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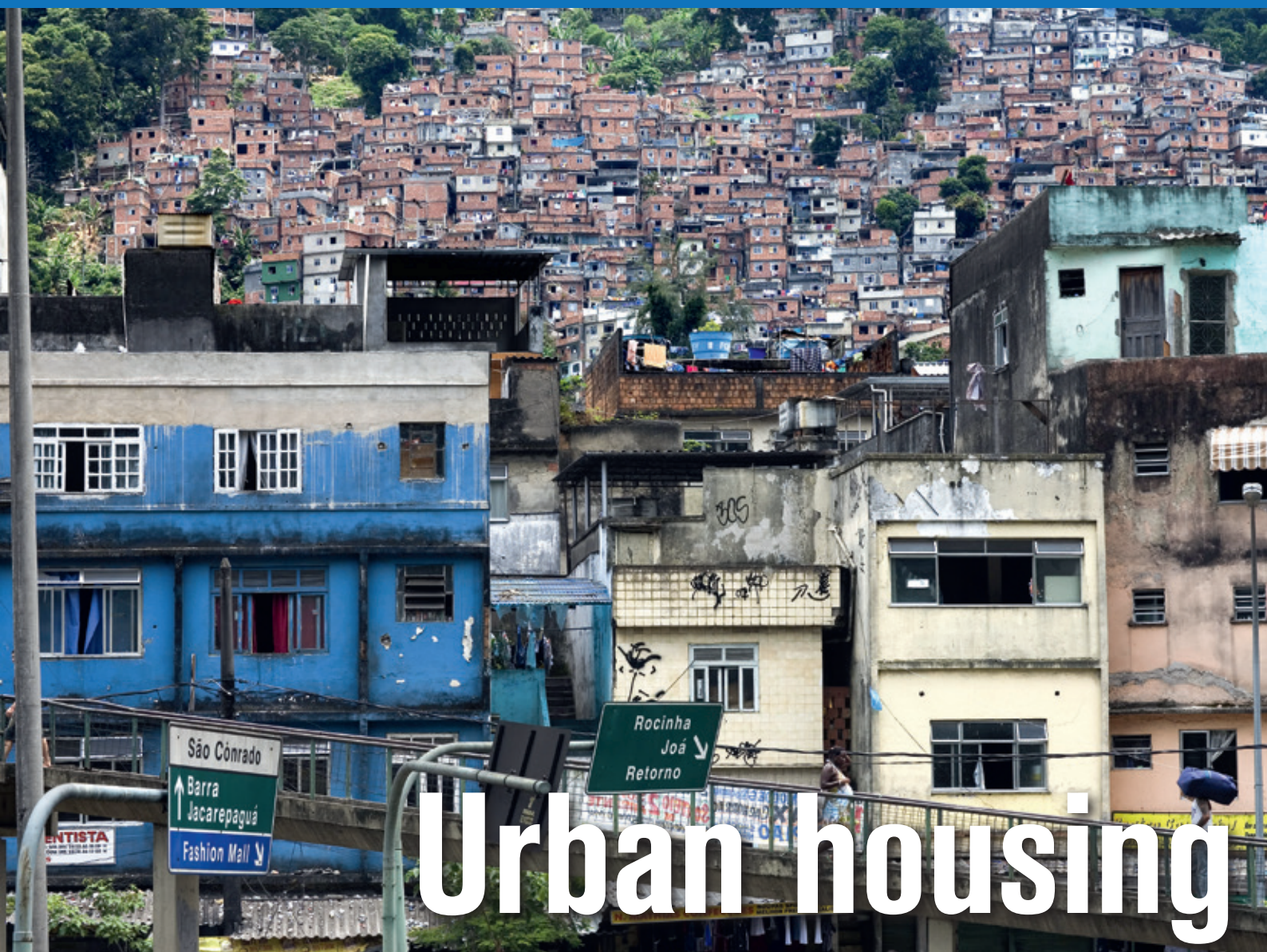
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are particularly at risk
in Ethiopian crisis

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Côte d'Ivoire, but not
as bad as last time

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achieved in 10 years
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FOCUS

Urban housing

Marginalised people

Brazil's favelas are special kind of disadvantaged neighbourhoods that started out as informal settlements. Residents are generally better off than slum dwellers, but they remain neglected and ignored by the authorities nonetheless, as journalist Thuany Rodrigues reports. **PAGE 16**

Kenyan conundrums

Even though the conditions in the Kenyan refugee camp of Kakuma are awful, masses of people now live there permanently. Qaabata Boru used to be one of them and shares his insights. Kenya's government, moreover, wants to provide better housing to urban slum dwellers, but according to journalist Alphonse Shiundu, it's approach is failing. **PAGES 18, 20**

How to upgrade informal settlements

The demolition of slums will not help the 1 billion people who live in those informal settlements worldwide. They need their homes and the surroundings to improve. As Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite of the International Institute for Environment and Development elaborate, giving them tenure and a say in upgrading programmes is essential. **PAGE 23**

Growth-induced problems

The demand for housing and public services keeps growing in Istanbul. Water supply, for example, has become a considerable challenge, according to the assessment of Sarah C. Schreiner, who specialises in urban planning. **PAGE 25**

City of migrants

Seen from above, India's commercial capital looks like a network of slums. The people who live in them appreciate the manifold opportunities Mumbai offers. Rahman Abbas, a novelist who grew up in one of the informal settlements, describes the scenario. **PAGE 27**

The climate dimension

Not quite 40 % of humanity's energy-related carbon emissions result from construction sites and the use of buildings. Investors who plan new houses or want to refurbish existing ones must therefore pay attention to energy efficiency, demand Sanna Stockstrom and Matthias Zilbauer of the development bank KfW. **PAGE 29**

More than a mere shelter

Our lives are marked by our homes. That, after all, is where we live. Where our home is and what conveniences it offers has impacts on many things, including education, work, health and social inclusion.

Especially in cities, housing supply is limited. Demand keeps rising due to population growth and migration from rural to metropolitan areas, and urban development is not keeping up. Those who newly arrive from remote villages must often cope in miserable conditions. That is equally true of people who do not earn much money or are disadvantaged because of old age, disease or disability. In some developing countries, the majority of urban people live in slums. An estimated 1 billion people around the world are slum dwellers.

By definition, these neighbourhoods are congested. Electricity and water supply is poor, and so is sanitation. Some places entirely lack utility services. Streets and paths tend to be unpaved, and many makeshift shacks cannot withstand heavy rains or storms. Diseases are common, and so is crime in some slums. Nonetheless, most of the people who live there do not want to leave. They consider their slum their home and feel protected by its social networks. Moreover, central locations often offer many advantages.

It is therefore utterly misguided to try to tear down informal settlements and displace the people. The goal must be to improve their living conditions to the extent possible. For good reason, slum upgrading is a target on the agenda of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ambition is to provide all people with adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services by 2030.

The challenges are huge. Competent urban planning is needed to guide development and prevent the chaos that results from improvisation. Some cities grow without any planning at all however. To make it happen, capacity building within the respective institutions may be needed first. Many megacities, moreover, require financial support for infrastructure investments.

Public housing projects have often proved to be useful. According to UN Habitat, Singapore has done a good job of building public housing. Success hinges on understanding the local people's needs and taking their wishes into account. What proved crucial in Singapore was to involve people early on and give them a say. Moreover, it is essential to not only build homes, but to create an urban environment that is conducive to work, education, leisure et cetera. Broad-based and active community participation, of course, is also recommended when existing settlements are upgraded.

There is an environmental challenge as well. Today, about 40% of global carbon emissions come from buildings, and energy consumption in buildings is increasing. The most important reason is hot countries' need for cooling. Moving from a small hut without electric power to a better apartment with a refrigerator and air conditioning does not just mean more prosperity – it also means more energy consumption. A person's wealth and resource use are closely linked.

When investing in better housing, it is therefore important to pay attention to energy efficiency, rely on renewable energies and use locally sourced construction materials. It is not only possible to build comfortable homes without harming the climate – it is necessary.

► You'll find all contributions of our focus section plus related ones on our website – they'll be compiled in next month's briefing section.



KATJA DOMBROWSKI
is member of the editorial team of D+C Development and Cooperation / E+Z Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit
euz.editor@dandc.eu

Debate

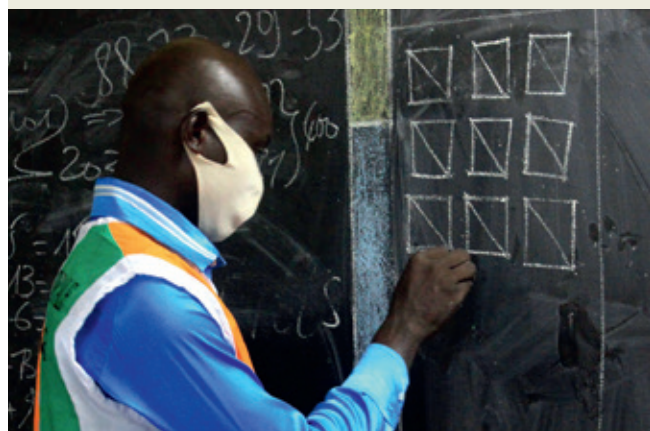


In the crossfire

In early November, violent conflict erupted in Ethiopia's Tigray region, with the central government fighting its regional counterpart. Eritrean refugees were not caught in the crossfire. The international community must pay attention, demands Markus Rudolf of the BICC (Bonn International Center for Conversion).

PAGE 9

Tribune



Hoping for peace

The recent presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire were marred by violence and won by incumbent Alassane Ouattara. The opposition considers a third term of his unconstitutional nonetheless. The good news is that Ouattara and the opposition leader are now on talking terms, as journalist Anderson Diédri reports.

PAGE 11

Support Tunisia's democracy

Ten years ago, mass protests in Tunisia launched the Arab spring. The uprising affected many countries, but only Tunisia made the transition to democracy. The EU should prioritise support for it over its own narrowly understood trade and migration interests, demands Tunis-based journalist Sofian Philip Naceur.

PAGE 12

Photos: Nariman El-Mofty/picture-alliance/ASSOCIATED PRESS; Diomande Bile Blonde/picture-alliance/AP Photo

ENVIRONMENT

Rays of hope in the climate crisis

Every day we hear new catastrophic reports on the climate crisis. The planet's future looks grim. But out of view of the global public, there are people who are achieving impressive things, often in difficult circumstances. Thanks to those initiatives, there are rays of hope.

By Dagmar Wolf

Worldwide, people are suffering because of climate-change impacts. The poorest are usually the worst affected. In his book "Wie Menschen weltweit das Klima retten" ("How people around the world are saving the climate"), Thomas Kruchem, a German journalist who specialises in international development, presents six successful initiatives from Mali, Niger, Bolivia, Haiti, Scotland and the Philippines. These initiatives typically use simple means in the fight against climate change. They also help poor people at risk to improve their living conditions and better adapt to climate impacts.

For example, "Africa GreenTec" is a start-up run by a Malian-German entrepreneurial couple. It sells mobile solar panels in rural Mali, thus ensuring people

have access to affordable green electricity. Kruchem writes that the company has not only improved the lives of villagers, but also sparked new business ideas such as the processing of agricultural products or the sale of frozen fish. Africa GreenTec, moreover, provides commercial customers with high-efficiency electronic devices such as notebooks, scanners and printers for internet cafés. It also sells refrigerators and cooking plates to restaurants.

According to the book, the social enterprise had installed 20 solar panels in containers by the end of 2019. One of these "Solartainers" is operational in neighbouring Niger, the others in Mali. In the meantime, Africa GreenTec has also begun to build small biogas plants, which primarily make use of livestock manure. The idea is to offer women with a healthier and more climate-friendly option for cooking.

In Bolivia, engineers, architects, water experts and social workers work for the small aid organisation Red Habitat. They are researching how to improve the living situation and water supply of the poor in La Paz and El Alto, where water supply has become erratic. The background is that cli-

mate change is causing glacier melting in the Andes, which in turn leads to enormous fluctuations in water supply availability. Water scarcities are becoming more common. Water contamination due to mining and the inefficiency and corruption of public water utilities compound the problems. According to Kruchem, poor households in particular are forced to buy overpriced, often poor-quality water that is delivered by trucks. However, he writes that in the shadow of public water utilities, local self-help systems have sprung up. They are said to function well and supply about 30% of the population with water.

For example, Kruchem reports that the residents of El Alto are cooperating in workshops, assembling tanks that collect and filter rainwater and raw water. This water is used for many purposes – from washing clothes and dishes and taking showers to watering vegetable gardens or flushing toilets. Kruchem writes that 130 households have been equipped with rainwater catchment systems. In a poor district located on a steep slope in La Paz, Red Habitat is securing landslide-prone hillsides with gabions (wire containers filled with stones). It has managed to provide 300 families with a sustainable and reliable water supply using a water tank and corresponding piping.

