im Rahmen des Projektes wurden mittels neuester Vermessungstechnologien systematisch Siedlungen in drei Landesteilen per Satellit, Luftfoto und Bauaufnahme vermessen und kartiert. Unterschiedliche Siedlungs-Typologien werden für die Gebirgsregion, die Küstenoasen und die Wüstenzone im Landesinnern identifiziert. Die vorliegende Veröffentlichung fügt diesen Plänen und Karten noch eine große Anzahl von Fotografien und einen – leider nicht sehr in die Tiefe gehenden – Text hinzu. Das Ergebnis ist eine Publikation von hohem dokumentarischem Wert, die aufgrund ihrer gefälligen Aufmachung auch Laien anspricht. Eine Kurzfassung der Veröffentlichung hat der Verleger freundlicherweise unter [www.edition-et.de/images/oman.pdf](http://www.edition-et.de/images/oman.pdf) ins Netz gestellt. Hintergrundinformationen können TRIALOG Leser auch im Heft 76 1/2003 (Gangler, Diener, Fein) nachlesen.

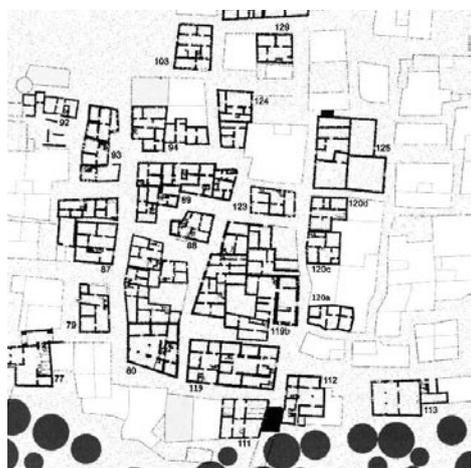
*Kosta Mathéy*



Teil I der Arbeit ist den ‚Bauherren‘ gewidmet, bzw. den sozialen Aspekten der Gebäudenutzung. Es geht um Familienstrukturen, die Bedeutung der Hausverzierungen und dem dadurch ausgedrückten Status. Teil II erläutert den Bauprozess einschließlich der Organisation des Baugewerbes. Teil III konzentriert sich auf die Dekoration selbst, ihre Geschichte, die Ästhetik, den Einfluss des Islam darauf. 100 Seiten Anhang dokumentieren detaillierte Primärdaten der Forschung, einschließlich der Fragebögen, tabellierter Ergebnisse, Abbil-

**Wates, Nick: The Community Planning Event Manual, Earthscan, London 2008, 121 S., ISBN 1-84407-492-1, € 27,99.**

Dieses ‚How-to-do‘ Manual für partizipative Stadtplanungs-Workshops ist eine Überarbeitung früherer Publikationen des gleichen Autors: Action Planning (1996, Rezension TRIALOG 53:51) und Community Planning Handbook (2000). Systematisch beschrieben werden die Notwendigkeit für partizipative Stadtplanung und die vorgeschlagene Methode, die Entscheidungsfindung, Vorbereitung der Veranstaltung, der tatsächliche Ablauf eines Planungsworkshops und Follow-Up Aktivitäten, welche zu konkreten Folgen des Engagements führen sollen. Besonders wertvoll sind auch die 30 Seiten Anhang, der Daten, Adressen, Tabellen, Literatur etc. enthält.



Die neue Publikation reflektiert die 40 Jahre Projekterfahrungen seit dem Ur-Event der Methode 1967, als das American Institute of Architects die ersten Workshops in 125 Städten durchführte. Auf viele fallspezifische Details wird verzichtet, praktische Vereinfachungen eingeführt (wie die Verwendung von Post-it Zetteln statt der umständlichen Moderationskarten) – und die Empfehlung, eine Gruppe von 4-5 Architekturstudenten hinzu zu laden, die Gedanken dann visualisieren können. Obwohl das Handbuch immer noch sehr stark auf englische Verhältnisse abzielt, ist es bei sinnvoller Übertragung auch für Workshops in Ländern des Südens sehr nützlich.

*Kosta Mathéy*

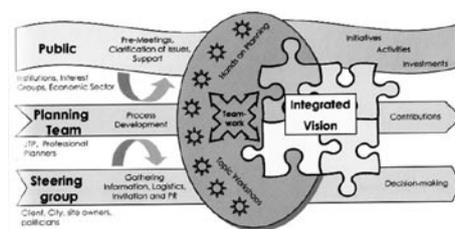
**Mehta, B. and Dastur, A.: Approaches to Urban Slums – A Multimedia Sourcebook on Adaptive and Proactive Strategies, World Bank Publications, Washington 2008, SKU 17354; ISBN-13 978-0-8213-7354-5, 60 S. /9 Std. Multimedia Inhalt auf CD Rom, \$ 30.**

