State, civil society, and the struggle for shelter of the urban poor in Mumbai

Sancharyeeta Adhikari and Kushal Deb

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, Powai, Mumbai-400076, India; Tel. 91-22-2576-4365 (Dept.) Fax: 91-22-2572 3480 email: sadhikari@iitb.ac.in

Keywords: civil society, forced eviction, human rights, India

The urban areas developing rapidly in Third World countries because of massive rural-urban migration and due to internal growth are different from those of their developed counterparts. This huge urban growth, taking place at lower levels of development creates its own complications like acute housing shortages, congestion, and proliferation of slums.

This holds true for the city of Mumbai, which attracts the attention of policy makers not only because of it being the largest urban agglomorate and the financial capital of India, but also because of its infamous slums scattered all over the city. With about 82% of the population living in one-room abodes, Mumbai makes one of the worst places for living especially for the urban poor.

This housing situation blatantly exposes the continuing indifference, neglect and lack of capacity of the government in providing housing and other urban amenities to the poorest sections of the society. This has necessitated civil society interventions in the form of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which are working amongst the urban poor and trying to alleviate their condition.

In their struggle for survival, the urban poor have to wage a daily war to hold on to their tenements, which are often unauthorized settlements on government or private lands. Their presence also offends the middle-class residential blocks whose residents have their own notions of sanitation and hygiene.

The urban poor face constant threats of eviction, frequent demolition of their houses along with destruction of their precious household goods by municipal...
The informal real estate market in favelas and the process of structuring the city

Nelson Baltrusis

Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade de Sao Paulo, Rua Barao do Bananal, 640 ap 31 cod 05024-000, Sao Paulo- SP- Brazil, phone: 55 11 38632029, email: nelsonb@ajato.com.br

Keywords: informal real estate, land tenure, territorial exclusion, favelas

The issue of the informal real estate market is a problematic typical of Third World countries. The dynamic of informality in these countries is related to factors such as a lack of policy tools that provide housing to low-income people and the poor distribution of wealth.

These days, when the much-promoted invisible hand of the market is indicated by many as the panacea for all evils, an understanding of the operations of market that functions at the margin of state regulation can be an important contribution to the debate about the social production of the space and the process of the production of social interest shelter in the country, and even help to establish new relations among the state, market, and demand.

I define the informal real estate market as one sub-market of the formal real estate market. What distinguishes the informal real estate from the formal real estate is its irregularity in legal terms. In talking about favelas, I am referring to a special type of irregular occupation. Favelas are irregular settlements in which
inhabitants do not have ownership title. Favelas occupy areas where the land does not have market value. Generally, these occupations cause environmental and ecological damage. This study seeks to understand the functioning of the informal real estate market in the favelas of the São Paulo Metropolitan Region through an analysis of production, commercialization and renting of irregular residential property in favelas. It gives special emphasis to the relationship between supply and demand with the dynamic of the formal market and urban norms found in our cities. That is, we sought to study relationships such as those between the formal market and the informal market and the process of structuring the city.

Impact of tenure and infrastructure programs on housing conditions: The case of urban slums in India

Banashree Banerjee

Independent Consultant, C-9/9165, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi – 110 070, India, Tel. +91-11-2689 9224, 09810366022, Fax +91-11-2613 5948 email: banashree@mantraonline.com

Keywords: slum upgrading, tenure security, housing investment, "upgradability"

One of the key underpinnings of slum upgrading programs is the widely held view that security of tenure leads to private investment in house building. This together with infrastructure improvements leads to substantial improvements in housing conditions of the poor. This paper uses the insights from research carried out over ten to twelve years in three Indian cities to examine if, and under what conditions this viewpoint is valid.

The findings from New Delhi, Bhopal and Visakhapatnam show that there is no doubt that security of tenure has stimulated considerable private investment in shelter consolidation in squatter settlements; and that service improvements have resulted in visible and immediate change for the better. However, over a longer time period, housing conditions in most settlements have actually deteriorated. The main reasons are that the limits to building are far exceeded in settlements with small plots and narrow streets and the growing population is soon beyond the capacity of the basic minimum services provided. Essential facilities like schools, dispensaries and play spaces can often not be made available for lack of space. Then there are settlements located in floodable areas or steep slopes, in which upgrading of tenure and infrastructure have not given much stimulus to shelter consolidation.

The same cities also provide a handful of examples where things have gone well. The paper looks at these and measures tried out in other Indian cities to establish that long-term impacts are related firstly, to what can be termed as “upgradability” of settlements – site conditions, layout, plot size, space for
social infrastructure; and secondly, to availability of linkages with city infrastructure, periodic upgrading of services and their upkeep through operation and maintenance. Another matter of concern is that buildings and activities invariably fall outside many planning and building regulations, and not enough is done to change regulations to accommodate slum upgrading, resulting in substitution of some dimensions of illegality by others.

The paper argues that tenure security and infrastructure improvement are essential starting points, but it is only by looking beyond immediate results and acting upon its limiting factors that slum upgrading can be considered as a viable option to bring about long-term and sustained improvements in housing environments of the poor. This is particularly important as the Indian Government and international programs such as Cities Alliance look towards up-scaling slum upgrading as a solution for cities without slums.

The informally built space as a means to achieve life chances

Ana Cláudia Cardoso
Departamento de Arquitetura e Urbanismo, Universidade Federal do Pará, Conj. Euclides Figueiredo Rua B, no. 6 cod 66620-640, Belém – PA / Brazil, Tel. 55 91 81120604, email: cardoso@ufpa.br

Keywords: informal settlements' consolidation, life chances, urban form

This paper addresses the issue of precarious integration of informal settlements into the existing city. Despite the recent availability of information about urban growth, land tenure, environmental and poverty issues in the cities of developing countries, little is known about how much the informal origin of consolidated low income areas interferes with their integration into the whole city, and about the contribution of formerly informal space to its inhabitants' life chances over time, as the transformations of consolidation take place.

Conversely, developing countries' top-down strategies of tackling social housing shortages through provision of housing, infrastructure and land only, have prevented the understanding and consideration of: a) the poor's strategies to overcome poverty and their own understanding of poverty; b) the action of other agents rather than inhabitants in the production and improvement of informal settlements; and c) the cycle of assimilation of the informal settlement by the pre-existing city. Furthermore, official action has not been able to acknowledge that the built space has a contribution to the multidisciplinary theme of poverty.