In Haiti, the local non-governmental organisation ACAPE (Association des Cadres pour la Protection de l'Environnement) is helping farmers to adapt their cultivation to the increasingly unpredictable climate using agro-ecological methods. It belongs to a network of 40 organisations. Spectacular gardens are emerging on clear-cut hillsides, where many varieties of fruit and vegetable are flourishing. The families consume some of the produce, but also sell some on the market. Kruchem reckons that agro-ecological farming is helping approximately 30,000 families to escape poverty and, at the same time, adapt to climate change in the long run.

The book is encouraging. What is needed is more committed climate activists to show how small projects can achieve impressive results.

REFERENCE

Kruchem, T., 2020: *Wie Menschen weltweit das Klima retten. Solar-Pioniere, Wald-Macher, Wasser-Kämpfer* (only in German). Frankfurt, Brandes & Apsel.



In Mali, so-called "Solartainers" are providing green and affordable electricity to village residents.

BIODIVERSITY

Digitalisation hurts profit sharing

Advances in gene manipulation and digitalisation have made working with genetic sequences easier. However, new questions arise, for instance with regard to access to resources. A multilateral fund could ensure countries of origin get a share of the profits.

By Katja Dombrowski

Gaining access to genetic resources – for instance from plants or corals – used to require a physical transfer of material. Many relevant resources come from very species-rich countries in the global South. The Nagoya Protocol, an international agreement

is digital sequence information (DSI). To an ever-greater extent, such information is freely accessible in online databases. This technology has been of enormous benefit to researchers as well as to private-sector companies from, for example, the agricultural, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries. They use DSI to develop new products, which in turn generate profits. So far, no share is being passed on to the countries of origin however.

Critics view this as biopiracy. “In the past, treaties and trade deals had to be concluded, but now you can get around that,” says Alejandro Argumedo of the Swift Foun-

dation using DSI to make it resistant to potato blight. It is intended for the East African market. The potato is based on the South American variety Victoria and was developed by the International Potato Centre (Centro Internacional de la Papa – CIP). This multilateral institution has its headquarters in Peru. It owns the commercial usage rights.

Argumedo is critical of both the genetic manipulation of the potato as well as of the fact that the Quechua, the indigenous community who bred the Victoria potato over the course of millennia, are not getting a fair share of the profits. “It would have been possible to fight potato blight without genetic engineering,” he argues. Argumedo believes that the new potato was only created “to allow individual companies to make a profit”. According to him, it must be ensured that the profits benefit the indigenous peoples who have demonstrably preserved biodiversity. “We need more regulations in this area,” he insists.

European countries and, to a lesser extent, other industrialised now recognise the problem, says scientist and consultant Edward Hammond. In his opinion, establishing a new multilateral fund would make sense: “It would offer a good method for benefit sharing.” Hammond hopes that the non-commercial scientific community – the largest user of digital sequence information – will appreciate the necessity of such a solution. “We have a moral duty,” says Hammond. He argues that the extreme loss of biodiversity makes it imperative that a solution be found.

The issue will be taken up at the next meeting of the conference of the parties (COP15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). CBD is an international agreement with over 190 conference parties and therefore represents the most comprehensive binding international agreement regarding conservation and the use of natural resources. The conference was originally scheduled to take place in Beijing in October of this year, but was postponed to the second quarter of 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic. One of the most important questions participants will address will be how research in the public interest – for instance into vaccines – can still be facilitated through open access to DSI, while at the same time ensuring that profit-oriented research provides fair financial compensation.



The potato is an ancient crop from South America. Market stand in Arequipa, Peru.

that took force in 2014, stipulates that countries of origin get a share in the benefits and revenues that may arise from resource use. The technical term for this practice is “access and benefit sharing” (ABS).

Thanks to new gene-technological and biotechnological methods, nowadays it is often possible to modify genetic material and create new organisms without having physical material at hand. All that is needed

is digital sequence information (DSI). To an ever-greater extent, such information is freely accessible in online databases. This technology has been of enormous benefit to researchers as well as to private-sector companies from, for example, the agricultural, pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries. They use DSI to develop new products, which in turn generate profits. So far, no share is being passed on to the countries of origin however.

One example of the commercial use of genetic resources is a potato that was modi-

BILATERAL LENDING

Relevant insights

Observers tend to struggle to get an overview of China's development loans. It helps to understand the responsibilities of Chinese institutions. Urgewald, a non-governmental organisation based in Germany, has assessed them in a recently published stakeholder analysis.

By Claudia Isabel Rittel

China's foreign policy approach to developing countries is complex, but more transparent than often assumed. The main problem is that most relevant information is only available in Chinese, says Marina Rudyak, an assistant professor at Heidelberg University's Centre for Asian and Transcultural Studies. She specialises in Chinese aid and is the author of the recent Urgewald publication with the title "Who is who in the Chinese lending institutional landscape". It offers a detailed account of the most important agencies and gives relevant insights into what kind of loans they provide with what kind of conditionality.

The scholar points out that China distinguishes bilateral from multilateral lending.

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for multilateral credits, whereas the Ministry of Commerce is in charge of the bilateral variety.

The two most important agencies involved in the bilateral business are the China Development Bank (CDB) with a capital stock worth \$2.4 trillion and the Export-Import Bank of China (Exim-Bank) with assets worth \$610 billion. The CDB is now the world's largest development bank. Its mission is to hand out moderately profitable loans, and it ranks as a ministry that is directly subordinate to the State Council, the People's Republic's top administrative body. By contrast, the Exim Bank is not expected to make profits, and it ranks as a vice ministry that is also subordinate to the State Council.

NO CLEAR DIVISION OF LABOUR

Both banks contribute financing to the One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative, the massive international infrastructure programme (see Katja Dombrowski in Monitor section of D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2017/10). How-

ever, in this context, there is no clear division of labour, as Rudyak reports. Moreover, four other commercial banks which are owned by the Chinese government also contribute to OBOR financing. The author admits that this setting can be confusing, but states that there is no evidence of China trying to ensnare countries in debt traps. In her eyes, Chinese loans do not go along with greater risks than other bilateral loans.

She points out that several agencies which report to the Ministry of Commerce are active in bilateral lending. For example, the Department of Outward Investment and Economic Cooperation (DOIEC) has a say in credit decisions, and the Agency for International Economic Cooperation (AIECO) implements large-scale infrastructure projects in their entirety.

The Chinese embassies and consulates have Economic and Commercial Counsellor Offices (ECCOs). They are important points of reference, where both Chinese companies and the national agencies of the partner countries submit proposals. The ECCOs supervise ongoing projects moreover. Other offices of the Ministry of Commerce handle aid and aid-related lending as well. The ambassadors, who report to the Foreign Ministry, have also been empowered to grant loans, though only for smaller projects.

The China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) has nominally been leading Chinese aid efforts since 2018. Rudyak points out, however, that its jurisdictions are not defined precisely. In theory, the CIDCA is supposed to supervise the Ministry of Commerce in aid affairs, but it is merely a vice ministry, and thus lower ranking. Accordingly, its influence is limited.

Nora Sausmikat, who heads Urgewald's China division, says the publication is a "tool for civil society". In her experience, non-governmental activists from the global south often lack information concerning both who they might approach in China as well as what to expect of different Chinese agencies. Sausmikat expects the document to prove useful in future workshops with NGO activists from around the world.

LINK

Urgewald, 2020: Who is who in the Chinese lending institutional landscape.

<https://urgewald.org/node/865>



Exhibition stand of the Export-Import Bank of China.

Travelling close to home

The coronavirus crisis and its attendant travel restrictions are devastating the tourism sector worldwide, and Zambia's industry is no exception. Since travel restrictions entered into force in March 2020, Zambia's flow of international arrivals has dwindled to virtually nothing. Many Zambian tour operators, hotel and restaurant owners, convention and festival organisers and sports event sponsors are facing very difficult times.

To replace some of the revenue lost as international visitors stay away, the Zambian industry is focusing on building a domestic tourism market. In October 2020, the first-ever Zambia travel conference was held at the Maramba River Lodge, four kilometres from Victoria Falls.

The conference in southern Zambia attracted over 150 tour operators and other industry members. It focused on how to encourage Zambians to travel within their own country. "It is very important that we meet like this and develop a plan to promote domestic tourism," Eugene Mapuwo, the mayor of Livingstone told the meeting.

"We need to adopt online marketing strategies if the industry is to bounce back," said Simone Layton, manager of the Shamba Lodge in Kitwe in north-central Zambia. "A lot of people in the industry are realising how devastating the pandemic has been to their business. Most weren't prepared for it."

The Zambia Tourism Agency, a government body, is developing tour packages geared to in-country travel, says marketing director Mwabashike

Nkulukusa. "The agency is drafting a plan to help attract domestic travellers," he says. "It must be an all-inclusive plan, including prices, products and how the packages will be promoted."

Some delegates were sceptical of this strategy, pointing to insufficient disposable income in the domestic market. "We have tried to scale down our rates but local tourists still can't afford to spend money for a holiday," Walter Joe Syakalonga, director of Sigo Adventures and Tours, said in an interview.

Other industry members argued that the government should focus on easing their tax burdens. They cite requirements to pay 10% to 15% employment taxes on staff, plus 16% value-added tax and a 1.5% tourism levy. The levies add to their cost of doing business and discourage travel, they say.

So far, the government has helped somewhat by granting tour operators and hoteliers more time to pay income and value-added taxes. And officials are publicly encouraging domestic tourism. "I encourage all citizens to support the tourism industry while observing Covid-19 health guidelines," Finance Minister Bwalya Ng'andu said in his 2021 national budget address.

Zambia in fact has a lot to offer tourists, wherever they come from. Aside from the famed Victoria Falls, Zambia is home to several other majestic falls and the mighty Zambezi River. Several national parks and game reserves offer opportunities for observing wildlife, whilst busy urban areas provide a window on the country's diverse culture.

Zambia's effort to boost domestic travel may provide ideas and best practices for tourism operators elsewhere. The worldwide tourism industry certainly needs all the help it can get. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, an industry body, the global industry will shrink by up to 30% in 2020, shedding some 50 million jobs.



DERRICK SILIMINA is a freelance journalist based in Lusaka. He focuses on Zambian agriculture and

sustainability issues.
derricksilimina@gmail.com

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ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL gGmbH

Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 40

53113 Bonn

Phone: +49 (0) 2 28 2 07 17-0

Fax: +49 (0) 2 28 2 07 17-150

www.engagement-global.de

ADVISORY BOARD:

Thomas Loster, Prof. Dr. Katharina Michaelowa,

Dr. Susanne Neubert, Prof. Dr. Imme Scholz, Hugh Williamson

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EDITORIAL OFFICE:

Dr. Hans Dembowski (editor-in-chief; responsible for content

according to Germany's regulations), Dagmar Wolf (assistant)

Freelance support: Sabine Balk, Katja Dombrowski,

Aviva Freudmann, Monika Hellstern (social media),

Jan Walter Hofmann (layout), Malcom Bell (translation),

Claire Davis (translation)

Phone: +49 (0) 69 75 91-31 10

euz.editor@dandc.eu

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Fax: +49 (0) 89 8 58 53-6 28 32

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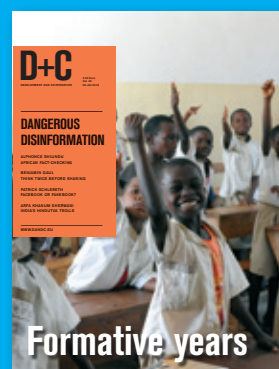
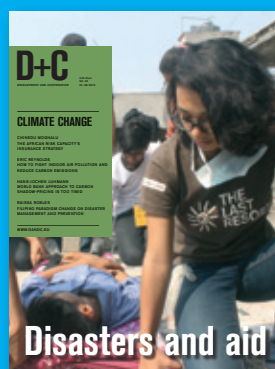
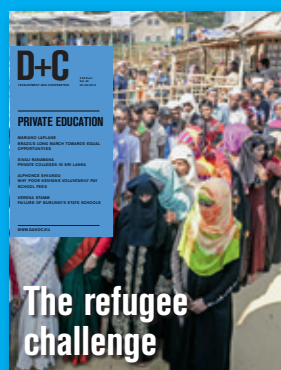
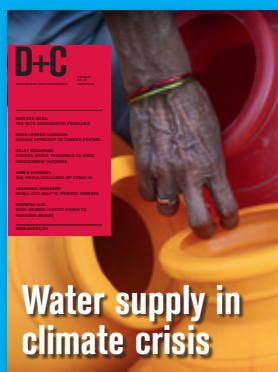
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HORN OF AFRICA

Caught in the crossfire

In Ethiopia's ongoing Tigray conflict, Eritrean refugees are especially at risk. The international community must pay attention.

By Markus Rudolf

In early November, violent conflict erupted between Ethiopia's central government and the regional government of Tigray. By mid-December, some 50,000 people had fled to Sudan. Their reports tell us about civilians suffering a humanitarian disaster in Tigray.



Tigrinya refugees in Sudan in early December 2020.

The scenario is largely non-transparent. According to estimates, about 1 million people have been displaced domestically.