Diese Gemeinschaftspublikation der Weltbank, des Weltbankinstitutes, der Cities Alliance und

der UN-Habitat ist ein richtiger Meilenstein! Das Medienpaket bietet exzellentes didaktisches Material zum Thema der Verbesserung von Slums in Entwicklungsländern. Die wesentlichen Nachrichten werden multi-medial an das Publikum gebracht. Es gibt wenig zu lesen, aber dafür vier gute 20 Minuten lange Powerpoint Shows zum Thema pro-aktiver Slumsanierung, untergliedert in thematische Einführung, Management von städtischem Wachstum, Planungsinstrumente und pluralistische Versorgungssysteme. Zur detaillierten Illustrierung verschiedener Erfahrungen gibt es Filme (etwa 3 Stunden) zu Fallstudien der Siedlungsverbesserung und Stadterneuerung in Dar-es-Salaam, Ecuador, Vietnam, Bahia, Kabul und Mauretania. Diesem an inhaltlichem Reichtum kaum zu überbietenden Material sind dann noch 12 thematische Interviews (weitere 4 Stunden) mit Weltbank-Personal, Sektorspezialisten, Praktikern und NGO-Aktivistinnen zugeordnet. Die Interviews sind eingeteilt in die Themen (i) Arbeiten mit Slumbewohnern, (ii) Planen für die Zukunft, (iii) Zugang zu Grund und Boden und (iv) Effektive Slumsanierung oder –beseitigung.

Man wünscht dieser Publikation massive Verbreitung, und kann nur hoffen, dass viele Institutionen sich die Qualität dieses Medienpaketes zum Vorbild nehmen werden.

*Florian Steinberg*



**Gandolfi, Emiliani (ed.): Spectacular City. Photographing the Future, NAI Publishers, Rotterdam 2006, 180 S., ISBN 90-5662-518-7, € 151,73.**

Das Buch wurde anlässlich einer gleichnamigen Ausstellung in Rotterdam zur Jahreswende 2006-7 zusammengestellt. Es enthält eine große Auswahl von Fotografien von ca. 30 Künstlern zu Aspekten der städtischen Umwelt – interessante Schnappschüsse, so manche Montage, keine Edelphotographie. Der künstlerische Wert der Bilder wird teilweise durch unscharfe Aufnahmen und flau und zu dunkle Wiedergabe zu steigern versucht. Bei vielen Bildern verweilt man länger, möchte vielleicht auch gerne wissen, wo das Foto aufgenommen wurde. Leider bleibt dieses Detail regelmäßig ein Geheimnis, dafür erfahren wir ersatzweise, aus welchem Material der Bilderrah-

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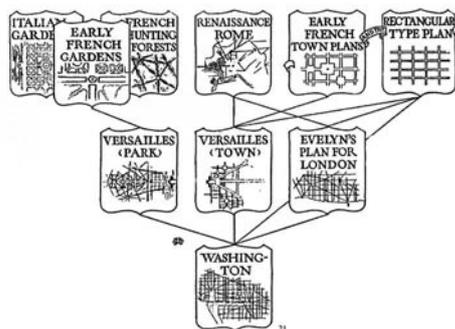
men jeder einzelnen Aufnahme bei der Ausstellung war, in welchen Galerien der Fotograf zuvor schon einmal ausgestellt hat etc. Ein Glückserlebnis sind vielleicht für manche Leser die doppel-seitigen Silberfolien zwischen den – unbetitelten – Kapiteln. Der Bildband ist ein Leckerbissen für alle Freunde von überflüssigen Büchern.

*Kosta Mathéy*



**Marshall, Stephen: Cities, Design & Evolution, Routledge, London & New York 2008, 342 S., ISBN 978-0-415-42329-8., € 75,-.**

Der Autor, Senior Lecturer an der renommierten Londoner Bartlett School, widmet sein Buch der Fragestellung, warum moderne, mit so hohem Aufwand geplante Städte in ihrer physischen Erscheinung im Allgemeinen als Rückschritt gegenüber historisch gewachsenen Stadtstrukturen bewertet werden können. Im Verlauf seiner Untersuchungen wurde ihm schnell klar, dass bei so komplexen Gebilden, wie es Städte nun einmal sind, eine eindeutige Antwort unmöglich ist. Daher begnügt er sich mit dem alternativen Ziel für die Arbeit, Stadtformen in ihrer Vielfalt besser verständlich zu machen. Er beginnt mit einem kurzen Streifzug durch die Geschichte von Idealstädten, entwickelt Modelle zur geometrischen Ordnung von Baublöcken, wendet sich sozialen Determi-



nanten zu. Im Vergleich zu natürlichen Organismen werden Evolutionstheorien als Erklärungsmuster für Stadtformung zu Hilfe gezogen, dann funktionale Hierarchisierung, dann Form-Mutationen. Die Gedanken werden mit meistens bekannten Städtebildern illustriert und mit nahezu 400 Literaturquellen belegt. Es ist dabei nicht weiter verwunderlich, dass der oder die Leser/in dabei schnell den Überblick verliert und am Ende so schlau bleibt wie zuvor. Es ist ein Buch für all jene, die sich gerne in Theorien verlieren und auf praktische Relevanz keinen Wert legen.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Wüstenrot Stiftung (Hg.). Stadtmachen.eu. Urbanität und Planungskultur in Europa, Karl Krämer Verlag, Stuttgart 2008, 236 S., ISBN 3-7828-1524-6, € 25,-.**

Bei einer subventionierten Festschrift machen die Erwartungen keine Höhenflüge. Umso bemerkenswerter zählt die Entdeckung, dass es sich bei dem hier besprochenen Band um eine wissenschaftlich fundierte und wahrscheinlich richtungweisende Publikation handelt. Die acht präsentierten Städteprofile haben gemeinsam, dass sie alle bewusst einen – zwar typischen, aber dennoch eigenen – Weg in ihrer Antwort auf die Herausforderungen von Globalisierung, Ressourcen-Verknappung und Klimawandel verfolgt haben.