In this sense, this paper presents a method devised to associate the social and the spatial dimensions of informal settlements' consolidation process. From a broader framework, based on the concept of life chances (originated in the social science, history and philosophy fields), the traditional understanding of
The Struggle for Survival / 225

provision was expanded to incorporate inhabitants’ motivations, trade-offs and strategies, and also the potential of physical access generated by the informal settlement built space to urban services and facilities. As an example, physical access, provision conditions and inhabitants’ motivations were investigated through the accurate description and analysis of informal settlements’ pattern of formation and development over time, in a northern Brazilian city called Belém.

Urban morphological approaches and space syntax techniques were taken as tools of analyses due to their appropriateness for investigating underlying structures as well as visible forms of urban growth and change, supplemented by elements of the planning discipline, and by the investigation of a site’s natural attributes. The cross-tabulation and observation of spatial distribution of physical and social variables have shown how local and global spatial scales, combined with timescale and agents’ actions, have affected consolidation within different areas of the city, and how agents have perceived and benefited from the transformations that have occurred.

POUSO Project, Rio de Janeiro

Tania Lima d’Albuquerque e Castro

Municipal Secretariat of Urbanism, Rua Afonso Cavalcanti, 455, sala 1132, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, CEP 20211-901, Brazil, Tel. (55 21) 25032711 & (55 21) 2273 6642, Fax (55 21) 2273 6096, email: tcastro.smu@pcrj.rj.gov.br

Keywords: informality, decentralization, inclusion, participation

Rio de Janeiro, like many other large cities in the world, has suffered from a rapid growth process, and the traditional planning structures have not been able to deal with such a fast development. This process has given rise to the expansion of the informal housing sector through self construction of dwellings in shanty towns, called favelas, where inadequate and often highly dense housing was built in areas lacking proper sewage, water, and drainage systems, as well as urban facilities. Although the Municipal Secretariat of Urbanism of Rio de Janeiro has been traditionally involved in projects and planning activities related to the formal city, in July 2003 it created a new program designed to deal with the regularization of informal settlements. This was the first step to face the informality of a large part of the city nowadays.

The POUSO Project is a Town Hall initiative, through the Secretariat of Urbanism, which was designed to integrate these areas to the city fabric, including those areas in the surrounding neighbourhoods. The idea is settling down a decentralized unit of local authorities in the chosen communities, where a team of professionals works together with the residents, in a participatory methodology. This decentralized unit is called POUSO – Posto de Orientacao Urbanistica e Social, which means Centre for Social and Urban Guidance.
The aim of the project is the establishment of urban land use and occupation laws, taking into consideration the type and height of buildings, the width and slope of the streets and local culture. A point, which is highly emphasized, is respect for the environment and the protected areas.

The whole project takes into account people's needs and desires, and brings up discussions about key issues, such as street nomination, and building laws, and involves people's participation in all its steps.

This project has a high impact on the areas surrounding the favelas as well, and the whole neighbourhood benefits from it. As a result of the success, this project has been established in communities located city-wide, improving the quality of life of neighbourhoods, and bringing economic improvements to the city, as well as promoting social and territorial justice. At the moment, there are 30 units of the POUSO Project established in selected informal settlements, located in different parts of the city, caring for 70 communities, benefiting about 250,000 inhabitants distributed in about 50,000 households.

Corporate participation in programs for the improvement of the built environment in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro

Erico Freitas Ferreira da Costa and Luciana da Silva Andrade


Keywords: social responsibility, corporations, favelas, built environment

In the last twenty years the favelas of Rio de Janeiro have been passing through a consolidation process – the replacement of wooden shacks by masonry houses – a spatial expansion of the agglomerations and an increase in urban density. This process was possible due to the economic crisis and due to the interruption of the removal policy, so common in the seventies. In fact, the urbanization of favelas, introduced in the last decade, supported the idea that these settlements should no longer be removed.

If on the one hand, the favelas' consolidation represented an improvement in the quality of life of its inhabitants, especially when followed by urban intervention, on the other hand, it presented some problems related to the lack of technical counselling. Indeed, it has been noticed that accidents might have
been caused by under dimensioned ladders and that the low ventilation and illumination levels of its houses may result in respiratory diseases in cold or humid seasons.

While the quality of the houses has been nearly forgotten during the social movements against the removal policies, some actions aiming at improvement of life condition in favelas, concerning not only the academic research but also the intervention programs, have been noticed today. Although a large number of Brazilian corporations have already shown their commitment to social causes, their interventions hardly ever tackle the built environment, where poor housing conditions are responsible for prejudice and spatial segregation.

The proposed article discusses the private sector participation in social programs aimed at poor communities as far as the built environment in favelas is concerned. The objective is therefore to show how the social responsibility concept may be inserted into corporate policies in order to help in the development of housing improvement programs to complement the governmental policy.

As part of the article a brief description of the social and physical conditions of Rio de Janeiro’s favelas will be presented. It will be shown how the social corporate concept may be used in the Brazilian case and how feasible corporate interventions are in housing improvements in these communities.

Housing and poor people: Livelihood strategies in Cote d’Ivoire

Maria Teresa Cuonzo
Territorial and Environmental Sciences Department, University of Reggio Calabria, Italy
email: mantecuonzo@hotmail.com

Keywords: slum housing, urban poverty, livelihood strategies

Housing is more than houses and adequate shelter means more than a roof over one's head. (The Habitat Agenda, paragraph 60).

This paper explores the importance of housing for livelihood strategies of the urban poor. It stresses the relationships between places and people in the cities of developing countries. Shelter in urban areas is more than just a place to live, it is also a working place for home-based enterprises and it involves a complex mixture of social, economic and cultural considerations.

But adequate housing is not sufficient without secure tenure on land, or without access to facilities, health care, education and infrastructures, that can support long-term strategies. Accessibility and “rights of access to” are the key factors for livelihood opportunities. The inclusion of the concept of livelihood is one of the most significant changes in the strategies against poverty.

Section one shows that the urban poor have a portfolio of assets, capabilities,
knowledge, skills and livelihood strategies that ensure them some income. The use of the Sustainable Livelihood Approach is important for an understanding of the nature of local livelihoods, what types of livelihood strategies are employed by local people and what factors constrain them from achieving their objectives. The lack of housing is one of them.

The second section focuses on the field-work in Abidjan and in San Pédro slum (Cote d'Ivoire). This section highlights the impacts of globalization on an African city, but also how this phenomenon is received, and its outcomes at social, spatial and urban level. What can be done to assist poor people with their livelihood strategies?