The setting remains explosive, and the historical background is complicated. The Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which runs the regional government, was one of the strongest forces in the Civil War that ended in 1991 with the downfall of Mengistu Haile Mariam, a military dictator. At that point, Eritrea became an independ-

ent country and has since been ruled with an iron fist by President Isayas Afewerki. In Ethiopia, a TPLF-led alliance took power and – with increasingly authoritarian tendencies – stayed in control until 2018.

In the 1990s, the relationship between Asmara and Addis Ababa deteriorated fast. Up to 100,000 people died in the Ethiopian-Eritrean war from 1998 to 2000. Peace was only agreed formally in 2018. At that point, the TPLF had lost its dominant position in Ethiopia due to increasing ethnic tensions

across the entire country. The TPLF nowadays opposes Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his peace deal with Isayas Afewerki. It continues to repudiate the Eritrean regime and emphasises its solidarity with Eritrean refugees.

In the current conflict, Eritrea is cooperating with Ethiopia's central government. There are even reports of Eritrean soldiers being deployed to Tigray, but the evidence so far is flimsy. It is highly probable, nonetheless, that Eritrea is providing the Ethio-

pian military with logistic support and safe havens.

In the meantime, many Eritrean refugees have fled further from Tigray to other Ethiopian regions. According to their accounts, the refugee camps in Tigray are devastated. Food and other supplies are no longer available. Moreover, the camps have been abandoned by those in charge of managing them.

The TPLF now speaks of a of a countrywide genocide of the Tigrinya community. Ethiopia's central government, accuses Tigrinya militias of a massacre in Mai Kadra. The alleged victims were seasonal workers from the neighbouring Amhara region, the very same place many Eritrean refugees seek shelter after fleeing from the devastated camps in the Tigray region. It adds to the acrimony that most of the refugees are ethnically Tigrinya, the community the TPLF claims to represent.

Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia are now obviously caught in the crossfire. The central government has taken control of Mek'ele, the capital of Tigray, and Prime Minister Abiy has declared victory. Though humanitarian corridors have been promised and established, the Ethiopian army is denying UN staff access to some of the refugee camps.

In mid-December, international observers did not have any reliable information about several thousand Eritrean refugees that are either held hostage by the TPLF or have been deported back to Eritrea. In the eyes of the Eritrean regime, the persons concerned have deserted the Eritrean Army, given that it enforces conscription without a time limit. The TPLF is apparently trying to recruit refugees into its militias, often resorting to force.

Even before the current military operations started in Tigray, there were 1 million to 3 million internally displaced people in Ethiopia. In 2020, moreover, the country hosted 800,000 international refugees. Any further escalation in Tigray and surrounding areas will exacerbate existing problems. The international community must pay attention.



MARKUS RUDOLF
is a Senior Researcher at the
BICC (Bonn International
Center for Conversion)
markus.rudolf@bicc.de

DIGITALISATION

Quality education is what matters

Digitalisation is a key trend in all areas of development policy, including education. But this trend ignores the real needs of the poor-est. It is illusory to claim that digitalisation is a panacea to overcome unresolved analogue deficiencies. On the contrary, digitalisation can make disadvantaged populations of the global south even more dependent on western donors.

By Julia Maria Fesser

International donors are working at top speed to implement digital solutions in the global south, especially in the education sector. They are reallocating large sums to fund digital projects. This is a major shift in international development policy, accelerated by Covid-19. However, especially in the education sector, it is crucial to question the quality and usefulness of these digitalisation measures.

An all too familiar pattern in international development may become evident again. Good intentions do not automatically deliver good results. Many factors must be carefully considered when designing high-quality digital programmes for teaching purposes, and this complex process takes time. For example, merely procuring hardware does not suffice where places lack adequate power supply. According to UNESCO, moreover, only about half the world's population has a stable internet connection.

Often, students learning at home do not have neither the computers nor the environment they need to attend online classes. Teachers rarely get adequate training. They also lack competent technical support. All too often, they do not even have appropriate software themselves.

It takes years to develop good software. Learning materials should not simply replicate analogue approaches on a screen. Instead, they should exploit the real educational potential of digital tools. Digitalisation of schools also requires effective technical support, which must be equally accessible to every school regardless of its location. The technical support staff must

not only be able to deal with hardware and software problems competently but they must also be available to students and teachers. The logistical challenges are huge. Proper digitalisation also requires deliver-



Not all children have equal opportunities: learning online via smartphone in central Java in Indonesia during the Corona pandemic.

ing service seamlessly nationwide. Without this feature, the trendy word “digitalisation” will prove an empty promise, and high expectations will not be met. On the contrary, uneven implementation of digitalisation can compound inequality and worsen learning conditions. That is the opposite of the desired outcome.

The challenges for digitised education in the global south are so wide-ranging that they cannot be addressed by technology alone. Unless teachers can live on their salaries and classes are not cancelled for various reasons regularly, good education will prove illusive. The foundations must be laid first.

The merits of digitalisation as such are not self-evident, and digitalised education must not be implemented in a short-sighted way. It is only a means to an end. The goals are multifaceted. Solutions must be tailored to specific contexts.

Of course, people long for good news in the Covid-19 pandemic, and yes, this crisis may indeed offer opportunities. Wishful thinking, however, does not help in a sector that requires endurance and sustainability. Digitalisation can only become an educa-

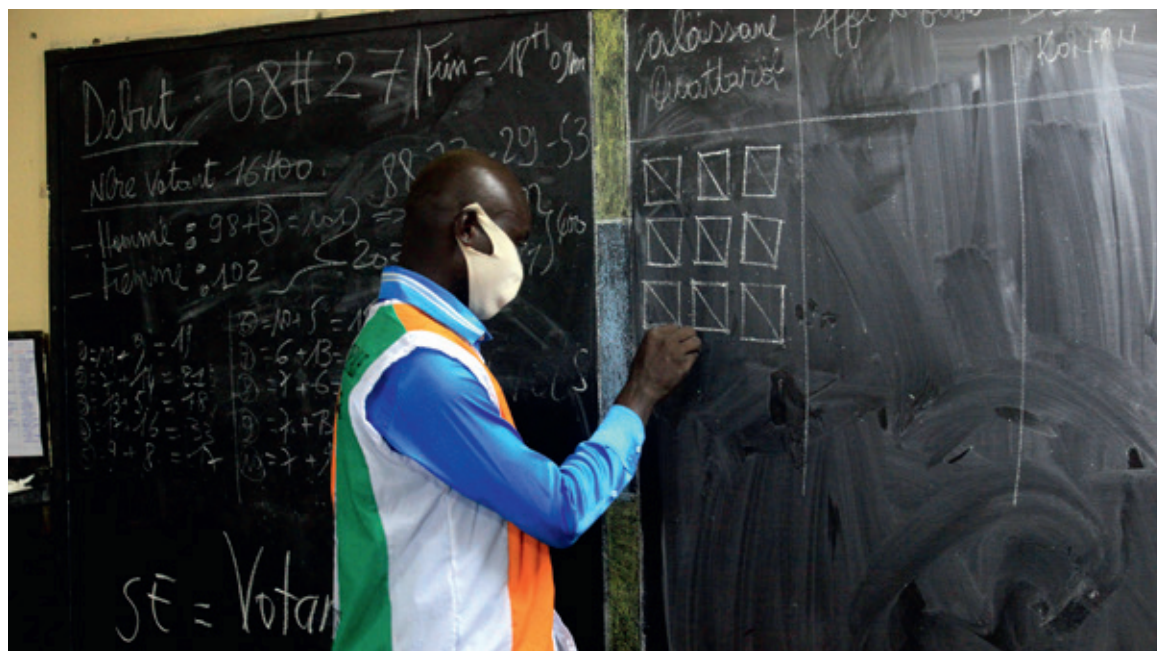


JULIA MARIA FESSER

studies Public Policy at the Hertie School in Berlin and Sciences Po in Paris.

Previously she worked at the GIZ Liaison Office to the African Union in Addis Ababa.

julia@jfesser.de



Counting of votes in Abidjan.

POWER STRUGGLE

Dialogue may yet ease tensions

The presidential elections in Côte d'Ivoire, which Alassane Ouattara won in a landslide, were overshadowed by violence. The opposition considers his third term in office unconstitutional and boycotted the vote. Turnout was only 53%. The good news is that Ouattara and opposition leader Henri Konan Bédié have begun discussing matters. The struggle for democracy geared to compromise and consensus continues.

By Anderson Diédri

On 6 August, Ouattara surprisingly declared he would run once again on 31 October. Previously he had promised to retire, but then Amadou Gon Coulibaly, his prime minister, suddenly died in July. Coulibaly was supposed to be the presidential candidate for Ouattara's party, and the president said it was his "citizen's duty" to run again.

He is 78 years old and has served for two terms, first elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2015. The constitution limits terms to two for the head of state, so the opposition considered him an unconstitutional candidate this year. The counterargument was

that the constitution was amended in 2016, so the count was re-set and Ouattara's previous terms do not matter anymore.

The Constitutional Council has the final say on electoral law and allowed Ouattara to run. It did, however, bar Laurent Gbagbo and Guillaume Soro, a former president and a former prime minister respectively. The International Criminal Court (ICC) tried Gbagbo for post-election violence in 2010, but acquitted him last year. Soro was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment by a court in Abidjan for embezzlement and money laundering. However, the African Court on Human and People's Rights argued that both men's civic rights in Côte d'Ivoire must be restored, but the Ivorian authorities so far have ignored that judgment. Both are living in exile in Europe.

In 2010, Gbagbo denied Ouattara's evident electoral success, clinging to power with support from the security forces. About 3,000 people died in clashes. Only after the French military intervened, could Ouattara, a former official of the International Monetary Fund, take office. Western governments consider him a reform-oriented policy-

maker, but critics point out that they should have spelled out clearly that a 3rd presidential term would be unacceptable.

Led by Bédié, who was the country's president from 1993 to 1999 and is now 86 years old, the opposition began calling for civil disobedience in summer. It stated that Ouattara was not a legitimate candidate this time and demanded that both the independent election commission and the Constitutional Council be reformed. The government's influence on both was said to be too strong.

85 DEAD

Many opposition supporters did as they were told. However, there was violence. According to the government, 85 people were killed and 484 wounded. To some extent, the violence reflected ethnic divides that had spawned the civil strife in the early years this millennium. As in many Sahel countries, there are serious frictions between the comparatively poor and predominantly Muslim north and the more prosperous and mostly Christian south. Immigration from poor neighbouring countries has exacerbated tensions.

Participants in the recent boycott campaign say they did not initiate violence. They claim that others provoked it. Amnesty International, the human-rights organisation, has reported that the police got



support from violent young men when dispersing rallies.

On 31 October, only 53% of citizens went to the polls, but 94% of them voted for Ouattara. International observers from the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) and the Carter Center have declared that the political and security context were not conducive to a fair and credible presidential election.

Two days later, the opposition announced the establishment of a national transitional council led by Bédié. The idea

was that it would create the conditions for a transparent and inclusive rerun of the election. The government responded by arresting opposition leaders, speaking of an attack on the authority of the state. Thousands fled the country.

OPPONENTS ON TALKING TERMS

The tensions seem to be dissipating however. Ouattara and Bédié met in a hotel in Abidjan on 11 November. It inspired hope that they were on talking terms. However, Bédié soon declared he wanted all arrested persons to be set free and refugees to be able to return home safely. Making matters more complicated, Gbagbo supporters wanted that to apply to their exiled former leaders.

People hoped the Ouattara-Bédié dialogue would reduce the tensions. The situation was difficult – but not as desperate as it was during the rebellion of 2002 or the post-election crisis of 2010.

In mid-December, Ouattara was sworn in for a third term. His new cabinet includes

an opposition leader as minister for reconciliation. Other opposition leaders still dispute the legitimacy of the president nonetheless.

It is hard to say whether it helps that Ouattara and Bédié are old acquaintances. Indeed, they have been competing for power in Côte d'Ivoire for decades after the death of independence leader Félix Houphouët-Boigny in 1993. Both men started their political careers as his supporters and both later claimed to be his legitimate heir. However, they also formed a coalition of parties they called RHDP (Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la démocratie et la paix) in 2005 and turned it into one party in 2018. The RHDP's presidential candidate in 2020 was once more Ouattara.



ANDERSON DIÉDRI
is a journalist based in
Abidjan.
[diedrimanfeianderson@
yahoo.fr](mailto:diedrimanfeianderson@yahoo.fr)

POLITICAL TRANSITION

Support Tunisia's democracy

Ten years ago, the so-called Arab Spring started in Tunisia with the uprising against Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, the longterm dictator. Protests quickly spread across North Africa and the Middle East, but Tunisia was the only country to establish a democratic political system. If the EU wants to support Tunisia's democracy, it must prioritise that country's needs over its own narrowly understood interests.

By Sofian Philip Naceur

After Kaïs Saïed won the presidential elections on 13 October 2019 by a landslide, thousands of demonstrators gathered in downtown Tunis, chanting slogans, waving the national flag and – for the first time in years – celebrating enthusiastically a political event. Saïed, an expert in constitutional

law and a political outsider, had run without the support of a political party or a well-established base. His victory was widely appreciated and indeed inspired new hope. He is considered to be trustworthy and impossible to corrupt.