Barcelona hat mit seiner langfristigen strategischen Planung Vorbildcharakter erworben, wozu auch die Verstetigung des zunächst kurzfristigen Booms der olympischen Spiele durch Folgeinvestitionen gehört. Amsterdam, einmal aus seinem Hippieschlaf erwacht, hat sich bewusst zum Wasser hin geöffnet und dies mit einem Feuerwerk an Architektur-Landmarks betont. Almere trägt als eine der wenigen europäischen Stadtneugründungen der Neuzeit zur Entlastung der bestehenden Zentren bei und ist dabei, sich durch eine eigene und selbstständige Infrastruktur vom Risiko einer Reduzierung zur Trabantenstadt Amsterdams zu befreien. Manchester als typischer Verlierer der Tertiarisierung von Städten hat erfolgreich ein Reurbanisierungsprogramm für die ausgedünnte Innenstadt gestartet und seinen Platz als ernst zu nehmender Player im globalen Städtewettbewerb zurückerobert. Kopenhagen hat mit Großinvestitionen, wie der Öresund Brücke, offensiv seine Position als globaler Verkehrsknotenpunkt ausgebaut. Leipzig als Paradebeispiel einer schrumpfenden Stadt ist es in den vergangenen 15 Jahren gelungen, seinen bedrohlichen Bevölkerungsrückgang zu stoppen. Sarajewo als multinationale und zerstörte Stadt

führt die Machbarkeit eines erfolgreichen Wiederaufbaus vor. Zürich schließlich ist es mit kooperativen Entwicklungs-Allianzen gelungen, die Gesamtstadt durch punktuelle Eingriffe nachhaltig aufzuwerten.

Die Dokumentation der Fallstudien ist zweifellos höchst interessant. Noch spannender ist natürlich die Analyse, was sich als gemeinsame Trends herauschälen lässt. Welches ist die gemeinsame Schnittmenge, die auch für andere Städte relevant sein könnte? Die ganz besondere Stärke dieser Publikation ist eine Querschnittsanalyse, mittels derer sieben typische Schwerpunkte zukunftsfähiger Stadtplanung identifiziert wurden und die als Einblendungen jeweils zwischen die Fallstudien eingeschoben sind. Fokus Eins ist die Existenz einer Entwicklungsvision oder eines Zukunftsbildes, das in der Lage ist, schlummernde Ressourcen lokal zu mobilisieren. Fokus Zwei betrifft die Übertragung von besonderen Planungsaufgaben an privat organisierte, aber öffentlich kontrollierte, Entwicklungsgesellschaften. Fokus Drei verweist auf die sich wandelnde Rolle der kommunalen Planungsbehörden weg von reinen Genehmigungsinstitutionen und hin zu Projektsteuerern, die jetzt eine führende Rolle in der Stadtentwicklung übernehmen, mit Investoren verhandeln und auch für das Marketing zuständig sind. Fokus Vier ist mit ‚Umbaustadt‘



betitelt. Gemeint ist die Bereitschaft, auch ganze Stadtbezirke radikal umzustrukturieren, alt mit neu zu mischen und mittels Zwischennutzungen bewusst kulturelle Pioniere anzuziehen. Fokus Fünf deutet auf den ‚Bilbao-Effekt‘ hin oder die Festivalisierung von Städten. Leuchtturmprojekte rücken eine Stadt in den Blickpunkt der Weltöffentlichkeit. Fokus Sieben betrifft das flächenmäßige Stadtbild, das der globalen Uniformisierung entgegenwirkt und z.B. durch Gestaltsatzungen, Entwurfsrichtlinien, oder auch fachliche Supervision in Gestaltungsfragen erzielt werden kann.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Nadarajah, M.; Tomoko Yamamoto, Ann: Urban Crisis. Culture and Sustainability of Cities, United Nations University Press, Tokyo 2007, 244 S., ISBN 92-808-1125-4, € 23,99.**

Um es vorneweg zu sagen: Der Titel 'Urban Crisis' erscheint allein auf dem Umschlag des Buches und sonst nirgends; vermutlich handelt es sich um einen Druckfehler. Der zweite Begriff 'Sustainability' ist ein modebedingtes Zugeständnis und taucht hin und wieder in den Beiträgen auf, ohne dass aber zu diesem Aspekt neue Kenntnisse beigetragen würden. Es bleibt 'Kultur' als zentrales und populäres Anliegen der Publikation, die hier auf Asien bezogen wird aber sonst schwierig zu fassen ist. Ab und zu wird im Text auf die UNESCO Bezug genommen, was als Indikator für die Beschäftigung des Inhaltes mit Kultur gewertet werden darf. Dieses Augenmerk steigert sich bis zum Teil III des Bandes, in dem es um die Anwendung von Kultur-Indikatoren geht und ihre Messbarkeit an der Auflage von Tageszeitungen und dergleichen erläutert wird.