The final section includes some considerations. Future slum policies should incorporate security of tenure and aim to enhance the housing rights of the poor, with specific provisions for poor women, who often haven’t legal rights of house ownership. Poverty eradication interventions need the participation of the people living in poverty, in partnership with the agencies, institutions, social movements, NGOs, CBOs and communities active in this field. The key is “helping strengthen the voice of the poor, instead of speaking in their place” (The Recife Conference).

Challenges to innovative development: State-NGO dynamics of slum improvement in New Delhi, India

Ashok K. Das

Department of Urban Planning, University of California, Los Angeles, 3250 Sawtelle Boulevard, Apt. #207, Los Angeles, CA 90066, U.S.A. Tel. (310)-391-7124, Fax 310-206-5566, email: adas@ucla.edu

Keywords: decentralization, development NGOs, squatter resettlement, India

In the last decade or so, decentralization and good governance have become the rubric of urban planning, development, and management in the developing world. In practical terms, this implies a significant impetus on participatory governance, particularly the enhanced role of NGOs as partners in policymaking and implementation of development projects. Qualities such as dedication, greater access for the poor, and flexibility to innovate have, for quite some time now, been recognized as what make NGOs more effective in improving housing and living conditions of slum dwellers.

Decentralization moves and good governance campaigns by the state, at various levels of government (central, state, and local), are supposed to improve service delivery to the urban poor through better state-civil society (mostly state-NGO) partnerships, as a consequence of an enhanced and formalized space provided for NGOs to participate in slum improvement programs.

However, the assumption that the mere shift to decentralization, and the
official adoption of good governance initiatives at the local level naturally result in better efficiency or productivity in slum upgrading is naïve and refutable. Even with decentralization and good governance, contextually variable factors such as local politics, organizational cultures of local state agencies, leadership of state agencies, capacity and expertise of local NGOs, and history of state-NGO relationships are also crucial in determining the degree of success achieved in slum projects.

In India, the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts (by the Government of India) of 1992 formally ushered in the era of decentralization, and empowering and improving local (municipal) governance by transferring certain welfare and poverty reduction responsibilities from the state (province) level to the municipal level. This paper illustrates how these changes have had little impact in India’s capital city, New Delhi. The paper primarily looks at the experience of an NGO, the Anangpur Building Center (ABC), with the Jaunapur Slum Resettlement Project, which has been internationally recognized as a best practice.

An analysis of past housing and land policies at work in New Delhi, the traditional posturing of state agencies engaged in housing and urban development, and their fractious relationship with NGOs such as the ABC, help us understand the specific context of development in New Delhi, and the challenges that they pose to the efficient implementation of participatory development and good governance initiatives. By looking at state-NGO relationships from the perspective of the NGO, it also illustrates how mere good intention and commitment of NGOs are inadequate for effective outcomes, and that even in new participatory arrangements the state reigns dominant.

Confronting informal urban development in Brazil:
A critical analysis of past and current policies and an assessment of a new experience

Edesio Fernandes and Betania Alfonsin

Fernandes: Development Planning Unit, University of London, 1 Hereford Mansions, Hereford Road, London W2 5BA UK, Tel. +44 20 7221 6952, Fax +44 20 7727 1271 email: edesiofernandes@compuserve.com
Alfonsin: Consultant, Urban Law and Housing Policy, Rua Dr.Barbosa Gonçalves, 106/201, Chacara das Pedras, Porto Alegre - RS – Brazil – 91330320, Tel/ FAX: + 55 51 33343789, email: betania@pro.via-rs.com.br

Keywords: Brazil, land regularization, urban poor, informal urban development

The aim of this paper is two-fold: to provide a general analysis of the main past and current policies adopted in Brazil, at all governmental levels, and to confront the growing phenomenon of informal urban development, as well as to discuss
the innovative policy recently approved by the Municipality Porto Alegre.

Over the last two decades, and more particularly in the last few years, land regularization programs have been gradually formulated and implemented in informal settlements in Brazil by the national, state and local governments. Many important general lessons may already, and must, be learnt from this incipient tradition of urban policies, not only to contribute towards improving the existing experiences in Brazil, but also to guide those governments which are confronting the phenomenon of informal urban development for the first time, in Latin America or in other regions.

The first part of this paper aims to present a brief, critical analysis of such land regularization programs in order to identify their main characteristics and shortcomings, requirements and possibilities. Special emphasis will be placed on a critical discussion of the ground-breaking legal-institutional framework which has been in force in Brazil since the enactment of the internationally acclaimed “City Statute,” the national law on urban policy, and the subsequent creation of the Ministry of Cities. In particular, the paper will explore how several municipalities have attempted to materialize the so-called “Brazilian formula” to promote land regularization, namely, the combination of the demarcation of Special Zones of Social Interest; inclusive urban planning regulations; democratic urban management; and the recognition of individual and/or collective, full and/or restricted property rights.

The second part of the paper aims to discuss how the Municipality of Porto Alegre in Brazil is proposing to go further than the abovementioned “formula,” by bringing the private sector into the regulated production of serviced urban land for the urban poor, through the creation of the so-called “Social Urban Developer” legislation. The paper will discuss the main objectives and requirements of this recent legislation, as well as assessing the necessary conditions for its adequate enforcement.

Regulatory guidelines for urban upgrading: A case study of Peshawar Municipal Corporation

Syed Hamidullah et al.

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Government Postgraduate College, Mardan, Pakistan; in collaboration with the Staff of Pakistan Education Research Council, 48/D, ASC, Nowshera.

Keywords: Pakistan, informal settlements, Peshawar, regulatory guidelines for urban upgrading

A description is presented of how the process of regulatory reform for the upgrading of informal settlements within the Municipal Corporation of Peshawar NWFP is proceeding as part of the research project on regulatory guidelines for urban upgrading. Details are given of why this universe was chosen.
for the project and the livelihoods surveys and Focused Group Discussion already undertaken with the residents of the informal settlements and other key stakeholders of the town. From the surveys and workshops priority for change of the current regulatory framework was identified for the areas of plot sizes, water and sanitation, land allocation and information and communications.

Further studies have looked at the current regulatory frameworks and processes covering these areas, identified their shortcomings in facilitating pro-poor upgrading processes and made proposals for changes. Some possible constraints to the wider adoption within Peshawar and throughout NWFP-Pakistan of the proposed changes in regulation are considered as well as possible ways to address these constraints.

Abuses of unplanned urbanization in Pakistan

Syed Hamidullah et al.

Assistant Professor of Sociology, Government Postgraduate College, MARDAN - Pakistan; in collaboration with the Staff of the Pakistan Education Research Council, 48/D, ASC, Nowshera.

