open
city Lagos

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Editorial – Open City Lagos

Cities stand out as the most open format of human settlements in recorded history. Their propensity for absorption lends them an infrastructural complexity, such that they are able to accommodate diverse social identities, spatial densities, as well as the potential for political mobilisation and economies of scale. Yet despite their reputation and persisting allure, cities are neither intrinsically inclusive nor democratic. Affordability, work permits and more systemic or locational factors such as transport connectivity or gender perceptions come into play in determining who has access to the city, for how long and on what terms. Investment in infrastructure and economic policies directed to encourage growth can create difficulties for smaller players who struggle to sustain their livelihoods in an increasingly global marketplace. Environmental hazards often disproportionally affect the poor and other disadvantaged groups who tend to cluster in sub-standard housing in the under-serviced margins and the blackholes of the city. In short, admittance to the city is not synonymous with equal provision of the cushions and benefits of urbanisation.

And nowhere is this more blatant than in cities of the South, where "the legacy of an incomplete modernity" coupled with limited municipal capacities and all the challenges that 21st century brings have typified cities marked by deficits in affordable housing, transport and road infrastructure, electricity, and facing severe challenges in education, healthcare and more. This is the typical narrative of the African city – an inventory of urban ills, more recently marked by an eager optimism that earmarks sites of innovation and investment.

Take the example of Lagos: only a few years ago, Lagos was characterized as a chaotic, dysfunctional city. Still, some researchers argued that the seeming dysfunction had its own internal mechanisms maintaining an interethnic, interreligious and social equilibrium. Despite the apparent chaos - mainly due to infrastructural neglect – strong neighborhood communities existed where young and old, rich and poor, Muslims and Christians and the diverse ethnic and West African identities lived closely together supporting and benefitting from each other.

As a city, Lagos has gone through multiple face-changing mandates, each alluding to the mode and extent of its openness. Broadly speaking, colonial strategies were quite straightforward. Governance was centered on economic expansion with an emphasis placed on industry, whilst urban development was ostensibly motivated by the wish to enforce sanitation, prevent environmental mishaps and limit the spread of communicable diseases such as typhoid and malaria in preserved areas. Thus infrastructure provision concentrated on the development of roads, railways and ports strategic to trade – such as the Iddo railway terminus and the deepening of berthing docks at Apapa – with serious negligence of the local community. Few if any concerted attempts were made to plan the indigenous areas of the city. It was not until an outbreak of the Bubonic Plague in 1928, that the Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) was established and given extensive powers to undertake comprehensive improvement schemes within the city's limits.

Fast-forward through several decades of partially delivered master-planning and ad-hoc development against broad and pervasive informal city-making. 1999 saw the ushering in of a new style of urban governance, characterised by fiscal restructuring and resource mobilisation, an expanded portfolio of public-private partnerships, a concentration on spatial planning, as well as the prioritisation of service delivery in transportation, education and primary healthcare.

Like other cities of the global South and emerging economies, Lagos has embraced model city approaches, welcomed new technologies and increasingly gears its fiscal planning towards private and foreign direct investment. The consequences are improved infrastructural standards, greater capital flows and new sectors of growth, which the fast-growing city does need. But it

also means higher indices for exclusion and inequality in areas skewed against investment. Gated communities are being created for middle and high income class excluding the poor; low income jobs and housing are being destroyed to upgrade infrastructure; gigantic infrastructural projects destroy the fragile ecological systems along the Lagoon and coast. This risks deepening social and economic segregation of the populace due to dwindling resources and opportunities and could easily result in increased tension and conflict with tremendous negative impacts on its socio-economic development not only for the city, but also Nigeria and the whole West African region, already destabilized by climate stress, migration and terror movements. This risk is heightened by the increasing numbers of low income migrants coming to Lagos on a daily basis.

How should Lagos city define its concept of openness in a changing environment? What does "openness" really mean for a city?

In his curatorial statement for the 4th international IABR in 2009, ETH-Zurich Professor Kees Christiaanse defined the 'open city' as "a place where different social groups co-exist, cultural diversity is present, differences in scale are visible, and urban innovation and probably economic development are taking place." He goes on to note that the resulting effects of these intersections should have a largely positive effect before we can speak of a city as being "open".