Tunisia's established leading political forces, by contrast, were rejected by voters: the moderately Islamist Ennahda party and the free-market oriented political current with links to Tunisia's old political elite and a reputation for corruption. However, the hope that Saïed's election would result in policies designed to achieve the goals of the 2011 revolution was soon dashed. Ten years after the revolution, frustration is palpable across the country. Yes, freedom of expression and freedom of the press are in force, and free elections are held, but some core demands of the revolutionaries remain un-

fulfilled. The young generation did not only demand political freedoms in 2011. It also called for social justice as well as an end to corruption, mismanagement and cronyism.

BEN ALI'S DOWNFALL

The immediate trigger of the uprising was the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi, a vegetable seller, in the central Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid on 17 December 2010. Police officers had confiscated the goods of the 26-year-old merchant, depriving him of his means to earn a living. Protests spread across western Tunisia immediately after Bouazizi's death, quickly turning into a nationwide mass revolt against Ben Ali, who had held power since 1987. On 14 January 2011, Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia, where he died in 2019 without having been held accountable for his crimes by Tunisian judges.

With his downfall, the political transition began. The dictatorship was dismantled. However, social disparities, a crippling economic crisis and the country's dependence on Europe for its foreign trade proved to be lasting problems. In Tunisia, civil so-



Protesters demand in Tunisia in December 2020 that the authorities implement promised reforms in the Kairouan region.

ciety is stronger and more developed than in any other country of the region. It is the most important force that protects civic freedoms achieved since the 2011 revolution. Countless human-rights groups, trade unions, grassroots organisations and an independent press have successfully opposed counter-revolutionary initiatives that the long-established elite has launched. Thanks to activists' determination, the principles that were enshrined in the new constitution of 2014 have not been diluted significantly.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC TIME BOMBS

Tunisia now has controversial public debates and a multiparty system, but its young democracy has nonetheless suffered serious setbacks. Two leftist trade-union leaders, Chokri Belaïd und Mohamed Brahmi, were assassinated in 2013. There were terror attacks in 2015. The political order still looks shaky – there have been 10 prime ministers since 2011, of whom Hichem Mechichi is the latest.

Ennahda and centrist parties with links to the old political elites have dominated Tunisian politics since 2011. Either unable or unwilling, they did not manage to tackle the dismal poverty and blatant disparities that mark Tunisia's southern and western provinces. Infrastructure needs to be built or modernised, and public services

must be provided and expanded. None of that is happening. Indeed, poverty and unemployment rates have even increased significantly.

A transitional-justice system was supposed to prosecute the crimes committed by Ben Ali and his allies. It has not made much progress. Tunisia's police is still not properly held accountable and continues to act arbitrarily. Police officers are still known to confiscate street traders' goods. Tunisia has seen reoccurring waves of protests and strikes, but the security forces – and most notably the Ministry of Interior – resist structural reforms. Since 2017, they have been repressing social movements with increasing force. Recent epicentres of protests were Tataouine in southern Tunisia as well as Sidi Bouzid and Gafsa.

The political rise of the Parti Destourien Libre (PDF – Free Destur Party) is ominous. It takes a populist, counter-revolutionary stance and wants the country to return to an autocratic presidential system. It is successfully leveraging people's frustration with Tunisia's socio-political standstill.

From the start, Europe supported Tunisia's transition to democracy, providing funding to civil-society organisations and bolstering institutional reforms with aid (in the form of grants, loans and budget support). However, European priorities shifted

after the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, with EU leaders now focusing on preventing irregular migration. That approach, however, hardly helps to promote democratic change. Instead of pursuing Europe's narrow-minded interests, the EU would be well advised to provide Tunisia's government with the means needed to respond to marginalised regions' socio-economic demands. That is what the EU should do if it wants to promote and stabilise Tunisia's young democracy.

Since 2015, debt servicing has been the largest single item in Tunisia's national budget. That money cannot be used for urgently needed investments. EU-funded development projects are welcome, but they only amount to a drop in the ocean. Tunisia is the region's first – and so far only – democracy. If western policymakers want it to succeed, they should deal with issues such as migration and trade in ways that do not only entrench European influence, but actually serve the interests of the Tunisian people and its economy.



SOFIAN PHILIP NACEUR is a freelance journalist based in Tunis. He specialises in covering Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia.

mail@sofiannaceur.de

Twitter: @SofianNaceur



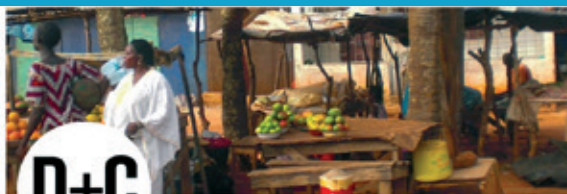
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Urban housing

The supply of decent homes is limited, and that is particularly so in fast-growing agglomerations. Millions of people cannot afford more than a mere shelter. Experts reckon that about 1 billion people live in slums around the world. To make cities and municipalities sustainable, these informal settlements must be upgraded. It is essential to rely on

locally sourced resources, pay attention to energy use and ensure climate protection.



This focus section directly pertains to the UN's 11th sustainable development goal: Sustainable cities and communities. It also has a bearing on the other SDGs.

MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

Brazil's neglected people

Favelas were initially informal settlements that, over many decades, have developed into a particular kind of disadvantaged urban settlement. Most residents are better off than slum dwellers in least-developed countries, but they are poor by Brazilian standards – and they remain marginalised in several ways.

By Thuany Rodrigues

According to census data, about six percent of Brazilians lived in one of the more than 6,300 favelas in 2010. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística – IBGE) defines a favela as a group of households with at least 51 units, which occupies – in a disordered and dense manner – land owned by others and which does not have access to essential public services. Rio de Janeiro has about 1,000 such slums. About 100,000 people live in Rocinha, the largest.

Favelas are not all the same. What they have in common is that they developed without systematic planning and with much improvisation. Small, low-rise buildings are typical. Over the decades, however, makeshift shelters were replaced with houses made of bricks or concrete. Infrastructure gradually improved, to some extent because of residents' efforts and to some extent due to government programmes. However, the authorities have a long history of neglecting the favelas and often still do not take full account of the conditions in which people live. Grassroots organisations are very important, and some non-governmental outfits are politically active or raise public awareness.

Some favela families tend to sleep in a single room, but it is not unusual to find households with two bedrooms. To create more rooms, people often build another storey onto their house. That happens when a child marries, for example. If a building has more than two floors, the ground floor often serves as a shop or workshop, while people live upstairs.

Favela roads are narrow and crowded. According to the IBGE, 56% of favela house-

holds were linked to the sewage network in 2010, but one percent did not even have a bathroom. The share of households with access to the water distribution system was 88%. Electric power supply is less reliable than in other urban areas, and some homes still do not have access.

Most homes had a refrigerator and a TV set in 2010, and did not differ from other Brazilian households in that respect. The IBGE, however, only found washing machines in 41% of favela households, while

tered businesses operate here too. The residents do not only belong to the working class, but to the lower middle class as well. The reputation for lawlessness and violence is exaggerated, but not unfounded (see box next page).

“AFRICAN NEIGHBOURHOODS”

Some favelas are actually quite old. The first emerged in the late 19th century, when former soldiers and former slaves built themselves informal homes in major cities. Often they settled on steep slopes because that land was unused without anybody laying claim to it. From the very beginning, there was a race dimension. Initially, favelas were sometimes called “bairros Africanos” (African neighbourhoods).



Favela life is tough, but two thirds of the residents do not want to move away.

the comparative figure in other neighbourhoods was 67%. The share for computer ownership was 28% in favelas and 56% elsewhere. These figures have certainly increased in the past ten years. According to Data Favela, a non-governmental institute, 78% of the age group 16 to 29 were regularly accessing the internet in 2013.

A lot of informal economic activity takes place in favelas, but officially regis-

People of colour are still more likely to live in a favela than those of exclusively European ancestry. The 2010 census showed that 45% of Brazil's population was white, but white people only accounted for not quite a third of the favela population, while 13% were black and 55% were mixed race. Members of indigenous peoples tend to be marginalised as well, but only rather few live in urban agglomerations.



Data Favela has found that 70 % of women living in favelas have children, and the majority had their first child before the age of 20. The number of children varies. It is not unusual for a mother to have five or even six kids. Data Favela research has also revealed that women head 44 % of favela households. Moreover, the institute recently reported that 72 % of favela residents do not have any savings. They can maintain their low standard of living for a week at most of if they lose their source of income. Social disparities are huge in Brazil, given that the country has more billionaires than France, as Forbes magazine has reported.

A large share of the favela population depends on informal activities. According to IBGE data, 27,8 % of the residents work

without a contract. Elsewhere, that share is just 20.5 %. Given that poor families tend to be large and include many dependent persons, half of the favela population probably depends on informal livelihoods.

This sector is marked by racism too. Black and brown people tend to be paid less than white people, even if they do the same work. Most often, they get the worst jobs. That is not different in the formal sector, of course, where white staff members earned about 42 % more than black and brown people in 2018, according to the IBGE.

If all favelas together were one of Brazil's states, that state would be the 5th most populous. Its monthly per-capita income, however, would be the equivalent of about 100 euro, only half of Brazil's official minimum wage, researchers from Data Favela and Locomotiva reckon. Nonetheless, its gross domestic product would be larger than Bolivia's.

It is no surprise, of course, that the favela population is particularly hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. That is true both in health and economic terms. Where population density is high, the virus spreads fast, and where people lack the kind of protection that comes with formal-sector jobs, they drop into poverty faster. In December, infection numbers were again rising fast.

MOST PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE

Life is tough in the favelas. Nonetheless, most residents do not want to leave. In 2014, the Data Popular Institute did a survey of 63 slums. Of 2,000 respondents, 94 % said they were happy, and 66 % said they did not want to move to another place. The reason is that people depend on the communities they live in. People like to be surrounded by family and friends. Close ties offer a sense of protection and provide support in times of need. Moreover, local networks facilitate joyful social activities – including Samba and Carnival, for example.

Karen Cândido, who works for the community-based media platform Voz das Comunidades (voice of the communities) says: "The people in the favelas fight for their rights and are happy as they are." There are many problems, she says, but people are determined to make progress. "What makes us proud," she adds, "is moving forward. And if you need help, the neighbours will provide it."



THUANY RODRIGUES

is a journalist based in Rio de Janeiro.

thuanyrodrigues@gmail.com

Violent crime

For residents of favelas in Rio de Janeiro, death sometimes comes from high above. Fighting violent gangs, police snipers shoot from helicopters. All too often, they kill innocent people, including children. Things became so bad that the Federal Supreme Court intervened and restricted the use of police helicopters.

Luis Felipe Rodrigues belongs to a Samba group in one of Rio's favelas. He says that perhaps seven percent of the local people have some kind of connection to the illegal drug business and the mafia gangs that

control it. The other 93 %, however, are exposed to police violence. According to the Public Security Institute, an agency of the state government, the police killed 885 people in the first half of 2019 alone, of whom 711 – or 80 % – were persons of colour.

Rio de Paz, a non-governmental organisation, has surveyed 57 press reports about children being killed by stray bullets from 2007 to 2019. In more than half of the cases, the cause were skirmishes between the police and gangsters.

Upper-class Brazilians tend to blame favelas for breed-

ing crime. What they ignore is that many rich people are involved in white-collar crime. A prominent example is Sérgio Cabral, a former governor of Rio de Janeiro state, who was sentenced to 45 years in prison for corruption as well as embezzling and laundering money.

It is also well understood that the drug mafias have close ties to state agencies. The scholar Thiago Rodrigues speaks of "symbiotic relations". He argued this case in 2018 in an essay he wrote for the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, which is close to Germany's Christian Democrats (see blog post on our website). The drug trade is the dominant industry in some favelas, Rodrigues admits, but

the gangs bribe security forces, judges and policymakers. Typically, a precarious equilibrium is found, reducing risks for all parties involved and delivering considerable benefits to the most powerful players.

Sometimes, however, the police invade a favela, and things turn violent. Those who suffer the impacts are mostly bystanders and perhaps some low-level gangsters, reckons favela resident Luis Felipe Rodrigues. tr

LINK

Thiago Rodrigues, 2018:
Symbiotic relations.

<https://www.kas.de/en/web/auslandsinformationen/artikel/detail/-/content/symbiotische-verbindungen>

REFUGEE CAMPS

A refuge, not a home

Living conditions in the Kakuma refugee camp in north-western Kenya are appalling, with substandard housing, poor roads, inadequate water and sanitation. The camp was supposed to offer temporary homes, but has become a town of now 197,000 people.

By Qaabata Boru

To reside in the Kakuma refugee camp is to experience daily intolerable living conditions, including substandard housing, defective roads and inadequate electricity supply. The water and sanitation situation is bad (see box next page).

The international aid organisations that run camps like Kakuma should recognise that these settlements, which were originally intended as temporary way stations for refugees, have become permanent encampments. They fail to provide minimal standards of habitation.