Keywords: Pakistan, unplanned urbanization, Peshawar, rural migrants, infrastructure

Rapid un-controlled urbanization in the developing world including Pakistan is causing mushrooming of cities resulting in a lack of municipal resources with public services falling further and further behind demand. Usually in developing countries there is a lack of financial resources to provide appropriate infrastructure to the sprawling cities. There is no land use planning and zoning to regulate such expansion.

The paper examines the vital causes of rapid urbanization, housing constraints of migrants from rural area and the abuses of unplanned expansion in the capital city of Peshawar District-NWFP, Pakistan.

The study is based on secondary data obtained from various offices of Peshawar Metropolitan Corporation of Housing and Physical Planning Department, Geography / Urban & Regional Planning Department of University of Peshawar etc. For primary data FGD (Focused Group Discussion) techniques, by selecting every zone of unplanned areas in Peshawar Metropolitan Corporation, have been used.

The study reveals that employment, medical facilities, availability of all the amenities of life (infrastructure, schools, markets etc), and formal social relations are vital causes of migration to big cities. The study also reveals that due to lack of development control and unplanned urbanization, the Metropolitan Corporation is incapable of providing appropriate infrastructures and utilities.
In conclusion the research indicates that due to un-planned urbanization future expansion of population will deteriorate the urban environment and place severe strain on social and physical infrastructure.

Social production of habitat: An introduction to the creation and upgrading of habitats in Latin America

Kate Hodal

United Nations Programme for Human Settlements (HABITAT), Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean; Bento Rubião (a human rights Rio-based NGO), Address (UN): Av. Presidente Vargas 3131/1304, Cidade Nova 20210-030 Rio de Janeiro, RJ Brazil, Tel: work (+55 21) 2515-1700; Email: hodal@habitat-lac.org

Keywords: social housing, habitat, upgrading

“Social production of habitat” is a term that was first used in the 1970s to describe a habitational process that combined self-help housing, community betterment, organized planning and motivation, and political action. The practice itself was essentially born out of the fact that not all sectors of society have the same opportunities: social, cultural, economic, political or legal. Faced with restructuring governments, extremely high rates of urbanization, little-to-no low-income housing, few economic opportunities and oversaturated job markets, many Latin Americans living in or migrating to the ever-increasing urban habitat found themselves amidst institutional voids. Lacking governmental aid and amid growing rates of homelessness, these people took care of their situations the best way they knew how. For many suffering from shortages of affordable housing, that meant creating their own housing.

Some of these settlements were planned and some were legal; many were not. Those that were planned, organized, structured, and having clear and feasible goals are examples of Social Production of Habitat. These habitats focus on democratic decision-making, the socialization of responsibilities, mutual aid (not profit), and auto-production. Actors can include either the community members themselves or outside support organizations (such as faith-based institutions, non-governmental organizations, political organizations, or international cooperation), ranging in effect from providing social and political inclusion in the city proper, to generating greater and better economic opportunities by providing secure tenure. Any and all of these improvements may be considered a collective initiative to improve the urban habitat.

1. Secure tenure is defined as “the right of all individuals and groups to effective protection by the State against forced evictions,” provided by either evidence of documentation or de facto protection. (UN-HABITAT, “Guide to Monitoring Target 11: Improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers,” UNCHS: Nairobi, May 2003).
This practice, focusing on self-help and initiative, has been lauded by professionals in the housing field as the best and longest-lasting alternative to the razing, relocation, or overall ignoring of informal settlements. It is also a means of involving society at large, via volunteer groups, NGOs, faith-based organizations, communities and authorities (city, state, or national governments) in investing in social welfare.

This social and economic investment is currently under scrutiny by a joint study put on by HIC (Habitat International Coalition) and NOVIB (a Dutch-based NGO), the investigation for which this UN-based research on Social Production of Habitat was timed to increase not only the literature on the practice, but also to clarify what the term means and entails. Indeed, while based primarily in Latin America, social production of habitat is rampant the world over, found in Africa, North America, and Asia, with each country and region having its own foci and concerns.

Socially productive and economically feasible, social production of habitat is a practice that must be recognized as a responsible government and social reply to increasing urbanization, decreasing housing funds and an overall social apathy about the uncertain future of millions of urban (and increasingly homeless) residents.

Factors that affect the development of self-build housing in Nairobi, Kenya

Peter K. Kamau and Kenjiro Omura

Doctoral Program in Policy and Planning Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Land-use Research Unit, University of Tsukuba, Japan. Tel/Fax 81-298-53-5227, mobile: 81-90-6142-3952, Email: kamaupk@sk.tsukuba.ac.jp ;
Professor, Institute of Policy and Planning Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Land-use Research Unit, University of Tsukuba, Japan. Tel/Fax 81-298-53-5227, Email: omura@sk.tsukuba.ac.jp

Keywords: self-builders, land tenure, infrastructure, housing finance

Urban housing provision has become one of the key development challenges for most developing countries. Scholars and researchers in housing development have shown that the percentage of people living in slums and squatter settlements continues to rise. In Kenya, the percentage has grown from less than 50% a decade ago to over 60% currently.

Kenya's urban population growth rate has over the past two decades far outstripped the development of public housing, which was the major source of housing especially for low-income urban residents. This has led to the growth of slums and squatter settlements, not only in Nairobi, but also in all other major urban centres of the country. In the few planned low-income housing
areas such as the so-called site and services scheme, conditions have continued to deteriorate due to excess capacity caused by large room occupancy rates, house extensions, and illegal development of available open spaces.

This is attributable to the fact that most housing especially in the low income sector is continually being built by people on their own ("the self-builders") with little or no regard for land tenure, infrastructure, or planning regulations. Even though considered informal, this study acknowledges self-build housing as an important source of low-income urban housing and analyzes the key factors that affect its development with a view to suggesting ways in which it can be formalized and encouraged. So long as the urban housing deficit continues to increase, self-build housing will continue to play a key role either informally or formally as it is more affordable due to the spreading out of plot purchase and construction costs depending on the income level of the self-builder.

A case study involving 176 self-builders in three areas of the city of Nairobi, Kenya, reveals that the key land-use factors that negatively affect self-build housing include land tenure, basic infrastructure, and financing. Preliminary results show that the land tenure system is outdated and inflexible. Lack of a clear land tenure and land-use planning process has discouraged financing for self-build housing.

To make people more capable of developing their own houses, as an alternative to public housing, there is an urgent need for harmonization and the formalization of land tenure and review of land-use planning approach. These two factors are shown to have a significant impact on future investment in housing by both self-builders and private sector developers.