Wie die vorstehenden Anmerkungen vermuten lassen, fehlt der Publikation eine durchgängige Linie. Die Beiträge stammen von verschiedenen Konferenzen, die von der so genannten Kanazawa Initiative, einem dreijährigen Projekt der Ishikawa International Corporation zusammen mit anderen Partnern gestartet wurde. Das Buch war somit eine Pflichtübung, was seinen ziellosen Charakter erklärt. Trotz alledem sei anerkennend hinzugefügt, dass der Teil II des Bandes vier Fallstudien zu den Städten Patan (Nepal), Penang (Malaysia), Cheongju (Korea) und Kanazawa (Japan) enthält mit Material, das in Europa an anderer Stelle wahrscheinlich nicht zugänglich ist. Think positive.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Gold, John and Margaret: Olympic Cities. City Agendas, Planning, and the World's Games, 1896 to 2012, Routledge, Abington & New York 2006, 348 S., ISBN 978-0-415-37407-1, € 42,99.**

Wenn ein Team von 16 fast ausnahmslos britischen Autoren ein Buch über Olympische Spiele zusammenstellt, liegt angesichts der bevorstehenden Games in London 2012 eine Marketing Absicht nahe. Dieser Verdacht verflüchtigt sich im Licht der relativ kritischen Auseinandersetzung mit der Thematik aber schnell. Der Band ist in drei Abschnitte untergliedert. Teil 1 verfolgt zunächst die Urgeschichte der Olympischen Spiele bis zu Beginn des 20. Jh., während die Folgezeit differenzierter in sieben Phasen unterteilt wird.

Andere Einzelkapitel beschäftigen sich mit den weniger publikumswirksamen Winterspielen, mit den Paralympics, mit dem kulturellen Schattenwurf dieser Großveranstaltungen. Teil 2 gilt den Planungs- und Managementaspekten der Spiele. Hierzu zählen die Finanzierungsprobleme, das immer wichtiger werdende City Marketing, den Zwang zum Großevent und die damit verbundenen städtischen Sanierungsprojekte bei denen regelmäßig eine beachtliche Anzahl weniger einflussreicher Bürger Opfer von Verdrängung, Vertreibung oder anderer Herrschafts-Maßnahmen wird. Der von allen umfangreichste Teil 3 der Veröffentlichung sind acht Fallstudien zu den olympischen Städten Berlin, Mexiko Stadt, Montreal, Barcelona, Sydney, Athen, Peking und London. Insgesamt manifestiert die Veröffentlichung eine fundierte und gut koordinierte wissenschaftliche Leistung neben der Parallelqualität des Augenöffners.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Roncayolo, Marcel: Territoires en Partage. Nanterre, Seine-Arche: en recherche d'identité, Editions Parenthèses, Marseille 2007, 112 S., ISBN 2-86364-178-1., € 22,-.**

Nanterre ist jener Pariser Vorort der in der Verlängerung der Champs-Élysées einige Kilometer hinter dem Triumphbogen und zwischen dem Grande Arche und der Seine liegt. Verkehrsmäßig heute relativ gut angebunden, ist Nanterre eine prädestinierte Expansionsfläche für die Metropole Paris und befindet sich gegenwärtig als öffentlich meist diskutiertes städtebauliches Großprojekt in der Planung. Stadtplanerisch stellt sich die Frage, wie das gesichtslose Sammelsurium unterschiedlichster Sozial- und Gebäudestrukturen in ein großflächig einheitliches Gefüge integriert werden kann.

Bevor das Gelände hektarweise umgepflügt wird, hat sich der Autor, Jahrgang 1926, auf Spurensicherung begeben. Bereits 1835 wurde der Marktflecken per Eisenbahn an Paris angeschlossen. Die Bahnverbindung führte in den folgenden Jahrzehnten zur Ansiedlung großer Industriekomplexe, die im Verlauf der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts die Ankunft und Niederlassung von Migranten und anderer Arbeitssuchender mit sich brachte – viele von ihnen in informellen Siedlungsgebieten, wie sie später auch die Dritte Welt kennen gelernt hat. Als Reaktion darauf folgten in der Nachkriegszeit riesige Sozialwohnbauprojekte, voneinander auf Distanz gehalten durch nahezu unüberwindbare Verkehrsbauwerke. Wo viele junge Leute wohnten, musste bald auch eine Universität eingerichtet werden, die maßgeblich

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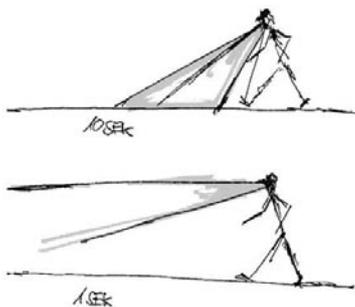
cher Ausgangspunkt der Studentenbewegung von 1968 werden sollte. Oft auch gewalttätige Proteste, sei es von Seiten der Studierenden oder seitens der ausgeschlossenen Jugend nordafrikanischer Abstammung, blieben bis heute an der Tagesordnung. Kein Wunder also, dass soziale Brennpunkte jetzt mittels Bulldozer aus dem Blickfeld geräumt werden sollen.