The sprawling refugee settlement is divided into several separately numbered camps and is located on the outskirts of Kakuma town in north-western Kenya. The Kakuma camp and the neighbouring Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement had a population of nearly 197,000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers in July 2020, according to the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR.

The camp was established in 1992 to house unaccompanied minors who fled the war in Sudan and refugee camps in Ethiopia. Today, nearly 30 years later, many inhabitants are second-generation residents and some are even third-generation. Almost all depend on humanitarian assistance. Their refugee status means they are not allowed to work for pay.

Kakuma was conceived as a temporary haven for refugees who would soon be resettled elsewhere. But three decades later, most residents have lost hope of moving on to better places even though their existing conditions are dire.

To begin with the housing: The camp's houses are small, overcrowded and poorly ventilated. A typical family house is a one-room dwelling with mud-brick walls,

measuring three by four meters. The roof typically is made of corrugated iron, plastic sheeting or so-called makuti thatching woven from coconut palm leaves.

Often refugees build their own homes, without knowing what materials to use to withstand bad weather. The makuti thatching covering many homes, for example, is believed to provide warmth during winters and protection from a hot sun in summer. But a makuti roof is also easily blown away by a strong wind. Similarly, walls made of dried mud can collapse during floods – a hazard that has cost lives.

In some houses, walls are made of poles and sticks tied together and then covered with mud. Long-term camp residents are more likely than average to use this building technique. They have learned that severe heat, torrential rains, wind storms and massive flooding can cause mud-brick walls to crack, buckle and collapse.

The plastic sheeting used to cover houses presents its own set of hazards. After only a few months of sustained exposure to summer heat, plastic sheeting can shrink or degrade in quality. Some residents try covering the plastic sheeting with makuti thatching or other foliage. But even with such covering, plastic roofing material is not durable enough to withstand harsh weather. Moreover, refugees have no choice over the roofing material they receive, and

often have to wait for it for months or even years.

Due to substandard building materials and construction techniques, dampness and mold are common in Kakuma houses. Many are not sealed properly at the walls, joints or roofs, so rodents can – and do – invade living quarters. Such infestations bring infectious diseases as well as mental disturbances.

All of this means that a home in Kakuma is far from a safe haven. “I have lived here for 21 years and I have seen houses displaced by wind storms and flooding,” says Mohamed Jillo, an Ethiopian refugee. “My family was made homeless three times because of delays in receiving materials from the shelter department. I couldn’t afford to renovate our rundown house. We have acclimated ourselves to this misery over decades.”

After repeatedly complaining to camp authorities about houses that are too small and built too close to each other, refugees have gained some ground. In recent years aid groups started building houses that are three by six metres instead of three by four metres, raising the total floor space to 18 from 12 square metres. These one-room dwellings typically house four to six people. Due to crowding, some adult males sleep under temporary coverings near their houses.

BLOCKED COMMUNICATIONS

The Kakuma camp is located near the Lodwar-Lokichogio highway that leads to South Sudan. The highway is paved – unlike the dirt roads inside camp. Dirt roads mean that ambulances or police vehicles responding



A man building what will probably become a family's permanent residence.



to emergencies have trouble reaching people in need.

Dirt roads also mean that during bad weather, critical supplies and services cannot be delivered. If flooding causes dirt roads to turn into rivers, residents cannot get to markets and children cannot get to school. People with disabilities and pregnant women cannot leave their homes, even to go to medical appointments.

Moreover, floods damage everything at once – communal spaces and houses as well as roads. The camp has humanitarian aid centres, food distribution locations, hospitals and places of worship. There are schools, reception centres, soccer fields,

markets and shops, and police stations to help fight crime. Bad roads, however, tend to make these amenities less accessible than they should be.

INTERMITTENT ELECTRIC POWER

At the same time, camp residents lack reliable electricity. At sunset, darkness covers the camp; streets and markets shut down. Some homes and small businesses use loud and costly diesel generators for lighting and phone charging. Others use kerosene or charcoal lamps, even though these emit smoke and damage health and the environment.

Internet access is similarly sporadic and unreliable. Over the years, some learning centres in the camp, supported by aid agencies, have provided free internet access to their students and staff. But for the most part, residents are cut off from the rest of the world. Those who can afford it buy internet access from Safaricom, a Kenyan mobile network and internet service provider, but the camp lacks the infrastructure to support reliable internet access.

Under Kenya's encampment law, refugees may not live in a permanent structure

because they are destined to move to permanent new locations or return to their home countries. Yet Kakuma's longevity contradicts the rule: Kakuma has become de facto permanent, but without the housing and infrastructure needed for a permanent settlement.

In effect, Kakuma is a place where people are illegally warehoused under harsh conditions for decades. In Kakuma, temporary living circumstances have morphed into permanent ones with no mechanism for reviewing or changing the conditions. Kakuma's example shows how sometimes the most permanent situation is one that was originally intended to be temporary. It also shows how the designation "temporary" can stand in the way of improving a situation that is actually permanent.



QAABATA BORU

is an Ethiopian journalist and former resident of the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. He is the founder and

editor-in-chief of Kakuma News Reflector (Kanere), a refugee-led online newspaper. kakuma.news@gmail.com
<https://kanere.org/>

Unsanitary sanitation

Water in Kenya's Kakuma camp is rationed based on family size. Using power from diesel generators, camp authorities pump water to communal taps, where it is collected by residents carrying jerrycans. Since water is limited, most cannot afford to take a daily bath.

While the tap water is generally clean, there is not enough for all the households, and that prompts some residents to fetch dirty water from nearby rivers for washing clothes, cleaning utensils and building houses, while saving tap water for drinking and cooking. The use of contaminated water for cleaning utensils can spread

diseases that land hundreds of people in camp hospitals.

Throughout the camp, houses lack adequate sanitation. Toilets are pit latrines, and often there are not enough latrines for the number of people using them. Waste disposal services are similarly inadequate. Once a pit latrine is full, a new one is dug, putting a strain on available land. If there are delays in digging new latrines, residents must use the surrounding countryside, in a practice they call "going to the bush".

Most refugee families share latrines with others in the densely populated camp. "We share toilets with four other

families," says Hassan Morsi, a Somali refugee. "Building a new toilet every year without help is difficult, but this is the situation."

Rapid growth in the refugee population has severely strained the camp's sanitation

system. The camp lacks an adequate drainage system. When floods occur, pit latrines are often breached, causing waste to spill into streets. This in turn leads to the spread of communicable diseases such as cholera and typhoid. qb



This mud-brick house collapsed after a flood.



Many Nairobians live in a slum – and the home they identify with is somewhere in a village.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

If you build it, they won't come

Hundreds of thousands of jobless Kenyans migrate to cities each year to search for jobs, adding to a severe housing shortage. The government's housing policy is unlikely to solve the problem.

By Alphonse Shiundu

After Kenya shut down its economy to battle the coronavirus pandemic, its comedians took to social media to entertain the public with stories of their journeys to stardom. Their tales tended to follow a rags-to-riches narrative: They left rural homes and moved to a big city to try their hand at an acting career. They shared single-roomed, tin-walled shacks with other impoverished residents in Nairobi's slums. Some slept on the streets. Others were housed by relatives or sheltered by prostitutes, living in dingy dwellings in back alleys. But eventually they achieved fame and fortune.

As entertaining as these stories are, they expressed the reality of most migrants to Kenya's teeming cities. Many young people still stream into cities from the countryside, hoping for opportunities and a decent income. But it is a hard struggle, particularly for the 99% of the workforce who lack high education.

For those with a secondary school certificate or lower, a move to the city usually leads to work in the informal sector, where over 80% of Kenya's workforce toil. They do any kind of work to buy food, pay rent, and perhaps send some money to their families in the village. They work as apprentice mechanics, welders, carpenters or household helpers. Or they hawk fruits, second-hand clothes, umbrellas and pencils. They live in dire circumstances but have no proof of a monthly income that would enable them to take on a mortgage and improve their living conditions. They have no social protection such as health insurance or an old-age pension scheme.

Nonetheless they keep coming. The share of Kenyans living in cities and surrounding urban areas quadrupled from eight percent in 1963 to 32% in 2019. The 2019 census shows that 39% of Kenyan households, comprising about 15 million people, are in urban areas.

People keep coming mainly because urban jobs pay more. By law, the minimum wage for menial jobs in Kenya's three cities – Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu – is almost double that of rural areas. Gardeners, street cleaners, watchmen and housekeepers in

cities are entitled by law to 13,572 Kenyan shilling (KES) (\$ 135) a month, compared to 7,240 KES (\$ 72) in rural areas.

Since independence in 1963, Kenya's policymakers have known that the steady migration to cities is a ticking time bomb. The stream of unemployed people into cities worsens existing joblessness and adds to the already severe urban housing shortage.

Upon his reelection to a second term in 2017, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced a plan: He promised that the government would build 500,000 affordable housing units in urban areas within five years. His government created a mortgage finance corporation to lend money to financial institutions for onward lending to Kenyans buying these and other homes.

But the project is floundering. The courts struck down a presidential proposal to levy a tax to finance the housing fund. It was hugely unpopular among formally employed middle-class Kenyans. They felt that they were being forced to buy houses they did not need, or to pay for houses for other people.

BUILD IT YOURSELF

Indeed, most Kenyans shy away from mortgages. Kenya has only about 27,000 mortgages, according to the Central Bank. While 61% of Kenyans own their homes, only three percent of those homeowners actually bought the houses, while 93% of homeowners built their own houses and three percent inher-

ited them, according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics. The vast majority of the owned homes are in the countryside. While the government focuses on alleviating conditions in urban slums by encouraging people to buy government-built city homes, the Kenyans who are most inclined to own their homes already do so – in the countryside. In the cities, people overwhelmingly tend to rent. A mere nine percent of Nairobians live in a home they own. The city counts 1.5 million households, of whom 91% are renters.

One reason for Kenya's urban-rural dichotomy in home ownership is cultural. Kenyans tend to consider cities places to work and earn money, but do not call them home. Their homes are in their rural ancestral lands, to which they return at Christmas, Easter and other holidays. Retirees tend to return to their villages as well.

Another reason that city residents tend to rent their housing is that urban housing is very expensive. Household incomes are typically too small to afford real-estate investments. Three-fourths of employed Kenyans earn less than 50,000 KES (\$ 500) a month.

Moreover, administrative hurdles and bureaucratic bottlenecks in property registration and titling make home acquisition difficult. Corrupt officials have a pattern of creating bottlenecks to extort money, moreover. On top of all this, interest rates on mortgages can be as high as 14%.

Despite the preference of city residents to rent rather than buy, the government decided to build hundreds of houses and offer them for sale or rent at subsidised rates to slum dwellers. The idea was that poor people would want to improve their living conditions, so the government should enable renters to start a journey towards home ownership. It is not working out. Some slum dwellers accepted the subsidised home-purchase terms, but they did not move into the new housing. Instead they sold their subsidised units to others and went back to live in the slums. Others accepted subsidised rent-to-purchase terms but then sublet their units, pocketing the rent while continuing to live in their slum home.

HOME TRUTHS

One important lesson from this sad experience is that at base of the housing problem is an income and employment crisis. To solve the shortage of decent urban housing, the government must first improve the job-creating capacity of the country's economy – in both urban and rural areas. That would raise incomes to the point where urban slum-dwellers could move into better housing on their own. It might also dampen the tendency to move from the countryside to cities in search of work.

Another lesson is that the government has no business trying to build and sell

homes in cities where most people shy away from home ownership. At best, the government should remove barriers to home ownership, such as bureaucracy and corruption in the titling process, high interest rates, and heavy taxes on building materials such as cement and steel.

The government could also improve conditions in the slums by providing better urban infrastructure in areas such as roads, sanitation, internet connectivity, electricity, water and waste-management.

Beyond that, however, the government should get out of the way and enable Kenyans to do what they are inclined to do anyway – at least in the countryside – which is to build their own homes. That is what nine out of ten Kenyan homeowners already do. Policy should follow a pattern that already works for most citizens.

In short, Kenya needs a smarter approach to social housing. The government would be well advised to consider more successful schemes run in other countries (see, for example, Katja Dombrowski on Singapore on page 31 of this issue).



ALPHONCE SHIUNDU
is a Kenyan journalist, editor
and fact-checker based in
Nairobi.

shiunduonline@gmail.com

Twitter: @Shiundu

Living like a student

Some of the worst housing in Kenya is occupied by university students who arrive at urban campuses from the countryside. Three of Kenya's biggest public universities are in or near the capital city. When students arrive from rural areas, many cannot afford student housing or other individual accommodations.

They rent houses in groups or live in hostels located in slums near the universities.

Such housing is cheap – albeit substandard. Sanitation, security and safety are secondary considerations for people who need a roof over their heads.

The picture is not much better for recent graduates. About 15 years ago, when I came to Nairobi after university, I stayed with my cousins in their home. After I got a job, I moved with my brother in a single-roomed house in a working-class neighbourhood.