It is a similar philosophy of urban space, community and development that Open City Lagos subscribes to, with adaptations made to align our definition with the conditions and priorities of Lagos and other cities in the global South. The 'open city' is not a place but a quality where players from different scales and sectors come together to foster growth that is diverse, equitable, creative, sustainable and inclusive. Its indicators are diverse - from migrants' experience to questions of mobility and boundaries, the status of public health, access to housing and basic urban services, and the ability to influence policy or to participate in decision-making processes that affect one's livelihood or well-being.

Open City Lagos is a conversation enacted across Lagos and with other cities, with a focus on the day-to-day experiences, grassroots initiatives and new opportunities for development and inclusion. As a project, it is an attempt to re-discover the instances and mechanisms that encourage people from diverse social, ethnic and religious backgrounds to interact and to commonly make use of limited resources with the effect of increasing their personal and collective good. We hope to initiate a public reflection on how individuals and communities through their actions, complemented by the government's urban policies, can enforce these opportunities.

To break the ice, we asked people across the city to identify and document such open moments, spaces and strategies in Lagos. Their responses, featured here in this publication, are vignettes of the city and of city fragments that depict what openness could be and where it can and does exist. Rather than rosy depictions, many countered the very idea of equity and an ease of inclusion. Instead impressions and evidences received pointed to a city of survival, concentrating on economic opportunities, in some cases, at the expense of commonness, social values and mutual support. Yet even at that, there was an underlying notion that Lagos remains a city that caters to all – albeit unequally – and that models of openness must adapt to the realities of urban life, constraints and ideologies in order to thrive in Lagos. One example of this is in the identification of 'public space' which feature in formal planning more readily as enclosed green spaces with out proper pedestrian access or clear relation to the immediate context. Where spatial publics do exist there are more dispersed, impermanent spaces, often with interchangeable, layered uses by several actors, and signalling collective forms of adaptation and appropriation. But the debate around their recognition and viability as socio-spatial constructs that abide with the inclinations and needs of the neighbourhoods they serve has not been substantively taken up in the discourse.

But the research in Lagos has just started and is still at its infancy. We therefore invited scholars and practitioners from other cities to share similar instances from their city and to describe the processes of both citizens' engagement and deliberate government interventions and their interactions that create, sustain or jeopardise opportunities for cultural and social exchange and innovation. The resulting publication features new ideas on reading the city and how these literacies may be regarded, to varying degrees, as a litmus test on the city's readiness to be navigated and engaged personally: from comparisons of Cape Town and Dakar, to exercises undertaken in Lagos and Beirut that blur the lines of priority that traditionally exist between art and academia. From the urban villages of Jakarta, to waste-pickers in Delhi and community collectivisation in Lagos, our readers may cultivate an appreciation for the power of scale, looking to mechanisms that work – though sometimes thwarted by planning cultures – at the neighbourhood level. Where hard pressed for spaces of negotiation that extend beyond a specific locality and engage with decision-making structures, we can look to intercity and regional movements, such at the Cities of Sanctuary in the United Kingdom.

The global urban turn places cities at the heart of frameworks for sustainable living and development. Forward-thinking cities will have to reconsider their interactions with new ideas, situations and influxes, which requires an openness not entirely at odds with a city's quintessential character. This inaugurual rendition of Open City Lagos is our first step to collating a breadth of perspectives on the city and on the various incidents and structures that differentiate how it is experienced. The curated pieces here are the contributions of an impressive mix of prolific professionals – from acclaimed academics, activists, architects, artists and even a technology expert – who combine lyrical, visual and analytical commentary to conceive the rich narrative of cities presented here.

While we hope to draw the attention of city-makers who are best placed to plug lessons generated here into their designs and policies for the city, the intention has not been to be prescriptive, but merely to open a space for conversation and reflection. As such it is more an exploratory text than an instructive one that over future episodes could eventually form the basis for reimagining an urban transition characterised by sustainable forms of spatial and socio-economic inclusiveness.

Monika Umunna
Lagos Megacity Program Manager
Heinrich Böll Stiftung

Ore Disu
Executive Director
Nsibidi Institute

Contributors

Andrew Maki is a U.S. trained lawyer and is the co-director/co-founder of Justice & Empowerment Initiatives (JEI) – Nigeria. He was the co-Editor-in-Chief of the Human Rights Brief and worked with the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the American Bar Association – Rule of Law Initiative, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, among others.

Bharati Chaturvedi is the founder and director of the Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group, an organization that focuses on issues of urban poverty, consumption, and sustainable livelihoods for informal sector workers in India. A founder of student-led environmental group, Srishti, she holds Master's degrees in history (Delhi University) and in international public policy (School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University).