The informal housing market in low-income settlements,
Cape Town, South Africa

Aly H. Karam

School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, Tel. 27 11 717 7707, Fax 27 11 717 7739, karama@archplan.wits.ac.za

Keywords: informal markets, Cape Town, low-income settlements

One of the primary benefits of homeownership in an expanding market economy is that of wealth creation through the capital appreciation of the dwelling unit. In many market economies, homeowners have most of their personal wealth tied up in the house in which they live. This is one of the main reasons why homeownership is regarded as preferable to rental. The housing subsidy in South Africa is built on the premise of building units for the amount of the subsidy following the model of one-house, one-plot, and giving them to people in the lowest income group. While the selling of non-subsidized properties by
wealthier homeowners is an accepted practice in the property market, it does raise important and new questions in the case of the subsidized housing market. Selling of subsidized units, in many instances, starts within months of taking possession of the unit and at a price below the replacement value. How prevalent are the sales of subsidized housing? How are the units sold legally or illegally? What is the process by which the transaction occurs? What documentation do buyers and sellers get to confirm the transaction? For how much are the units being valued on that market? These are some of the questions that are addressed in this attempt to understand the phenomenon and its replications.

The study was conducted in the Cape Town Metropolitan area; the data was gathered from two main sources. The first and foremost was from a field survey conducted in two low-income subsidized housing settlements. The second source involved formally interviewing a group of persons directly involved in the housing delivery, officials and people working in Non Government Organizations.

One important finding was that most of the transactions happening with the subsidized housing are illegal transactions. The research also shows that the benefits gained by homeownership in the low-income communities does not lead to secure tenure and does not render the same benefits as middle and high-income unsubsidized homeownership. These findings should stimulate the government to introduce new legislation to curb the sales. The legislation should be directed towards more appropriate housing options and alternatives to homeownership.

Improving access to adequate and affordable housing for the urban poor through an integrated approach

Michael Majale

School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, Global Urban Research Unit, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK Tel. +44 (0)191 222 7482, Fax +44 (0)191 222 6000, email: m.m.majale@ncl.ac.uk

Keywords: affordable housing, urban poor, sustainable livelihoods

The South is urbanizing at an unprecedented rate. Occurring concurrently with the accelerated urban growth is what is now commonly referred to as the “urbanization of poverty” – the fact that a rapidly increasing proportion of the world’s poor are to be found in cities and towns. An ever-rising number of urban poor households are thus seeking low-cost housing within their means. This has resulted in a proliferation and expansion of densely populated and overcrowded informal settlements characterized by inadequate infrastructure (water, sanitation, drainage, waste management, and access roads and footpaths), and poor building and housing conditions.
In many cases, more than half of the population live and work in these unhygienic, hazardous environments where they face multiple threats to their health, well being and security. Moreover, most Southern nations cannot provide sufficient employment opportunities for the rapidly growing number of new entrants to the urban labour market each year. A substantial proportion of women and men living and working in informal settlements are thus unemployed or underemployed in the informal sector, earning low incomes for long hours of work. And a majority consequently find themselves unable to afford the cost of adequate shelter.

Early interventions by Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) aimed to improve poor people's shelter conditions in rural areas through the use of appropriate building technologies. However, recognizing that poor households in cities and towns were facing an even bigger housing problem, ITDG shifted its focus to urban areas.

Subsequent participatory action research projects have substantiated the complexity and multidimensionality of urban poverty, and shown that a single sector approach cannot sustainably improve the shelter conditions of those living in poverty in cities and towns. ITDG has learned that improving urban poor people's housing (physical capital) through the use of alternative building materials in urban areas involves not only a review of standards and regulatory frameworks, but also building human capital through skills upgrading, strengthening community-based groups and empowering local communities (social and political capital), and facilitating access to credit (financial capital).

The paper reviews the evolution of ITDG's interventions from a single sector, appropriate building technologies perspective to an integrated sustainable livelihoods approach to improving access to adequate and affordable housing for the urban poor.

From policy to practice: The World Bank approach to secure tenure in urban upgrading

Balakrishna Menon

The World Bank, Jakarta Stock Exchange Building Tower 2, SCBD, Jl. Jendral Sudirman Kav. 52-53, Jakarta, Indonesia-12190, Tel.: 61-21-5299 3144; fax: 62-21-5299 3111; email: bmenonparameswar@worldbank.org

Keywords: shelter, slum upgrading, tenure security, World Bank

Consistent with an “enabling” approach, the World Bank has mainstreamed slum upgrading – often referred to as urban upgrading, or upgrading – as a strategy to address the problems of shelter and services for urban poor in developing countries. Typically, Bank-financed upgrading projects extended basic standards of on-site infrastructure to existing low-income settlements and pro-
vided secure tenure, where conditions permitted. These were often complemented with loans to slum households for housing improvements or income generation activities.

In the three decades of operationalizing this strategy, the Bank has travelled far in perfecting a sustainable model of progressive self-help housing for the urban poor. At the policy level, upgrading has become widely accepted as a more cost-effective and socially acceptable shelter strategy than the previously customary practice of slum clearance and relocation policies.

The only area where this record appears anything less than stellar is in tenure regularization. Although thousands of slum households have obtained legal tenure through these projects, the World Bank’s policy and practice with regard to tenure regularization under the upgrading banner have come across as ad hoc and opportunistic. The benefits of formal tenure abound in Bank’s literature. Formal tenure removes risks of eviction, encourages households to invest more in their homes, provides dwellers with access to formal credit, enables households to realize more land market gains and rental incomes, and allows municipal governments to regularize informal settlements and facilitate property taxation. Yet, provision of formal (legal) land tenure has been an objective in less than half of the Bank projects concerning urban poor, although most projects have aimed at some form of informal, de facto land rights.

Land issues, especially those related to tenure, are among the most difficult to resolve during on-site upgrading. For example, legal registration of land ownership is almost a colonial concept in many developing countries, political will to address tenure is difficult to come by, ownership arrangements of upgrading sites can be complex and unclear, de facto arrangements providing less than legal title often create the minimum needed security, and twinning land titling with infrastructure upgrading can impair financial sustainability of projects. Thus, although the Bank has promoted tenure regularization as an integral part of upgrading, in reality, many projects de-linked formal land titling from infrastructure improvements. This approach was justified by the desirability of improving living conditions for large numbers of families in a relatively short period of time. The wisdom of such an approach is of course, moot.