Some of my new colleagues were less lucky and lived in hostels. Others shared a single room costing 5,000 Kenyan shillings (KES) (\$ 50) a month in rent with others.

These rooms had thin mattresses on the floor for sleeping at night and sitting on during the day; a cooker atop a 5-kg cylinder of cooking gas; a small metal box used as a makeshift ironing board for clothes; and three or four 20-litre jerrycans with water for cooking, bathing and cleaning. The rest of the room was filled with clothes, a few utensils,

and a bucket for trash. Bathrooms and toilets were outside, usually shared among many tenants.

With slightly more income, some residents can move out of a shared room to occupy bedsits. These are single-roomed houses in decent neighbourhoods with a toilet and bathroom, and often a sink in one corner that denotes a cooking area. The rent for these small houses is typically twice the amount of the one-room rentals – about 10,000 KES (\$ 100) per month.

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Kakuma was conceived as a temporary haven for refugees who would soon be resettled elsewhere. But three decades later, most residents have lost hope of moving on to better places.
#Kenya



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Living conditions in Kenya's Kakuma refugee camp are harsh and dangerous

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INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

More liveable neighbourhoods

For the estimated 1 billion people who live in slums in the global South, eradicating their impoverished settlements is not a way to make their lives better. It is a threat. The solution is to upgrade slum housing and infrastructure in ways that respond to local needs, involve local communities and do not harm the most vulnerable.

By Diana Mitlin and David Satterthwaite

An estimated 1 billion people in the global South live in “slums”. This English term stands for populated residential areas with decrepit housing. It has pejorative connotations, but the editorial team of D+C/E+Z has decided to use it in line with various slum-dwellers’ initiatives who hope to reduce those connotations by using the term. All too often, the infrastructure is decaying, incomplete or entirely missing. Many slums started as informal settlements. They were never properly planned and are often outside government control. All too often, the authorities simply neglect them.

The need to upgrade these settlements – improve living conditions in them rather than clear them out – is widely recognised. In the early 1990s, Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI), a global movement of the urban poor, called for cities to become “slum friendly”. Ever since, the SDI has opposed the UN aim of making cities “slum free”, which can be achieved by bulldozing, but severely harms the people concerned.

Upgrading slums includes:

- securing the rights of residents to remain there, as well as
- providing services such as water, electricity and safe housing.

Upgrades can take many forms, from simply rearranging shacks to installing sophisticated infrastructure (see box next page). Granting tenancy rights to residents has proved to be very effective. It provides incentives for people to improve conditions. Individual land titles may help; but the most vulnerable may be pressured into selling the title at a time of crisis.

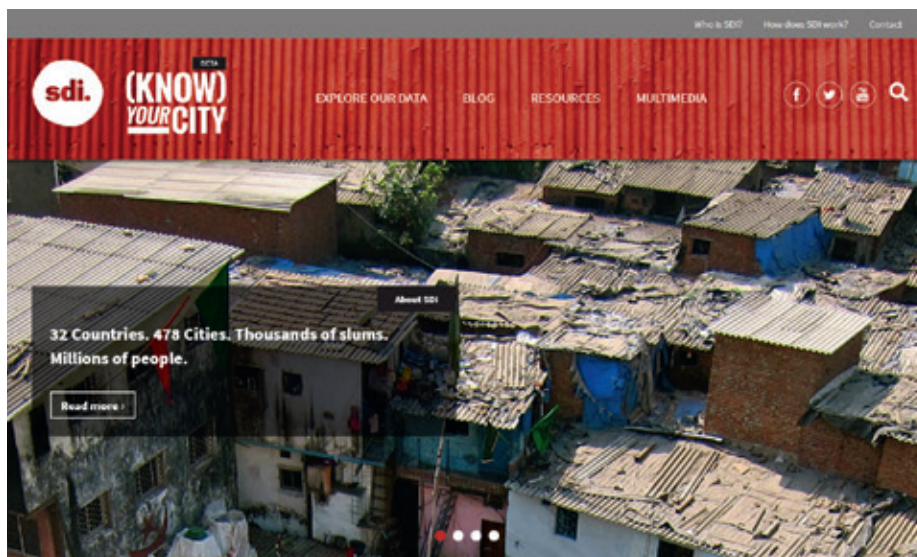
There is a bottom-up and a top-down approach to upgrading. The first focuses on realising the wishes of local residents and requires communities to be organised. The second is driven by government initiatives.

Increasingly, slum-improvement programmes involve a mixture of top-down and bottom-up approaches. Local communities engage governments to support their aspirations through appropriately designed programmes, while governments seek to involve local communities in implementing measures.

ensuring the participation of local communities and giving them some control of the process. Another is matching the type of upgrades to local circumstances, taking account of residential density and a nation’s general standard of living. Yet another is avoiding the displacement of the lowest-income tenants. All too often, that is an unintended consequence of improving housing and infrastructure conditions.

OWNERSHIP MATTERS

Slum improvement programmes across the globe have shown that local ownership is key. The grassroots community must be involved, and it must be organised to make sure improvements address local needs. Organised communities can lobby collectively for changes in upgrading plans. They can, for



SDI is a movement of the urban poor, calling for more “slum friendly” cities: www.sdinet.org

Thailand’s Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) is a parastatal organisation that takes such a mixed approach. It relies on government funding to support local communities that wish to upgrade their disadvantaged neighbourhoods. It offers subsidies to tenants as well as homeowners for infrastructure improvements, and it also grants loans at subsidised interest rates to enable housing development. Collective titles reduce the risk of vulnerable households selling their homes.

Several key factors determine the success of efforts to upgrade slums. One is

example, insist on higher housing subsidies for the lowest-income households and/or limit repayments and future charges by lowering standards. Community organisations often encourage collective saving to improve affordability. Collective bargaining can also help to lower purchase costs of planned improvements. Grassroots agencies, moreover, can increase their clout by collecting data and mapping localities (see Diana Mitlin in Focus section of D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2016/10).

Of course, ownership also matters in a very literal sense. Unless residents feel that they and their homes are safe, they are

unlikely to invest money or efforts in improving them. Tenure security empowers them to take responsibility and organise.

The power of involving community groups became evident in Pune, India, for example. The municipal government implemented a programme called Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP). In the first round of the BSUP, medium-rise housing was built on the city's periphery, requiring low-income residents allocated these units to move from well-located central areas.

In the second round, however, the community was involved and the results were better as residents remained in their original locations. The municipal government worked with NGOs to involve residents in a participatory development. Residents then designed their own homes. Moreover, they themselves organised temporary relocations while their homes were being improved. The households had to pay 10% of the costs, and the neighbourhood savings schemes helped them do so. The Mahila Milan (a network of women's savings collectives) played an important role.

In addition to involving local residents' organisations, upgrading plans should be carefully tailored to local conditions. Measures should vary depending on such factors as:

- Who owns the land?
- What are the risks of natural disaster such as flooding?

- How densely populated is the area?
- How much improvement can the community afford?
- What is the country's general standard of living?

In a region with low population density, for example, it may be best to build individual houses. Where density is high, by contrast, terraced housing or apartment blocks are probably more appropriate. Moreover, a well-off region can afford higher housing standards than a low-income one. Installing expensive infrastructure where people cannot afford it, on the other hand, is likely to exclude low-income households from the benefits of the upgrade. Granting them subsidies can again change the equation.

DON'T HURT THE VULNERABLE

In addition to ensuring local participation and tailoring upgrades to local circumstances, projects aimed at upgrading slums must not harm vulnerable people. Too often upgrades drive up costs, which displaces low-income tenants. When only those who can prove a claim to their home are offered title and tenure, some residents will be pushed out. But addressing the needs of tenants is challenging.

A recent analysis of two SDI housing developments in Nairobi highlights the complexities. Community-led upgrading

was designed to provide affordable housing. The original plan was to build single-room dwellings of 12-16 square metres on the ground floor plus a toilet on the first floor. Long-term tenants were also offered title to plots of land as the community wanted the upgrading to be inclusive. Rooms could be added on higher floors as residents became able to afford the investment.

However, the home-owners need for income – in part to repay the housing loans – meant that they rented these rooms to new tenants. The community came to accept that there was a continuing demand for rental housing. That lesson is now being built into their new efforts to address housing need.



DIANA MITLIN
is a professor of global urbanism at the University of Manchester and a principal researcher at the International

Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

diana.mitlin@manchester.ac.uk

Twitter: @DianaMitlin



DAVID SATTERTHWAITE
is a senior fellow at IIED and a visiting professor at University College London.

Stages of moving up

There are many dimensions to upgrading an informal settlement. Improvement programmes thus operate at several levels, ranging from rearranging dwellings and providing legal title to building extensive new infrastructure.

At a most basic level, upgrading typically involves providing residents a secure right to stay where they are. Through titles issued by government and/or private land-owners,

residents can be freed of the spectre of forced eviction. This step is often very effective. People are more likely to invest in their homes once they are sure they will be allowed to stay.

The next level up involves making basic improvements to services, such as installing public toilets, providing piped water or building pathways through the settlement. How ambitious such measures are varies. Water may be piped

to each home or only to public standpipes. Roads may be paved or simply graded. Decisions should depend on what is considered normal in the given agglomeration. On the other hand, very expensive infrastructure – a drainage system, for example – is unlikely to be provided at this point. Moreover, there typically is no provision for infrastructure maintenance.

Further up the scale is providing a more complete range of infrastructure and services, including drainage, street lighting and solid waste

collection. Households may also get private toilets and access to electricity.

Finally, particularly in middle-income countries, governments and community groups may build simple modern dwellings consisting of one or two rooms. In high-density areas, walk-up apartment blocks may be provided, with full services for each household. In low-density, low-income countries, however, households are likely to remain in shacks, with some residents making self-funded incremental improvements. dm, ds

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Growth creates supply problems

Istanbul is the city with the most residents in Turkey. It is also the country's commercial capital. Because of economic growth and the associated job opportunities, the demand for residential housing, office space and municipal infrastructure is growing. Public services like the provision of drinking water are also challenged.

By Sarah C. Schreiner

After the military coup d'état of 1980, the new Turkish government gradually rebuilt the country's economy and politics. Increasing Turkey's exports was an important goal. As a result, metropolitan centres like Istanbul became attractive to public and private investors. Money flowed into residential building and infrastructure in particular.

In the 1980s, an amnesty law de-facto legalised the existing informal settlements. Consequently, the affected properties and homes could be sold as real estate. Their value increased massively if they were connected to urban service networks.

Beginning in the 1990s, the rising demand for residential and office space pushed commercial and industrial activities away from the centre to the urban fringes. The city authorities implemented large infrastructure projects including the construction of an underground line and mass housing, for example, with help from Turkish and international corporations.

For the sake of building condominiums, office complexes, shopping malls and hotels, private companies also invested in the water system. It was simply not adequate for the increasing demand.

MORE LEEWAY FOR THE CITY COUNCIL

New national legislation granted the city council more financial leeway, and it took an increasingly entrepreneurial approach. Responsibilities were reorganised: the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality took charge of city-wide planning, including the designation of new residential areas and the expansion of transport infrastructure. The

District Municipalities were given authority over local infrastructure management. For the first time it also became possible to found municipal enterprises, which operate according to private-sector rules. Local authorities had to guarantee residents basic social services, but they could run those services in a profit-oriented or at least cost-neutral way.

The city council established ISKI as an enterprise to supply drinking water. Among other things, it installed water meters in buildings, so consumption could be measured and attributed to individual house-



holds. Public wells were taken out of service. Repairs to water lines improved the security of supply and line losses decreased. The city refinanced these investments by raising the price of drinking water. Today, the residents of Istanbul pay a larger share of their income to receive municipal water. Poorer people have fewer and fewer opportunities to ob-



Drinking water supplier in Istanbul.

tain drinking water free from wells or from pipes that are not metered.

IMPACT ON SURROUNDING AREAS

The example of the drinking-water supply makes clear that Istanbul's urban development – and the way it is managed – have massive impacts on the city's relationship with its fringes. Seven rivers and lakes, located primarily outside of Istanbul, are where most people's drinking water comes from. They get it either through municipal water lines or from private water suppliers.

In new settlements that can be connected to the existing network, ISKI supplies drinking water. On the outskirts of the city, where that would be uneconomical, ISKI and private vendors ensure a decentralised supply. Competition between municipal and private suppliers is useful, both in terms of keeping a check on prices and ensuring the quality of the drinking water.

Given Istanbul's growing population and increasing demand for drinking water, additional water is being transported into the city by truck from more and more

remote regions. As a result, residents must cope with shortages. The same fate hits agriculture in the areas where the water is sourced. Urban water supply hinges on municipal and private water suppliers from Istanbul concluding contracts with local and regional authorities outside the city limits. At the same time, more competition for limited water resources drives up prices.

CONCLUSION

Traditionally, Istanbul's urban and infrastructure development was geared to growth. At the same time, the transition to more flexible planning instruments has opened up new opportunities for public and private actors to improve municipal infrastructure.

On the one hand, that has led to numerous investments in existing systems – like for instance the water supply. On the other hand, the city's constant growth has resulted in new challenges for urban infrastructure.