Carole Rakodi (Emeritus Prof.) is Emeritus Professor at the University of Birmingham, where she served as a professor from 2002 to 2010 in its International Development Department, School of Government and Society. Between 2005 - 2011, she was Director of the DFID-funded research program on Religions and Development, coordinating a team of over a hundred researchers across four UK universities and partner institutions in India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania.

Cheta Nwanze is one of the founders of Enough is Enough, a coalition of individuals and organisations focused on good governance and public accountability in Nigeria. He is currently the head of research at SBM Intelligence, Nigeria and a regular contributor to the online magazine Africasacountry.com and the newspaper review at Nigeria's Smooth FM.

Daliana Suryawinata and Florian Heinzelmann are co-founding partners of SHAU, an architectural design firm with offices in Rotterdam, Munich and Jakarta. SHAU offers a broad scope of services ranging from project commissions, international exhibition curatorial, international design competitions, teaching, writing, lectures and workshops. SHAU is mostly interested in delivering outstanding design solutions while embedding societal as well as energy related concepts in the design process.

Emeka Okoye is the CEO and Chief Architect of Cymantics, a company that makes people, government, cities and machines smarter using Linked Open Data, Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Computing. Over the last 18 years, he has been at the forefront of technology and innovation in Nigeria, designing the first framework for publishing election data in structured formats. He has been listed among the top 20 most influential Technology people in Africa (2013) by South Africa IT News.

Fabienne Hoelzel is an architect and urban designer and teaches at the ETH Zurich. For three years, she acted as the Urban Design and Planning Program Coordinator of one of Latin America's largest slum-upgrading program in São Paulo, Brazil. In 2013, she founded Fabulous Urban, an urban design and planning practice that builds comprehensive, community-based concepts —from strategic planning to detailed construction design, with the human being in the center of thoughts.

Frank Eckardt (Prof.) holds a PhD in Political Science and is a professor for urban studies and regional research at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. A widely published scholar, his research is focused on the cultural diversity and social inequalities in the city. He has been the coordinator of the exchange project "Urban Minorities" (2012-14) with 5 universities in the Middle East. Most recent publication is City of Crisis (edited with Javier Ruiz) and The Multiple Contestation of Southern European Cities (Bielefeld: transcript 2015).

Jenny Mbaye (PhD.) is a lecturer in Culture and Creative Industries at the School of Arts and Social Science, City University London. Prior to this, she was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town. Her work focuses on cultural labour and creative production processes, as well as the work and policy practices of urban creativity in African contexts.

Oluwamuyiwa Logo is a photographer, predominantly focused on black and white photography. His long term projects explore the themes of public spaces and daily life interactions, migration and human rights from a conceptual and documentary perspective. He runs "Monochrome Lagos" - a digital archive highlighting the aesthetics and idiosyncrasies' of the city. He currently lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria.

Lukas Feireiss is the founder of StudioLukasFeireiss based in Berlin which focuses on the cultivation of contemporary cultural reflexivity through the discussion and mediation of architecture, art and visual culture in the urban realm. The editor and curator of numerous books and exhibitions, Feireiss teaches at various universities worldwide and is in the Advisory Board of the Aedes Network Campus Berlin.

Megan Chapman is co-director/co-founder of Justice & Empowerment Initiatives (JEI) — Nigeria, where she has worked since 2011. Working with a variety of international and domestic human rights and development organizations, Megan has helped mobilise communities and build community-based paralegal programs in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Uganda. She has also led and supported strategic human rights litigation in Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Burundi.

Mohamad Hafeda (PhD.) is an artist and a designer whose current research investigates the negotiation of spaces of political-sectarian conflict and the interplay between material and immaterial borderlines in contemporary Beirut. He is a founding partner of Febrik, a collaborative platform for participatory art and design research active in Palestinian refugee camps in the Middle East and housing estates in London. Currently he is a senior lecturer at the School of Art, Architecture and Design at the Leeds Beckett University UK.

Nele Brönner is a Berlin-based visual artist, author and illustrator. She divides her time between artistic projects, teaching at the university and collaborative work in the field of artistic research, dealing with transformations of cities. Her most recent publication, the children's book Affenfalle which won the Serafinapreis 2015 of Deutsche Akademie für Kinder- und Jugendliteratur and Frankfurther Buchmesse.

Olamide Udoma is a project manager, researcher, writer and filmmaker holding degrees in BSc Architecture, MA Design and MPhil Infrastructure Management. At Our Future Cities NPO, she is the Future Lagos founder, manager and editor.