This paper traces the policy and practice of the World Bank with regard to tenure regularization and titling under Bank-financed slum upgrading projects from the early-1970s to the mid-1990s. It examines the evolving thinking within the Bank during this period and provides a critique of the approach that Bank-supported upgrading projects have taken across various countries and at various times and analyzes the institutional imperatives that has led the World Bank to pursue such an approach.
Cities in developing countries are known for their informal delivery of housing for low-income groups. Physically, the informal model, typically, consists of undeveloped, individual land-lots with deficient, or even non-existent, infrastructure, and the residents incrementally expand their housing over time. But such housing settlements also exist in the United States, and are classified by federal regulations as colonias. Around half a million people, many U.S. citizens, live in such settlements, particularly in the poorer counties along the border with Mexico. Most of the recognized colonias are in Texas and Arizona. But the State of California has also identified fifteen colonias in Imperial County, a border county. Another settlement is in the process of being designated as a colonia in San Diego County.

In this paper, I present a preliminary assessment of California's colonias. It is part of a larger research project. I focus on two sets of key questions and issues:

1. How are the colonias in California formed? Who are the key actors involved in the colonia formation process? How do state policies, including the regulatory framework, allow the formation of colonias? How do private developers plan and manage the development process? How do potential buyers find out about colonias? Are there middlemen like brokers? How do the buyers make their payments? Are there opportunities for housing loans and payments on installments?

2. How do California's colonias compare with the colonias in Texas, and the informal settlements in the developing world? Do residents of the state's colonias have formal security of tenure? What are the physical characteristics – settlement size, lot-size and density, build-out, street layout of the colonias? Are there active community-based organizations? How is the quality of life, including amenities, infrastructure and services, in the colonias? How well connected – physically and socially – are the colonias to other developments? Are living conditions within the different colonias similar?

The paper is based on ongoing research. I will draw from secondary sources (literature reviews) and primary data (ethnographic fieldwork, physical surveys, and open-ended interviews, including extensive interviews with a student who was born, and grew up, in a California colonia) to answer the above questions. I will also include a discussion of the region's housing market (spe-
The urban informal sector and environmental health policy in Nigeria

Geoffrey I. Nwaka

Professor, Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria, Geoffrey Nwaka <geoffrey-nwaka@yahoo.com>

Keywords: Nigeria, informal economy, urban poor

This paper tries to relate the general debates about the informal economy to the wider concern for urban poverty reduction and sustainable development. It reviews the stages in the development of the urban informal sector in Nigeria, and highlights the complex links and interactions in the formal-informal sector continuum. It also examines the shifts in development thinking and official attitudes to the informal sector, especially with the increased informalization of urban activities in the 1980s and 90s as part of the restructuring strategy of the formal public and private sectors to cope with the general economic crisis. It concludes with some suggestions on the options open to government and the development community in general for harmonizing the concern for urban development with that for environmental sustainability.

Even those who idealize the informal sector and its potential recognize that it is at best a mixed blessing. Informal enterprises, especially those located in residential areas pose real public health hazards, even more so for those of low income who cannot afford the cost of health care than for the well-off groups who tend to monopolize the health and environmental services that are available. The policy dilemma then is how best to contain the adverse environmental impact of informal activities without disrupting their productivity, and how public policy can promote environmental consciousness as well as the quality, competitiveness and profitability of informal sector businesses, and at the same time protect the vulnerable groups in that sector, especially women and children, from harm and exploitation.

The paper will briefly examine in selected Nigerian cities the range and scale of informal sector enterprises, the environmental problems they face, and past policy failures to redress the situation. Special attention will be paid to the misguided campaign of the mid-1980s to outlaw and repress small businesses during the so-called “War Against Environmental Indiscipline” under the military. The aim is to identify the lessons that could help promote a more positive view and policy regarding the sector.

The study suggests that what is needed in urban management is not less gov-
ernment, less control, or mindless deregulation of economic and related activities, but a more enlightened, more participatory and more effective form of state intervention that would eliminate needless restrictions, and provide a more appropriate and flexible regulatory framework, compatible with local conditions, but still environmentally safe and responsible. In this regard, the paper considers the need to improve the capacity of state and local authorities, and relates this to the current advocacy for “institutional reconciliation” which seeks to promote partnership, and to correct the “structural and functional disconnect between informal, indigenous institutions rooted in the regions history and culture, and formal institutions mostly transplanted from outside” (Dia, 1996). How can the positive attributes of the informal sector and other non-formal institutions of civil-society be harnessed and enlisted in the current campaign to reduce urban poverty and promote good governance and economic recovery? How can the agencies for development assistance such as the World Bank adjust the ways they operate so that they can more effectively support and strengthen these local institutions which relate more closely to the needs and priorities of the urban poor?

Nairobi’s Mathare Valley informal housing upgrading: Factors that continue to hinder these efforts

Crispino C. Ochieng

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Code 00510, P.O box 17342, Nairobi, Kenya Telephone: +254 722 725282

Keywords: sitting residents, landlords, upgrading

Data was collected over six months. This was done using a qualitative case study method. It involved an in-depth study of the controversial informal housing upgrading in Mathare, aka Mathare 4A, Nairobi. Selection of the method was based on the fact that it would offer the researcher an opportunity to study the upgrading program in details.

In 2003, the researcher spent a considerable amount of time within the upgrading site. This would be marked by breaks that would be caused by some of the disturbances due to the upgrading. Some of the major players – for example slumlords, local politicians, opinion makers, non-Catholic Church leaders – had been left out of the planning exercise. They had their reservations on this. They would organize for violent protests.

Outsiders were not readily welcomed to the site. They were suspected of being part of the housing actors. Research had to cultivate the way into the upgrading. This came through a relative who was one of the community members. Through him the researcher explained the objectives of the research to elected community leaders. Notwithstanding this, the relative and/or at times
his friends would have to accompany the researcher throughout the period that he would be within the vicinity of the upgrading.

While within the project and its neighbourhood, the researcher would frequent some of the popular places, for example, the drinking places, points where people would come together to spend the better part of their day while involved in activities like table games. At times the researcher would have to spend some money to buy drinks for the group. The researcher would also arrange through others to be present during community meetings.

To collect data, different techniques were employed. They included discussions with people at different levels, observations of ongoing activities and photography. The technique ensured that the researcher did not impose his judgment on the community.

As the data was being collected it was analyzed by interpretation. During this, themes, constructs, and patterns were identified and used to explain the events. This has been communicated in forms of narration and pictures.