Privatisation and the outsourcing of government functions have transformed the

supply of drinking water in Istanbul from an affordable public service to a commodity. Nowadays, municipal and purely private-sector utilities are competing for customers and resources.

The greatest challenge consists in promoting the integrated development of the entire metropolitan region. The city needs to expand its cooperation with partners in the region and consider social and environmental factors more seriously when planning new residential areas. Sealing surfaces within the city limits for new residential buildings, after all, is an immediate response to rural-urban migration and has environmental impacts on surrounding areas. The urban development strategy should focus on making living conditions in the entire region more equitable, but so far has not been doing so.



SARAH C. SCHREINER
is an independent urban planner and operates an engineering firm in Hamburg.
dr.ing.schreiner@gmx.de

Increasing housing prices

In Istanbul, urban development has not kept pace with the dramatic increase in residents and economic development. Since the turn of the millennium at the latest, the Turkish metropolis has therefore become an increasingly divided city.

Whereas low-income residents live in dilapidated apartments in the traditional centre or in poorly connected settlements on the outskirts, the new middle and upper classes populate attractive locations. These locations are marked by new apartments, proximity to nature, views of the Bosphorus and good infrastructure. More and more nature preserves and watersheds are yielding to the

growing demand for exclusive residential housing and office buildings. Real estate prices are rising fast in the city centre. In

historical districts, that often leads to razing, followed by new construction, or to restoration. Both make housing more expensive.

In principle, the state regulates the real estate market and urban infrastructure.



Building boom in Istanbul.

The municipal authorities aim to drive urbanisation through new regulations on land use, large-scale infrastructure projects and the designation of new development areas. In order to do so, they form alliances with private companies and homeowners, encouraging private-sector investment.

For example, the city council has entered into public-private partnerships (PPPs) for individual housing projects, primarily for the new urban middle and upper classes. It has also approved projects that are financed entirely by private investors. The city administration focuses on directing and supervising the building plans. Project design is then largely left to developers, as long as they conform to the overriding urban development plan. scs



Community health workers checking people's temperature in view of Covid-19 threat in a Mumbai slum in October 2020.

SLUM DWELLERS

City of migrants

Mumbai is India's commercial capital. Seen from above, it looks like a network of slums. Masses of people live in those disadvantaged settlements – but they nonetheless appreciate Mumbai's many opportunities.

By Rahman Abbas

Mumbai – formerly Bombay – is widely acknowledged for many things, including its glittering nightlife, gregarious slum dwellings, suffocating congestion, extreme poverty, vibrant and violent political culture, glamorous film industry (Bollywood) and various hubs for the arts. Another important feature is that virtually every person residing in Mumbai is a migrant in a way or another.

Some have come from the surrounding areas, others from far-away places in India and neighbouring countries or even from overseas. The only variance is that some people arrived yesterday, others a few years ago and yet others have been here for several decades.

By Asian standards, Mumbai is a young city, founded 500 years ago by Portuguese colonialists. The agglomeration is still growing fast. It is now home to more than 20 million people, of whom more than 12 million live within the city limits. Since 2015, about 1 million have arrived. Not even half of them are from Maharashtra state, of which Mumbai is the capital. Maharashtrian newcomers tend to feel that they did not migrate at all, and indeed, the language they speak in their villages – Marathi – is the official language in Mumbai too. All other Indian languages, however, are spoken here as well, and so is English, the language of the colonial power that ruled India for three centuries.

When allowing migrants in, the city has never shown discrimination of colour, caste or religion. However, there are tensions, and the Shiv Sena, the major regional political party, often exploits them to entrench its power more deeply. It sometimes emphasises its Hindu identity, but can also turn against North Indians or South Indians. Like all political parties in Mumbai, it is

often accused of corruption, nepotism and favouritism.

The city is overcrowded and has no space for new settlements. Nonetheless, it remains open to migrants. There is a pattern according to which families move here. First, an individual person – normally, though not always, a man – comes to the city in search of a job. He either lives in a small dormitory with other workers or rents a tiny room. Invariably, the location will be in a slum. The migrant's principal objective is to earn and save money in order to become able to invite other members of the family to follow. Those who must send money home to support particularly poor relatives in their native village may not succeed, however, and some particularly ill-fated people become prey to drugs peddlers or end up as sex workers. They are unlikely to ever escape the worst living conditions.

On the other hand, most migrants eventually achieve the goal of reuniting with their family in the city. Accordingly, they are likely to tell you that Mumbai showered gifts on them and made their lives bearable (this, by the way, was my own family's fate – see box next page). Mumbai is a city of opportunities where people manage to escape desperate rural poverty – and that is precisely why others keep coming.

Mumbai's population density is now 21,000 people per square kilometre. According to the 2011 census, 42% of the population lives in slums. If all forms of low-income housing are included, that share goes up to 57%.

Seen from above, the city looks like a web of slums. If you enter one of them, you will feel as though you have ended up in some sort of labyrinth – or hell. Gutters are open, and garbage is scattered everywhere. Cats, dogs and goats roam the trash piles – and so do rats, hens and impoverished naked children. Nonetheless, many slum dwellers feel they are thriving because disadvantaged families are better off here than in the villages. They are more likely to get enough food – and there are opportunities to find work, acquire new skills and see the children get a formal education.

COVID-19 AND LOCKDOWN

Slum conditions are unhygienic, of course, and common diseases include malaria, cholera, dysentery, typhoid and jaundice.



The majority of people live in one-room homes where physical distancing is impossible. Tarpaulin sheets often serve as roofs, and many huts are makeshift. Unsurprisingly, the novel coronavirus spreads fast. In spring, a random sample of 7000 slum dwellers was tested – and half of them were found to be infected.

The national government imposed a harsh lockdown on the entire country, and the poor slum population was brutally affected. People were stuck in crowded rooms, which they often shared with strangers and which lacked the circulation of fresh air. Moreover, they were no longer able to earn their living. Hunger made some of them rebel, only to experience barbaric police repression. All the while, Covid-19 was spreading among them. The death rate remained comparatively low, not least because people did apply hygiene rules such as mask wearing. The slum communities deserve praise for the discipline with which they have been warding off this crisis – but the middle class-

es tend to regard them only with scorn, accusing them of spreading the disease.

The truth is that the authorities are not ensuring public health in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Even today, Mumbai slums typically do not have sufficient access to drinking water. According to official data, only 73 % of slums have government-provided community toilets, while less than one percent have “pay to use” toilets managed by a non-governmental organisation. Obviously, open defecation remains quite common.

MOVING UP EVENTUALLY

Facing many-fold adversities, most migrants take their fate into their hands and actually do manage to improve their lot. Initially, they live in tiny slum rooms that resemble suffocating cells with no fresh air circulating. However, they typically move on to better homes eventually. What outsiders do not see at first glance, is that there are actually various degrees of slum quality.

Efforts to upgrade poor people’s housing have made a difference. Some initiatives were driven by the government, others by non-governmental organisations. Residents of an improved slums typically have legal power supply, for example. Depending on the quality of a slum, the water and sanitation situation can differ considerably. The governmental Slum Rehabilitation Scheme has certainly delivered results. Moreover, the government has also run lotteries, providing some slum dwellers with affordable

better housing. People have ample reason to assume that bribery played a role.

All summed up, however, the situation in the slums has hardly improved. New arrivals keep moving in, so the population keeps growing, and the slum setting stays miserable.

In the past two decades, satellite townships have come up on the outskirts of the city, but the apartments are very expensive. Families of first-generation migrants cannot afford them. They do not get bank loans because they normally work in the informal sector. Their jobs are not safe, so they cannot show financial institutions the required documents. The new suburbs have thus become the home of the middle classes whose incomes depend on work for a formal business or a government agency. On the upside, the mere fact that people have moved to the suburbs has reduced population density in the city.



RAHMAN ABBAS

is a Mumbai-based novelist who writes in Urdu and English, and the recipient of India’s highest literary award,

the Sahitya Akademi Award, for his novel “Rohzin” in 2018. A German translation of this book was published by Draupadi Verlag (Heidelberg, 2018) with the title: “Die Stadt, das Meer, die Liebe”. Penguin Random House India has acquired the rights to publish two novels, including Rohzin, in English in 2021.

rahmanabbas@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/rahman.abbas.12>

Our own experience

Mumbai offered my family opportunities – and the freedom to become whatever we wanted to become.

I was six when my father moved us to Mumbai. I had three siblings, so our family of six lived in a single room. It was actually quite small. My father was our family’s only earning man. My mother was semi-illiterate, as most Indi-

an mothers were in the early 1970s.

Early in the morning at 5 AM, my mother would get up to fetch water from half a kilometre away. We had an illegal electricity supply – but only from 7 PM to 6 AM. We used to go for nature’s call in the bushes or on the streets.

Two decades later, in the early 1990s, our slum finally got

two sets of community toilets. However, there were still only 16 toilets for over 4,000 people. The queues were always long and there were constant disputes. The toilets were dirty, moreover, and we had to bring along our own water.

Our roof was made of tarpaulin sheets. In the summer, we had heat rashes on our skin. When the merciless rain lashed the city, the entire slum was flooded with the water rising to our knees. Depressingly, most slum dwellers still live

in such conditions today (see main story). The open gutter in front of our lane was big. Stray dogs, cats and – especially in the rainy season – snakes lived in it.

In 2001, my elder brother started earning money and we shifted to a better apartment. In the span of 40 years, this great city has helped my family to grow and earn money. My siblings and I were able to get good educations and decided what we wanted to become. I chose to be a novelist. ra

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Race against climate catastrophe

Nowadays, no construction or renovation project should proceed without an assessment of its energy impact. The building sector plays a decisive role in achieving climate goals: the construction and operation of buildings accounts for almost 40% of energy-related carbon emissions and more than one third of energy consumption worldwide.

By Sanna Stockstrom and Matthias Zilbauer

The UN Climate Change Secretariat is calling for a “Race to Zero” – reducing emissions of climate-damaging greenhouse gases to zero by 2050. The race is against emissions, but also against time.

Reducing energy consumption in the building sector can play a key part in succeeding. Unfortunately the efforts made so far to cut energy use – the main source of carbon emissions – have not shown results. On the contrary: in the building sector, energy consumption continues to rise.

According to the International Energy Agency, one reason is increased use of electrical appliances. While appliances are becoming more efficient, increased use more than cancels out the efficiency gains. Consider the sharp increase in demand for cooling in buildings. Since 1990, annual sales of air conditioners have quadrupled to 135 million units worldwide, and the trend continues upward. Some 1.6 billion units, half of them in the US and China alone, consume 2,000 terawatt hours of electricity each year. That is 2.5 times the annual electricity consumption of the entire African continent.

Another factor is demographic change: in 2050, around 9.7 billion people will populate the earth, about 2 billion more people than today. They will all need space to live, work and play, causing a disproportionate growth in demand for buildings. Between 2010 and 2018 the world's population grew by just under 10%, but building space increased by over 20%. The additional building space created currently amounts to constructing another Paris every five days.

The longevity of buildings creates enormous challenges, but also opportunities. Half of all the buildings that will exist in 2060 have not yet been built. What we do – or fail to do – today will have an impact on energy use and emissions decades from

- efficient systems,
- sustainable building materials,
- climate resilience and
- clean energy.

This wide-ranging list shows that measures such as installing insulation or multiple glazing – which are often seen as the centrepiece of energy efficiency – are only cogs in a larger wheel. In fact, energy efficiency and sustainability should be factored into all decisions related to construction and renovation. Humankind needs an adequate standard, for example when draw-



EcoCasa is a KfW-supported project in Mexico that subsidises energy-efficient social housing construction.

now. We must act with foresight when planning and building today.

RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

That applies to a wide range of activities. In a joint roadmap to 2050, the International Energy Agency and the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction, which emerged from the Paris climate summit in 2015, focus on eight areas of activity that should include energy efficiency planning:

- urban planning,
- new buildings,
- renovation of existing buildings,
- building management,

ing up building codes, setting national climate protection targets or reimbursing costs incurred to improve energy efficiency. We also need a faster rate of retrofitting buildings. The application of new technologies and use of sustainable building materials are imperative too, to name just a few important issues.

Acting on behalf of Germany's Federal Government, KfW Development Bank is supporting partners in the construction sector in the “Race to Zero”. KfW's initiatives vary significantly, depending on the partner country, local opportunities and overall conditions. On the other hand, KfW can sometimes contribute to shaping the

policy context. One example is Georgia. With substantial financial investment and the experience of many years of successful cooperation, KfW and Georgia have jointly developed high energy efficiency standards that are now implemented in public buildings.

In India, KfW construction-specific financing is based on standards that the country previously developed with support from Germany's GIZ. KfW's partner is the State Bank of India, the country's largest bank. KfW provides grants for construction measures that reduce energy demand by 40% compared to conventional technologies. These grants ensure the economic viability of energy-saving measures and provide incentives for widespread implementation. This is very important, as India is number three in the world in terms of energy consumption in the building sector.