Omolara Adenugba (also known as Clara Aden) specialises in drawing and painting. She has won awards in several competitions, including at the 1999 UNFPA International poster contest (third place), Art for Fela Anikulapo-Kuti 2007, and was listed among the five best visual artists at the Olokun Festival Foundation art competition (2007) and at the National Patriot Portraiture and Immortalisation awards (2010). She is also the winner of the Global Network Research Development (GNRD) Freedom of Expression 2015, an international art competition in Norway.

Temilade Sesan (PhD.) is a development researcher and consultant with expertise in the areas of gender, energy, and the environment. She works across sectors to identify pathways to greater inclusion of women and girls in public and private development initiatives. Her work highlights the social and cultural upheavals that often accompany seemingly benign processes of technological and economic advancement in developing countries like Nigeria.

Victoria Okoye is an urban planner, researcher and writer who uses media and community engagement to document urban development challenges, inform and shape interventions. In 2010, Victoria created the online platform African Urbanism to produce local content on urban development in West Africa. She has also written for UrbanAfrica.net, The Guardian UK and NextCity. She is based in Accra, Ghana.

1.0 Governance / Participation

North Darfur
United Nations Photo

Rethinking Governance to Bring About the "Good City": The Case of Lagos

Fabienne Hoelzel

Fabienne Hoelzel is an architect and urban designer and teaches at the ETH Zurich. For three years, she acted as the Urban Design and Planning Program Coordinator of one of Latin America's largest slum-upgrading program in São Paulo, Brazil. In 2013, she founded Fabulous Urban, an urban design and planning practice that builds comprehensive, community-based concepts —from strategic planning to detailed construction design, with the human being in the center of thoughts.

The 'Good' City

For the meek and unacquainted, Lagos is an intense place, full of hustle and bustle, full of people, energy, diversity, and creativity—most especially in its long-established neighborhoods and districts like Lagos Island or the numerous low-income areas like Mushin, Makoko or Agege, where much of life is interrogated and staged in the streets. Lagos is also a divided city. The division line runs along the rich and the poor, like in many developing regions. However, all Lagosians share the constant struggle that everyday life imposes on them. "Did you have electricity last night?" is a common conversation starter in Lagos. Insufficient power supply and long-lasting blackouts can be bypassed with private backyard diesel generators. For those who can afford it, this is business as usual.

With an estimated population of 17.5 to 21 million[1], the region's busiest port, its most frequented migrant destination and a wealth of services and industries to boast, Lagos has an essential role to play in shaping the social and economic futures of many – some of whom lie beyond its borders. The tasks for the government of Nigeria's most populous city are enormously challenging. The UN-Habitat's City Prosperity Index (CPI) diagnoses weak prosperity factors for Lagos.[2] Its index is composed of five dimensions of which the local economy is only one and others such as livability, ecology and the Human Development Index (HDI) are equally included.

The CPI also measures government actions and policies in the pursuit of prosperity, and the outcomes of these policies.[3] In concrete terms, the CPI revealed in 2013 for Lagos that the production of goods and services is too low. It further demarcates the region as suffering from historic structural problems, chronic inequality of opportunities, widespread poverty, inadequate capital investment in public goods and a lack of pro-poor social programs.[4]

In light of this assessment, what kind of city should its urban professionals, administrators, and citizens aspire to? Most urban planners would describe a 'good city' as a conglomeration and mix of different, safe and well accessible neighborhoods—richer, poorer, residential, commercial, mixed-use, low-rise, high-rise, some denser, some greener, etc. It is a quality that encompasses linkages as well as content, connoting spaces connected by a well-developed, well-maintained and differentiated network of pathways: roads, streets, alleys, green parks and squares that allow for the circulation of people, information, knowledge, and goods. A well-developed public transportation system is one of the greatest drivers of democratic, inclusive equal development.[5] The 'good city' offers further opportunities and access to education and jobs, and ideally promotes entrepreneurship through a respective legal framework.