Squatter settlements and the trajectories of social exclusion in Eritrea: The case study of Asmara

Petros B. Ogbazghi

University of Tilburg, Warandelaan 2, P.O. Box 90153, 5000LE, Tilburg, The Netherlands, Tel. 013 466 2556; Fax. 013 466 3015, E-mail: petersoba@yahoo.com

Keywords: social exclusion, colonialism, squatter settlements, sub-Saharan Africa

A fundamental feature common to colonial cities in sub-Saharan Africa was the process of social exclusion, involving a racial divide between "Whites" and "Natives." This legacy of socio-economic and political exclusion has had far-reaching impacts upon urban dwellers, urbanization, administrative, physical and spatial processes, and the overall level of people's welfare.

The article aims to understand squatter settlements in the city of Asmara from the analytical approach of social exclusion. It is argued that the concept of social exclusion is helpful to the understanding of the problems of squatters from the multiple dimensions of socio-political exclusion, in contrast to the one-dimensional poverty analysis.

Using the case study approach, the article will analyze and describe the pattern and nature of social exclusion and its impacts on the squatter neighbourhoods. This requires locating social exclusion in a historical perspective, and identifying the processes and institutions that have shaped urbanization, urban planning, architectural and housing designs, and the conditions of city life during the different colonial periods.

A part from the absence of racial divide in the city, squatters are the residents of excluded neighbourhoods who face constraints of access to social services
and goods, of which shelter is the most basic. The vast differences in the quality and quantity of services in the squatter settlements and the mainstream city continue with a similar pattern to that evident during colonial times. Moreover, the analytical and descriptive findings have elucidated the problems of the squatter settlements and the implications that these challenges pose for urban and national housing policy authorities.

It is concluded that the concept of social exclusion is an appropriate conceptual tool for the analysis of urban problems in sub-Saharan Africa, which involve multiple problems, many of which are imbedded in historic colonial processes. Moreover, effective and responsive urban planning and policy cannot be realized without reintegrating squatters to mainstream city.

Socio-political imperatives of land invasion and eviction: Revisiting the Bredell case, Johannesburg, South Africa

Olusola Olufemi

Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, solaoluf@yahoo.com

Keywords: land invasion, homelessness, eviction, socio-political trends

Land invasion is one of the alternative tactics that the poor, powerless and homeless people adopt to access land on which to build their shelter. Land invasion by the homeless people is a consequence of desperation for space to put up a shelter. It occurs spontaneously and is not disappearing in the city fabric. Land invasion continues unabated because the poor homeless people lack the resources to build their shelter formally and legally. Hence, they resort to non-formal and illegal means to access land to build their shacks. It is no longer possible to underestimate the pervasiveness of poverty in our human settlements with resultant invasion and re-invasion of land and buildings by the poor or destitute homeless people in the urban areas. Land invasion and eviction still remains a challenge for land, housing and planning policy makers.

This paper looks at the Bredell invasion and eviction incidents in Johannesburg, South Africa. It discusses the socio-political imperatives of land invasion and eviction; and the responses by the relevant multiple players such as the homeless people, the government, the media, faith-based organizations, and civil society.

The paper argues that the often ignored powerful socio-cultural and political imperatives of accessibility to land and housing, coupled with the vested interests of a number of players involved in the process of land invasion and eviction, often result into ineffective responses.

The usual approach to land invasion remains eviction or relocation. An approach that de-emphasizes non-participation and manipulation is pertinent.
Such an approach should be proactive, socio-politically correct and incorporate the interests of the relevant players in the land invasion and eviction issue.

Conceptual and theoretical developments in the self-help housing: A case for housing networks analysis

Alfred Omenya

School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; E-mail: aomenya2002@yahoo.co.uk

Keywords: housing theory, self-help housing, social networks, urban network studies

This paper outlines the evolution of theories applied to housing inadequacies in developing countries, from “modernization,” Turner’s phenomenological approaches, through the neo-liberal and neo-Marxist divide, to theories and concepts that have gone beyond that divide. The paper unpacks the current scenario of theories applied to housing, dominated by theoretical and conceptual eclecticism, with few meta-narratives, e.g., globalization, outlining advantages and disadvantages of the scenario. The paper argues for more nuances in contextual explanation of housing inadequacies, based on contextually appropriate and consistent application of “coalition” of “relevant” concepts.

The next section of the paper is dedicated to the analysis of the production of self-help housing in Kenya and South Africa. The former was characterized by colonial mercantilism, post-independence laissez-faire capitalism, the collapse of welfare under free-market economics, weak housing policies, high inflation, and the extreme exploitation of individuals through self-help. The latter was shaped by apartheid capitalism, redistribution under neo-liberal economic frame, strongly articulated policy frameworks, resulting in distortion of self-help housing. In both instances the policies are unlikely to achieve the desired results, mainly because of “policy abstractionism.”

The next section of the paper develops a case for an analytical framework for self-help housing in Kenya and South Africa, based on networks. It revisits the early network concepts associated with Turner: housing as a system. It develops these concepts further, by borrowing from networks in sociology and economics. It considers “glocalization” and discusses the contradiction between public and private consumption, in self-help from a “network perspective.” It revisits the issue of social networks, in the context of housing, arguing that these build communities, but are distorted in a neo-liberal policy frame.

The paper investigates the interactions between actors and agents with institutions, suggesting that the webs of relationships they form – which can also be spaces for negotiations – are open to manipulation. The paper then unpacks the relationships between the state, the market, and the civil society, suggesting that
the three groups are made of different actors, who relate in different ways, from a simple tripartite one in very structured systems, e.g., apartheid South Africa, to a “mesh” in less structured systems, e.g., Moi’s Kenya. The paper then expounds on the contribution to housing networks from “urban network studies.”

The paper concludes with specific recommendations for self-help housing studies, based on network analysis in Kenya and South Africa, e.g., to help avoid abstract policy; desegregate policy framework; develop institutional thickness; remove “weak links”; mitigate exploitative relationships; develop reciprocal relationships; reintroduce complexity in analysis of self-help housing and develop policies that optimize resource use, among others.

Note: This paper was developed in collaboration with Harry Smith and Paul Jenkins of Heriot-Watt University, who have researched aspects of housing networks in Costa Rica and under the supervision of Dr. Huchzermeyer.

Land for housing in African cities: Do informal delivery systems provide land for the poor?

Carole Rakodi

International Development Department, School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, UK, email: c.rakodi@bham.ac.uk

Keywords: informal settlement, Anglophone Africa, informal land delivery, rural-urban migration

Since the 1960s in most African cities, the increase in urban population has been accommodated by so-called “informal settlement.” In the early years of rapid rural-urban migration, many poor households were able to get access to land to manage the construction of their own houses for little or no payment, through “squatting” and similar arrangements. This paper will report on some of the findings from a current research project, which has examined contemporary informal land delivery systems in several medium-sized cities in Anglophone Africa.