FLAGSHIP PROJECTS IN MONTENEGRO

In Montenegro, KfW is developing a project for a "nearly zero energy building" as part of the country's national energy-efficiency

programme. Reasons for offering support included the country's proximity to the European Union, its high energy costs and its backlog of renewable energy and building refurbishment projects. Montenegro's EU accession agreement requires the country to modernise an annual one percent of the total state-owned building stock according to efficiency standards. To help Montenegro achieve this goal, KfW will provide subsidised loans to buy modern energy management systems for the country's 2,500 public buildings.

Thanks to up-to-date sensor and measurement technology, smart electricity metering can automatically monitor the consumption every 15 minutes. It is thus possible to identify major consumers and to save both energy and water. Worldwide experience shows that such systems can reduce energy use by up to 20%. The city of Frankfurt, where KfW has its headquarters, was the model for Montenegro's new system.

Apart from cutting buildings' energy use, countries should focus on the sus-

tainability of buildings throughout their lifecycle. Even the most energy-efficient buildings have roofs and walls whose production involves CO₂ emissions. The way to eliminate carbon footprints eventually is to use sustainable and locally sourced building materials. KfW promotes that approach. It also promotes the use of solar and photovoltaic roof systems – for example as part of Mexico's "EcoCasa" project (see box below).



sanna.stockstrom@kfw.de

SANNA STOCKSTROM
is a portfolio manager in the
Urban and Social
Development team at KfW
Development Bank.



matthias.zilbauer@kfw.de

MATTHIAS ZILBAUER
is a sector economist in the
Competence Centre Climate
and Energy at KfW
Development Bank.

Energy-efficient new buildings in Mexico

The "EcoCasa" project provides financial incentives and technical support to real estate developers so they can increase energy efficiency in new buildings, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It is a joint initiative of the Mexican development bank Sociedad Hipotecaria Federal, the Inter-American Development Bank and KfW Development Bank with support from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The programme offers subsidised loans and grants that compensate building developers for the higher costs of energy-efficient technologies.

Up-to-date insulation, reflective exterior paints, energy-efficient boilers or refrigerators, solar thermal systems, multi-paned windows and other technologies thus become more affordable. The resulting savings in electricity, gas and water consumption help to protect the climate and lower operating costs for owners or tenants.

The EcoCasa programme has shown significant results so far. By early 2020, it helped to enhance energy efficiency in more than 58,000 housing units in varying efficiency categories. On average, these dwellings have so far cut their energy consumption by around 25% and

carbon emissions by more than 30% compared to comparable new buildings in Mexico. Projected over an assumed 40-year lifetime of the houses, EcoCasa will thus reduce carbon emissions by around 1.8 million tonnes.

EcoCasa's mission involves a combination of climate protection and social benefits. Climate goals can only be achieved if sustainable housing

is available to even disadvantaged communities. Therefore, EcoCasa covers state-subsidised housing and supports integrated urban development. As a result, parks, local commercial areas, schools, health centres, playgrounds and sports fields are included in the planning. This strengthens communities and enhances the quality of life in new neighbourhoods.

Nonetheless, some challenges associated with infrastructure projects remain. It is not always economically possible to maintain and sustainably operate a football pitch or community centre. Planning "green" buildings with sustainable building materials is one thing. Building capacity, training local tradespeople and sourcing good building materials locally, is an entirely different matter.



RELEVANT READING

Public housing reduces problems

According to an analysis by UN-Habitat, Singapore is making exemplary use of public housing to create living spaces in the city. Over the decades, the policy has evolved in response to people's changing needs and guiding the city state's urban development.

By Katja Dombrowski

Singapore's method of providing public housing is unique. Of the city state's 5.8 million residents, 82% live in homes built by the state-run Housing Development Board (HDB). The rents of the most affordable of these flats lie far below the market price. On the other hand, many of the apartments are eventually sold, so the share of homeownership is very high in this densely populated south-east Asian nation.

Singapore is a global financial and trading centre. Market competition is generally welcome. Nevertheless, the state intervenes with regulations in key areas with an eye to promoting social equity (see conversation with Anna-Katharina Hornidge in

D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2020/10, Focus section). Indeed, the cost of living tends to be high in what is often considered to be a "millionaires' oasis". Housing costs matter very much.

UN-Habitat, the UN's housing and settlement programme, has devoted the latest issue of its "Housing Practice Series" to Singapore. The series assesses public-housing programmes from around the world. It serves to inform developing countries about how to create urban spaces, prevent the emergence of slums and improve people's living conditions. The aim is to provide adequate, affordable and sustainable housing to everyone. That is the UN's 11th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG).

In response to fast population growth, Singapore began building public housing in the early 1960s. The HDB has since built more than a million housing units. It has also met other urban planning goals in the process, including the removal of slums, the redevelopment of the city centre and expanding industry. Urban planning helped to

overcome various social and political challenges arising from Singapore's ethnically diverse population.

According to the UN report, the approach was successful for several reasons. People were given much more than an affordable roof over their heads. The authorities created urban environments in which residents could live, work, learn and spend their free time. Housing complexes thus became the centres of social infrastructures. Input from the people concerned and close cooperation with all relevant state agencies were essential. The authors point out that the people strongly identify with the environment they live in. It helps, of course, that – in contrast to many other countries – public housing in Singapore is not synonymous with poor quality and a lower class population.

TWO SEGMENTS

In the 1980s, the state temporarily halted the construction of new public housing and declared that it wanted as many people as possible to own their homes. As a result, there were then two categories of publicly built housing. While owner-occupied flats were new and large, rental flats were older and smaller. The consequence was that demand for something in between social housing and homeownership was no longer being met. In the meantime, however, smaller flats have also become available for purchase.

Since the 1990s, the focus has been on renovating aging buildings and improving their local environments. Many residents are now elderly, but live in the same flats. Modernisation programmes must take their changed needs into account. At the moment, the HDB is primarily focussing on creating attractive housing for the next generation of residents.

According to UN-Habitat, Singapore shows that it is possible to reverse the general trend towards less and less public housing and that, now as in the past, housing promotion can contribute to social stability in economically uncertain times.

LINK

UN-Habitat, 2020: Housing Practice Series – Singapore.

<https://unhabitat.org/housing-practice-series-singapore>



View of Singapore's Chinatown: in the background is a portion of the Pinnacle@Duxton housing complex, which was built by the state-run Housing Development Board.

Novel coronavirus

As D+C/E+Z is supposed to tackle issues of long-term relevance without responding much to breaking news, Covid-19 took us by surprise. To deal with this crisis, we started a Covid-19 diary on our website and are including some of the most recent entries here. The authors are from four different continents. Their articles do not necessarily reflect the fast changing state of affairs. The relevant date is the indicated day of publication on our website.

Our web diary: <https://www.dandc.eu/node/4306>



27 DECEMBER 2020

Medical myths can be deadly

Zambian health officials are grappling with a wave of dead-on-arrival cases at the country's main referral hospital. The spike in cases may be related to residents not following Covid-19 guidelines, as well as to widespread misconceptions about the virus.

By Derrick Silimina

Zambian health officials have spotted a worrisome trend: More and more patients are dying before reaching University Teaching Hospital (UTH), the country's largest referral hospital.

"We have recorded an increase in the number of Brought-In-Dead (BID) cases," says Dr Lloyd Mulenga, director of infectious diseases at Zambia's Health Ministry. According to him, UTH recorded 4,339 BID cases from early June to early November as compared to 3,711 in the same period in 2019.

The people arriving dead at the hospital died from a variety of causes, not only Covid-19. But according to Mulenga, the spike may be related to the pandemic, reflecting a failure of many residents to comply with Covid-19 prevention measures.

As of mid-December 2020, Zambia had a total of more than 18,400 Coronavirus cases, of which 367 ended in death, according

to www.worldometers.info, an independent statistics portal. Covid-19 infections continue to rise, with many patients suffering from other diseases alongside Coronavirus.

The increased number of dead-on-arrival cases may be related to a growing tendency to self-medicate against Covid-19, in addition to failing to follow recommended preventive measures.

In hopes of fighting the virus, many Zambians are using drugs that were developed to combat other diseases, or are taking "various herbal concoctions," Mulenga says. "This undermines medical efforts to control the virus and prevent new infections."

Dr. Nyambe Mukubesa, a resident doctor at the Ministry of Health, confirms that assessment. "Many citizens are abusing malaria drugs and other medicines to treat Covid-19, without seeking medical advice," he says. "So a surge in new cases is likely to remain a worry."

Those views are confirmed by a survey of 1,035 Zambians carried out in March and April 2020 by Ipsos, the Paris-based market research and consulting firm. The survey shows widespread misconceptions about the virus. "Approximately half believe that Covid-19 can be prevented by drinking lemon juice and Vitamin C (54%), or that

a hot climate prevents the spread of the virus (49%)," Ipsos says in a report titled "Responding to Covid-19: Highlights of a Survey in Zambia".

In addition, the Ipsos report states: "One in four think Covid-19 can be cured with garlic (25%), and sizeable minorities believe that Africans can't get it (15%), or that drinking bleach cures it (9%)."

Some misconceptions cause needless anxiety. "I used to think that the virus only affects the elderly or those with underlying health ailments," says Mercy Chilongo, 33, who had Covid-19 and recovered from it. "When I got Covid-19, I believed it was the end of me."

In some cases, people have correct information about preventing infection, but cannot comply. According to Ipsos, social distancing may prove very difficult in a country where many people do not have separate rooms to isolate infected family members.

But many prevention measures are within the control of residents, who nonetheless are not using them. "The improper wearing of face masks, with citizens dropping the masks when talking or wearing their masks on their chins, or not observing physical distancing, is a battle we continue facing," says Health Minister Chitalu Chilufya.



DERRICK SILIMINA
is a freelance journalist based in Lusaka.

derricksilimina@gmail.com



Masks, face shields, protective suits and test kits are badly needed in Kenya's hospitals.

13 DECEMBER 2020

Medical mystery

Medical supplies and equipment that are badly needed in the fight against Covid-19 are disappearing in Kenya, stolen for sale on the black market. The thefts are symptomatic of widespread corruption in Kenya's health sector.

By Mahwish Gul

Kenya's fight against the coronavirus pandemic is hampered by persistent shortages of equipment and supplies, including basic materials such as personal protective equipment. Health workers suffer directly from these shortages: as Kenya witnesses a surge in coronavirus cases, medical practitioners have died by the dozens.

Against this backdrop, the international community is trying to help Kenya and other hard-hit African countries. International organisations have sent Kenya more than \$2 billion worth of aid and grants to help curb the pandemic. Donors include the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Health Organization and the Jack Ma Foundation, a philanthropic group created by Alibaba founder Jack Ma.

Sadly, however, much of this aid has not reached the doctors, nurses and patients for whom it was intended. Much of it has simply disappeared amidst suspicions of corruption, theft and misallocation of funds.

One notorious case became known as the "Covid-19 millionaires scandal". In that incident, Kenya's Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission unearthed evidence that thieves were selling medical supplies to the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority at three times the market rate.

Similarly, last March a series of 697 packages of medical supplies started arriving at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, donated by the Jack Ma Foundation. They were to comprise 20,000 test kits, 100,000 masks and 1,000 protective suits and face shields the foundation sent to each African nation in need, including Kenya.

Mysteriously, the packages disappeared shortly after they landed. Media reports said many packages were sold either to black-market buyers or to the Ministry of Health at inflated prices. The Ministry of Transport, charged with clearing imported

goods destined for government agencies, blamed Ethiopian Airlines; the airline denied the charge. Six months later the government admitted to only 21 missing packages, and it still cannot say where they went.

This is just one of several high-profile corruption cases to arise since the pandemic started. Overall, an estimated \$400 million in funds and supplies disappeared in the first six months of the pandemic. The problem is not confined to the coronavirus response. A 2020 government report titled "Road to universal health coverage" says corruption and mismanagement are widespread in the health sector generally, and that county health departments are among the worst offenders.

Transparency International, the international organisation fighting corruption, says Kenya's corruption problem is worse than the average for the Sub-Saharan region. Together with 44 other civil-society organisations, Transparency International recently published an open letter to government agencies demanding a clean-up of the health sector. The letter is headlined "Corruption in the health sector is negatively affecting realisation of the right to health".

"The 'Covid-19 millionaires' scandal is not an isolated case of corruption. For a long time, the health sector has been facing high instances of corruption," the group wrote. "Corruption often thrives during times of crisis," Sheila Masinde, executive director of Transparency International Kenya, added in a press statement. "Even in times of crisis, there are those who aim to profit from others' misfortune."



MAHWISH GUL

is a consultant with a focus on development management. She lives in Nairobi.
mahwish.gul@gmail.com



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ENVIRONMENT

Book shows rays of hope in climate crisis

TOP STORY



Current e-Paper



29/12/2020 – by Denick Shimisa
The little tuber that could
Industrial users of cassava are opening
new vistas for Zambia's farmers



29/12/2020 – by Geetika Bora
**Throughout the camp, houses
lack adequate sanitation**
Water and sanitation infrastructure is



MONTHLY BRIEFING