Die Kombination von historischen Fotografien und schriftlich festgehaltenen Recherchen vermittelt ein starkes Stimmungsbild, das betroffen macht und sich in das Gedächtnis eingräbt. Ein ausgezeichnetes dokumentarisches Zeugnis.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Humpert, Klaus: Lauf-Spuren, Edition esefeld & traub, Stuttgart 2007, 120 S., ISBN 3-9809887-1-1, € 47,-.**

Klaus Humpert, emeritierter Professor für Städtebau an der Uni Stuttgart, ist bekannt für seine unkonventionellen Betrachtungen und Beweisführungen, die eigentlich so einleuchtend sind, dass man sich fragt, warum zuvor niemand auf den Gedanken gekommen ist. In diesem Band, der auf Ergebnisse eines DFG geförderten Forschungsprojektes aus den 1990er Jahren zurückgreift, geht es um die Genese und Transformation von Wegeverbindungen. Der kleinste Nenner der Untersuchung ist der Trampelpfad, der – obwohl als kürzeste Wegeverbindung zwischen zwei Punkten – dennoch nie geradlinig verläuft. Gelüftet wird das Geheimnis in dem Selbstversuch, beim Gehen das Ziel ununterbrochen im Blick zu behalten, was nicht gelingt, da der Laufende



instinktiv die größte Aufmerksamkeit den bevorstehenden 5 oder 10 Metern widmet. Interessanterweise entstehen gleiche Wegeverläufe bei Tierschneisen, nicht jedoch bei Menschen, wenn sie sich nachts ausschließlich an irgendwelchen Lichtpunkten in der Entfernung orientieren können. Es folgen Beobachtungen über Kreuzungen und Abzweige, bei denen typische Winkel von 200 als Kompromiss zwischen Minimierung des Kraftaufwandes und dem Widerstand des Verlassens einer bewährten Wegeführung entstehen. Überhaupt ist die Einsparung von Energie = Mus-

kelkraft die wichtigste Variable bei zielgerichteten Fußwegeverbindungen – anders als bei modernen Autostrassen, wo der Zeitgewinn eine höhere Priorität einnimmt. Dies ist z.B. abzulesen an Stadtgrundrissen, bei denen sich spontan ertrampelte Abkürzungen oder Wegverbindungen aus der vormotorisierten Epoche mit dem geplanten Straßenraster moderner Parzellierungs-Planungen aus der motorisierten Neuzeit überlagern. Anders liegt der Fall beim ziellosen Laufen, Spaziergängen, auf frisch gepflügten Feldern oder riesigen Stadtplätzen, auf Wochenmärkten. Es entstehen abstrakte Wegemuster, die wiederum denen von Wild auf der Nahrungssuche gleichen. Kurz: der Band führt kurzweilig von einer neuen Erkenntnis zu nächsten, ist anregend illustriert mit Fotos und einfachen Skizzen, ästhetisch gelayoutet – eines der seltenen Bücher, die man von vorne bis hinten liest und gerne als Referenzquelle weiterempfiehlt.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Aronson, Shlomo: Aridscapes. Designing in Harsh and Fragile Land, Editorial Gustavo Gili, Barcelona 2008, 215 S., zweisprachig Spanisch-Englisch, ISBN 84-252-2221-4, € 35,-.**

Der Autor ist ein erfolgreicher Landschaftsarchitekt aus Israel und gleichzeitig Professor für Politikwissenschaften an der Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Mit einer Lebenserfahrung von mehr als 70 Jahren verfügt er über einen nahezu grenzenlosen Erfahrungsschatz, der sich in dieser Veröffentlichung offenbart. Der Band über den Umgang mit Landschaft in trockenen Regionen – zu Zeiten der globalen Erwärmung ein sicherer Zukunftsmarkt – ist kein Lehrbuch oder Nachschlagewerk über angepasste Planungs- oder Landschaftskonzepte unter den Vorzeichen der Versteppung, oder gar über dürreresistente Pflanzengattungen. Stattdessen finden wir philosophisch angereicherte Erzählungen über das Verhältnis von Mensch und Landschaft, über die Veränderung von Landschaften über die Epochen hinweg, über individuelle oder kollektive Erfindungen, die ein Optimum an Lebensqualität unter dem Vorzeichen Wasserökonomie erreicht, über die noch weitgehend unerforschten Auswirkungen des Baus des Assuan Staudamms auf die Fauna des Mittelmeers.