In particular, the studies examined why informal land delivery arrangements continue to deliver more land for residential use than state land allocation or other arrangements that comply with formal regulatory requirements, and whether the land provided is accessible to the poor, with a view to exploring the policy implications of the findings. A variety of systems of informal land delivery were identified. Some relate to land held under customary tenure arrangements and depend on roles adopted by the customary authorities, with or without the approval or tolerance of the public authorities (e.g. in Enugu, Nigeria; Gaborone, Botswana; Kampala, Uganda; and Maseru, Lesotho). Others are closer to private market arrangements between buyers and sellers,
although they do not share all the economic or regulatory characteristics of the formal private market (e.g., Kampala, Uganda; Eldoret, Kenya).

In all cases, however, the land delivery systems reveal increased interaction and often mutual adaptation between the informal and formal systems and increased commercialization. The latter has, in most cases, placed new land for residential development beyond the reach of the poor, although some of the channels through which land can be accessed still enable a minority of poor people to acquire land for construction of their own houses. Some of these will be identified in the paper.

Informal housing in urban situations in developing countries: A case study in New Delhi

Vijay K. Saluja

New Delhi Municipal Council

Keywords: New Delhi, India, slums, quality of life

Informal housing – slums, temporary settlements are very common features of all the urban landscapes in any developing country and India is no exception. Large scale migration from rural areas and hinterlands of mega cities in particular, is one of the prime reasons for population increase in the cities. The typical profile of the migrants is – semi educated/uneducated, unemployed, labourer in construction sector / industry, etc.

Since slum dwellers are powerless, various political parties/slum lords of the settlements in which they live assume a significant role in the slum dwellers' lives. With the passage of time, they become strong vote banks of various political parties. They also become a source of illegal money for some of the municipal employees, corporations, etc., as their slum settlements are unauthorized on the vacant government land.

Insecurity of tenure, lack of basic services and infrastructure, proliferation of illegal activities are the common features of these settlements/housing. Though most of the residents play important parts in the economy of the city, providing services in the neighbourhood, they remain neglected. Insensitivity of the judiciary and bureaucracy and delay in the judicial process aggravate their problems. Recurrent fires, diseases, evictions at short notice are big sources of harassment of the large percentage of population in these settlements.

This paper will discuss in detail various ways to bring about better quality of life in these chaotic areas of urban settlement with particular reference to New Delhi, India.
Paradigm shift: Improving future slum policies in developing countries using prediction

Remy Sietchiping

Department of Geography and Geology, The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Kingston 7, Jamaica, Tel. (876) 927 2728, Fax (876) 977 6029, email: remy.sietchiping@uwiona.edu.jm

Keywords: slum policies, prediction, urban planning

In cities of developing countries (DCs), slums are fast becoming major spatial manifestations of urbanization and poverty. The United Nations Habitat reports that slum areas in DCs’ cities are steadily increasing: from 30% in the 1960, to 60% in 1990 and 78% in 2001.

Specifically, since the 1960s, different policies have been attempted to contain the expansion of slums and mitigate their social, economical, environment impacts. These policies include laissez-faire responses, slum clearance, “sites-and-services” approaches, upgrading, security of tenure, and “city without slums” plans.

Recent study indicates, however, that these policies have consistently failed in many areas, such as reducing the proliferation of slums. This successive failure constitutes a serious challenge to urban management in DCs, has negative and profound implications on slums settlements and slum dwellers, and raises issues of urban sustainability. This failure calls for the development of new strategies that incorporate long-term prospects of spatial extension, which represents an important step forward to achieve a comprehensive and effective slum policy.

This paper assesses existing slum policies and strategies and identifies their weaknesses. Particularly, these slum policies have, so far, been concerned with short-term measures to address the issue of slum emergence and growth. Additionally, urban planners are overwhelmed by the magnitude of slum expansion and ill informed of the past, current and future trends of slum growth.

In light of such inadequacies, the paper suggests that future strategies to understand and manage slum growth should consider a prospective approach in the policy formulation and implementation.

The paper proposes that one of the most effective ways to address the housing crisis that affects the majority of urban dwellers in DCs is to develop tools such as modelling and simulation that would help represent and predict the spatial and temporal behaviour of unplanned developments. Such modelling and simulation tools would assist in the development of long-term strategic planning for slum management.

The paper finally demonstrates how these propositions constitute an impor-
The Struggle for Survival / 247

tant shift in the way in which slum policies will be enacted and could contribute
a great deal in the monitoring and prevention of slum occurrence and expan-

Disputing security of land tenure in low-income housing
settlements in Brazil

Flavio A. M. de Souza
Universidade Federal de Alagoas, Departamento de Arquitetura e Urbanismo,
Campus A C simoes, Tabuleiro, Maceio, AL Brazil, CEP 57072-970, Tel. 55 82
2141283, Fax 55 82 2141625; email: fdesouza@ctec.ufal.br;

Keywords: security of land tenure, disputed security, Brazil

The rapid urbanization process of developing countries in the 1960s and 1970s
has intensified pressures on the use of resources at rates that demanded alterna-
tive solutions beyond local capacities. For example, the number of jobs that
needed to be created to accommodate the unskilled migrants was a task that
proved to be impossible to accomplish.

As a result of this, the poor were left with very few feasible alternatives to
access affordable land for housing. Therefore, most urban housing land that the
poor have accessed in Brazil is in some way illegal and is subject to tenure dis-

The failure of centralized state interventions until the 1980s were largely
documented. And, with the re-opening of democracy in Brazil, alternative
solutions were initiated with some degree of success. Among these, a promising
approach initiated at the end of the 1980s aimed at accommodating the urban
poor in their existing housing settlements, in recognition of rights to use land
for social housing (albeit their present illegal/informal situation). But system-
atic analysis of these programs is still lacking, and this study contributes to
discussion in the limited extant literature.

For example, access to urban land for housing has been a major issue for the
vast majority of poor families in most developing countries in the last decades.
Most recently, the issues related to access to urban land are more acute, espe-

cially because serviced land or partially serviced land became a highly disputed
commodity in the markets. In addition, the demand for clear titles on the part
of the markets has intensified access issues, and most importantly for the pur-
poses of this paper, the duration of permanence of the great majority of this
population.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate the effectiveness of legal
instruments to serve as guarantee for households of disputed land that their
permanence in their legalized lots is secure, and that investments are perceived to be permanent. It investigates the case of Recife and Porto Alegre in Brazil to illustrate the issue and conclusions are drawn on the use of CRRU instrument to secure land tenure for households living in legalized urban land.