Die Veröffentlichung beginnt mit der Definition arider Landschaften, gefolgt von Anmerkungen zu den vier Elementen: Sonne, Erde, Wasser – Pflanzen. Ein Kapitel über psychologische Aspekte der Landschaft erfasst Erfahrungen, die nicht technisch messbar sind. Eigene Abschnitte sind dem natürlichen und geschaffenen Paradiesen ‚Oase‘ und ‚Wüstengarten‘ gewidmet. Das Kapitel ‚Landwirtschaft‘ dreht sich in der Hauptsache um Bewäs-

serung, der wichtigsten Variablen in Wüstenzonen. Unter der Überschrift ‚Altering the Landscape‘ werden großflächige Eingriffe in das Ökosystem beschrieben, mitsamt den gleichzeitig nützlichen wie schädlichen Nebenwirkungen. Einer möglichen Gegensteuerung zu radikalen Umwälzungen des Ökosystems ist das letzte Kapitel über Landschaftsschutz als Faktor in der Regionalentwicklung gewidmet.

Die einzelnen Kapitel sind realisierten landschaftsplanerischen Projekten gewidmet – die meisten unter Mitwirkung des Autors konzipiert. Ein Buch, das zwar nicht hält, was der Titel verspricht, aber dennoch bereichert.

*Kosta Mathéy*

**Ellen, Regine; Wöhrle, Hans-Jörg: Designing with Plants, Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel 2008, 91 S., ISBN 3-7643-8659-7, € 14,-.**

Das schmale DIN-A 5 Heftchen, dessen Seiten schon beim ersten Aufklappen auseinander fallen und das im ‚klassischen‘, von A4 herunterkopierten, Typenrad-Schreibmaschinen Layout nur schwer zu lesen ist, vermittelt zunächst nur wenig Bewunderung. Doch je weiter man liest, desto dezidierter wandelt sich der Eindruck. Die beiden Autoren vermitteln schnell ein Verständnis dafür, welche räumlichen und atmosphärischen Wirkungen sich durch überlegte Anordnung von Pflanzungen erzielen lassen, und welches differenziertes Wissen ein guter Pflanzplan erfordert.

Der erste Teil der Publikation beginnt mit grundsätzlichen pflanzenbezogenen Design-Parametern, wie Klima, Bodenbeschaffenheit, Wasserqualität und Quantität – aber auch mit funktionalen Aufgaben wie praktischer Nutzen, ästhetische Funktion, ökologische Aufgaben und symbolische Konnotationen. Im darauf folgenden Kapitel werden ausführlich die zahlreichen raumbildenden Möglichkeiten von Pflanzungen erklärt, während im abschließenden Kapitel die Charakteristika von Farbe, die Zyklen der Qualitäten im Tages- und Jahres-Rhythmus und die Vielfalt der zu beachtenden Merkmale in ihrer Kombination verdeutlicht werden. Obwohl in dem Band nicht ausgesprochen, drängt sich die Berechtigung des Begriffes ‚Gartenbaukunst‘ ins Gedächtnis.

Die Lektüre dieses Bandes wäre sicherlich jenen 90% der Architekturstudierenden ans Herz zu legen, die bei ihren Entwurfsaufgaben den Raum jenseits der Außenmauern von Gebäuden als weiße Fläche denken und auch darstellen.

*Kosta Mathéy*

Zimmermann, Astrid (ed.): *Constructing Landscape. Materials, Techniques, Building Elements*, Birkhäuser Verlag, Basel 2009, 533 S., ISBN 3-7643-8600-9. € 54,- bis 98,- händlerabhängig.

Der umfangreiche Band ist Lehrbuch und Nachschlagewerk für Freiraumplanung zugleich und gliedert sich im Wesentlichen in drei Teile: 130 Seiten füllt die Erläuterung wichtiger Materialien, die zum Einsatz kommen können, wie Erde, Pflanzen, Wiesen, Holz, Stein Ziegel, Beton, Metall und ‚Sonstige‘. Teil Zwei behandelt technische Grundlagen, unterteilt eine kompakte Einführung in Baustatik, Fundamente und Verbindungen. Der dritte Teil kann mit seinen fast 300 als Hauptteil verstanden werden und ist mit ‚Strukturelemente und Methoden‘ überschrieben. Darunter ist eine Art Bauentwurfslehre für den Freiraum zu verstehen: Bodenarbeiten, Wege, Treppen, Geländer, Wände, Dach- und Wandbegrünung etc.

Schon beim Lesen der Einleitung fällt die Fähigkeit der Herausgeberin - ehemalige wissenschaftliche Mitarbeiterin an der TU Berlin - auf, komplexe Themengebilde klar zu gliedern und auf den Punkt zu bringen. Damit gelingt es, all die wesentlichen Kenntnisse und Daten der Disziplin Landschaftsarchitektur samt seiner Nachbarwissenschaften wie Architektur in nur einem Band zu vereinen. Das Buch kann aber noch mehr: die zahlreichen und zum Teil farbigen Abbildungen stellen – soweit es sich nicht um technische Details handelt, gelungene gestalterische Lösungen an, die entwerferische Anregungen vermitteln und zu einem wiederholten Durchblättern wie bei Designzeitschriften einladen.

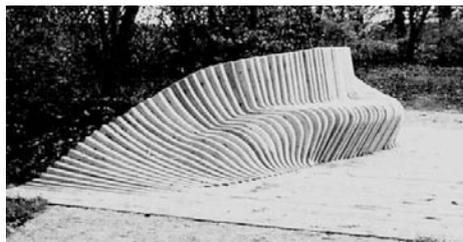
Zusammenfassend kann der Band rundum für jeden Studierenden sowie jedes Entwurfs- und Bauausführende Büro wärmstens empfohlen werden.

*Kosta Mathéy*

## Gesellschaft und Politik

Bahl, R.; Martinez-Vazquez, J. and Yougman, J. (eds.): *Making the Property Tax Work – Experiences in Developing and Transitional countries*, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Cambridge (MA) 2008, ISBN 978-1-55844-173-6, \$30.

Grund- und Bodensteuern gehören weltweit zu dem klassischen Repertoire von Instrumenten der Städte und Gemeinden, die normalerweise eine direkte Einnahmequelle darstellen, ohne dass andere Regierungsebenen (Nationale oder Provinzregierungen) irgendwelche Abzüge ver-



langen. Grund- und Bodensteuern gelten als unvermeidlich, da Besitzer von Grund und Boden, die als Immobilien, „immobil“ sind, sich deren Zahlung nicht entziehen können. Doch die Praxis vieler Entwicklungs- und ehemaliger sozialistischer Länder zeigt, dass die Einführung effektiver Instrumente und Mechanismen zur Erhebung von Grund- und Bodensteuern noch aussteht. In vielen Ländern ist deren Potential bislang weitgehend unausgeschöpft. Die Verwaltungsapparate vieler Städte und Gemeinden sind veraltet und ineffizient, und bei der Einstufung oder Taxierung von Grund- und Bodensteuern gibt es viele Möglichkeiten, den tatsächlichen Kaufpreis von Grund und Boden zu verschleiern oder niedriger anzugeben, was letztendlich zu einer NiedrigEinstufung von Steuerobjekten, und damit zu reduzierten Steuerzahlungen, führt. Da es sich um sehr umfangreiche Ersparnisse von Steuerzahlungen handeln kann, bietet die NiedrigEinstufung von Steuerobjekten eine interessante Möglichkeit für korrupte Praktiken, auch „Kollision“ genannt zwischen Steuerzahlern und lokalen Beamten, welche die Einstufung vornehmen oder Steuerakten überprüfen. Was der Steuerzahler an Steuerzahlung sparen kann wird zur potentiellen Geldquelle für korrupte Beamte.

Weltweit hat es in den letzten Jahrzehnten viele Bemühungen gegeben, durch modernisierte Steueradministration, die Einbeziehung geographischer Informationssysteme und die Nutzung professioneller Makler und Bodenexperten Grund- und Bodenwerte ihrem realen Wert anzugleichen und zu aktualisieren. Dieses Buch präsentiert die Erfahrungen vieler ehemaliger sozialistischer Staaten Osteuropas (Russland, Ukraine, Baltische Staaten und Estland) und die Erfahrungen von Entwicklungsländern wie Indien und Südafrika, die alle mit interessanten Innovationen befasst sind, um gerechtere und effizientere Grund- und Bodenbesteuerung einzuführen. Das Thema ist hochpolitisch, denn es handelt sich nicht nur um eine Verbesserung und gerechtere Verteilung der Steuerlasten. Steuerzahler sind sich zunehmend der Bedeutung ihres Beitrages bewusst, fordern mehr Transparenz und sauberere Regierungspraktiken sowie bessere Dienstleistungen. Die Steuerzahler wollen zu Recht wissen, was mit ihrem Geld geschieht und was nicht.

*Florian Steinberg*

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# Veranstaltungen / Forthcoming Events

## March 30 – April 4, 2009 in Santiago de Chile

5th International Conference of the Research Network Private Urban Governance & Gated Communities on "Redefinition of Public Space Within the Privatization of Cities", Organised by the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the University of Chile in Santiago, <http://gated-communities.uchilefau.cl>

## April 1 - 3, 2009 in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Annual Planning Research Conference (PRC 2009): "Unequal Places". Organised by Newcastle University. Contact: <[conference.apl@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:conference.apl@ncl.ac.uk)> [www.apl.ncl.ac.uk/aboutus/unequalplaces.html](http://www.apl.ncl.ac.uk/aboutus/unequalplaces.html)

## April 2 - 3, 2009 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Conference on „Family, Migration and Housing“ organised by the Research Team on Residential Choice in a Family and Socio-spatial Context, Univ. of Amsterdam. Contact: <[m.blaaboer@uva.nl](mailto:m.blaaboer@uva.nl)>, Phone: (+31 20) 525 6032, [www.fmg.uva.nl/amidst/fmh.cfm](http://www.fmg.uva.nl/amidst/fmh.cfm)

## April 2 - 3, 2009 in Warwick, UK

Conference on "Crisis and the City" organised by the University of Warwick. Contact: Department of Geography, King's College London, Strand, London WC2R 2LS, UK, Phone: (+44 20) 7848 2721/ 2599, Fax: 20 7848 2287, <[david.r.green@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:david.r.green@kcl.ac.uk)> [www.le.ac.uk/urbanhist/uhg/conf2009.html](http://www.le.ac.uk/urbanhist/uhg/conf2009.html)

## April 22 - 25, 2009 in Barcelona-Sitges, Spain

REAL-CORP 2009. 14th International Conference on Urban Planning, Regional Development and Information Society on "Cities 3.0. Strategies, Concepts and Technologies for Planning the Urban Future". Contact: <[office@corp.at](mailto:office@corp.at)> [www.corp.at](http://www.corp.at)

## April 27, 2009 in Zurich, Switzerland

ETH Forum Wohnungsbau 2009 on "Building Tall or Urban Sprawl?" (in German). Organised by: ETH Wohnforum, ETH Centre for Research on Architecture, Society and the Built Environment (ETH CASE), Contact: [www.wohnforum.arch.ethz.ch/english/e-forum/forum\\_conferences.html](http://www.wohnforum.arch.ethz.ch/english/e-forum/forum_conferences.html) <[halm@arch.ethz.ch](mailto:halm@arch.ethz.ch)>

## May 01, 2009 in Berlin, Germany

TRIALOG Frühjahrstagung - Spring Workshop of the Society for Scientific Research on Planning and Building in Developing Countries (TRIALOG): "Redefining the Urban – Studies on Cities and Regions", Organised by TRIALOG and Habitat Unit, TU Berlin. Venue: Forum at Faculty of Architecture, TU Berlin, Straße des 17.Juni 152, 10623 Berlin. Contact: Astrid Ley, Phone: (+49 30) 314 21908, <[astrid.ley@tu-berlin.de](mailto:astrid.ley@tu-berlin.de)> [www.habitat-unit.de](http://www.habitat-unit.de)

## May 02, 2009 in Berlin, Germany

TRIALOG Mitgliederversammlung 2008. Forum der Architekturfakultät, TU Berlin, Straße des 17.Juni 152, 10623 Berlin. Starting 10:00 a.m. Contact: Astrid Ley, Phone: (+49 30) 314 21908, <[astrid.ley@tu-berlin.de](mailto:astrid.ley@tu-berlin.de)>

## May 7 - 8, 2009 in Berlin, Germany

International Conference: "Empty Country and Lively Cities? - Spatial Differentiation in the Face of Demographic Change". Organised by ARL, Leibniz Institut für Länderkunde, Leibniz Institut für Ökologische Raumentwicklung, IRS, and Technische Universität Dresden. Contact: [www.leeresland-buntestadt.de](http://www.leeresland-buntestadt.de) <[g.hutter@ioer.de](mailto:g.hutter@ioer.de)>

## May 10 - 14, 2009 in Portland, USA

International Making Cities Liveable Conference on "True Urbanism: Cities for Health & Well-Being". Organised by: International Making Cities Liveable (IMCL), [www.LivableCities.org](http://www.LivableCities.org)

## May 15 – 16, 2009 in Berlin, Germany

Workshop on "Urban Street Vending: Economic Resistance, Integration or Marginalization?" Organised by / Contact: Centre for Metropolitan Studies, TU Berlin, Ernst-Reuter-Platz 7, TEL3-0, D-10587 Berlin. Phone: (+49 30) 314 28400, Fax: 314 28403, <[streetvending@metropolitanstudies.de](mailto:streetvending@metropolitanstudies.de)> [www.metropolitanstudies.de](http://www.metropolitanstudies.de)

## June 4 - 6, 2009 in Madrid, Spain

"City Futures in a Globalising World" International Conference, organised by the European Urban Research Association (EURA) and the Urban Affairs Association (UAA), Contact: <[info@cityfutures2009.com](mailto:info@cityfutures2009.com)> [www.cityfutures2009.com](http://www.cityfutures2009.com)

## June 4 – 6, 2009 in Berlin, Germany

5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Transatlantic Graduate Program, Berlin – New York: "Cities and the State of exception / State of emergency". Organised by / Contact: Centre for Metropolitan Studies, TU Berlin, Ernst-Reuter-Platz 7, TEL3-0, D-10587 Berlin. Phone: (+49 30) 314 28400, Fax: (+49 30) 314 28403, <[ausnahmezustand@metropolitanstudies.de](mailto:ausnahmezustand@metropolitanstudies.de)> [www.metropolitanstudies.de](http://www.metropolitanstudies.de)

## June 24 - 27, 2009 in Stockholm, Sweden

Annual European Real Estate Society Conference organised by ERES and the Department of Construction and Real Estate Economics, Royal Institute of Technology, Contact: [www.eres.org](http://www.eres.org) <[chair@eres2009.com](mailto:chair@eres2009.com)>

## June 28 - 30, 2009 in Marseille, France

5<sup>th</sup> Urban Research Symposium 2009 „Cities and Climate Change: Responding to an Urgent Agenda“. Organised by: World Bank in conjunction with some key partners. Contact: <[isabel.diaz@i-carre.net](mailto:isabel.diaz@i-carre.net)> [www.urs2009.net/](http://www.urs2009.net/)