In a nutshell, the 'good city' is inclusive and hence open, socially and spatially. It is a response to UN Habitat's call for "transformative change towards people-centered, sustainable urban development beyond the narrow domain of economic growth" – a call seconded by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) who in an unorthodox step have dissociated from an exclusive focus on economic growth and now promote economic development in order to "share prosperity for the poorest 40 percent" and end poverty.[6]

The former Lagos State Governor Babatunde Fashola (2007-2015) must have had such a

'good city' in mind when he declared the vision of Lagos to become "Africa's Model Mega City and Global, Economic and Financial Hub that is safe, secure, functional and productive."[7] Mindful of the serious doubts that UN Habitat's CPI revealed, the central questions seem to be for whom is "Africa's model city" and which planning strategies, governance mechanisms, actors and alliances can achieve it. The Lagos State Development Plan (LSDP) 2012-2025, a strategic planning document, drafted by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget shares the World Bank approach and provides one possible lens through which to answer this question. It aims at creating a "dynamic economy that can provide jobs and wealth (…) not just to uplift the many millions of Lagos citizens currently suffering from poverty but also as a means of increasing tax revenues and providing an income for Lagos State to undertake all the non-wealth creating tasks it is required to do."[8]

Indeed, the large majority of the Lagos' population is poor to extremely poor, and most of the production of the built environment has happened informally.[9] In this regard, Lagos is reflecting circumstances that are distinctive for the entire region of Sub-Saharan and South Africa.[10] Although with 70% of the population living in sub-standard housing and slums[11] the numbers in Lagos and Nigeria are extremely high, this may well be a conservative estimate[12] and spaces and circumstances of poverty may be on the rise. The absolute numbers of slum

The self-built structures at Makoko displaying varying degress of regularisation, investment and aesthetic appreciation

Image: Ore Disu

settlements has grown from 21 to 100 since 1993, according to Lagos Bureau of Statistics.[13] Amukoko, Badia and Ilaje are the names of some of the largest and well-known slum settlements in the city. Little effort has been taken by city authorities to improve and upgrade these places.[14] On the contrary, forced evictions and demolitions without compensation are still being practiced, as 2013 in Badia[15] and just very recently again in the same neighborhood.[16] Some—e.g. US-American scholar Seth D. Kaplan—praise the achievements of Lagos since 1999 as good examples for other cities under similar conditions.[17] Others see especially Governor Babatunde Fashola's term in office (2008-2015) a period of improvement and progress in the development of the city, although probably mainly for the upper class and wealthy neighborhoods. After all, this may be not a bad strategy, according to Kaplan: "The powerful and wealthy classes are more likely to insist on better governance when their own neighborhoods are affected."[18]

Recent explorations on the future of cities and urban strategies revolve increasingly around 'urban governance' or 'the governance of cities'.[19] Governance is, put at its simplest, the relationship between government and citizen[20] and could further be defined as processes through which public and private resources are coordinated in the pursuit of collective interests.[21] Hence, governance is broader and more encompassing than 'government'[22] and is conceived as a set of interactions, including conflicts, negotiations, alliances and compromises, which result in more or less stabilized regulations to produce order or disorder.[23] Governance per se (and hence also the often promoted 'good governance') is an empty shell; it requires the definition of a social field, the boundaries and the participants.[24]

So how can we tackle the challenge of steering complex urban development processes in an already highly urbanized world (USA: 81%; EU: 75%; Brazil: 85%)[25] or an urbanizing world (Sub-Saharan Africa: 37%; China: 54%)[26]? Which instruments are adequate, how can actors, stakeholders and stockholders get involved and what are the guiding principles for the development of our cities that are on the one hand highly globalized—this becomes mainly visible in the global trade and capital flows—and need yet local solutions for sometimes—again—global problems like climate change?

Lagos State government has drafted in the last few years a series of planning documents, amongst them the mentioned Lagos State Development Plan 2012-2025 and a series of model city plans, usually covering one or several neighborhoods.

Lagos State's major urban development efforts in recent years focused on the Victoria and Lekki Island, promoting new town development approaches and giant land reclamation projects like Eko Atlantic City or Lekki Free Zone. Eko Atlantic City is planned as an upscale residential and business district. Lekki Free Zone is intended as a special economic zone to promote innovation, inspired by the respective Chinese model, e.g. Shenzhen.

These mega projects are mainly driven by private and foreign investments, often and increasingly Chinese.[27] The planning processes happen usually secretly; for even well-informed professionals, information hard to obtain.[28] They result in mostly gated neighborhoods—fenced and guarded, accessible only by authorized people and representing the opposite of an open city.

The (new) face of Lagos

Eko Atlantic City and Lekki Free Zone represent trends in urban development that find their expression in large areas that are entirely transformed into new districts of tall skyscraper buildings with glass facades, servings as "gateways for international investors and showpieces for ambitious politicians", as Vanessa Watson puts it.[29] This "urban gigantism"takes place against the backdrop of privatization and deregulation waves that took place across many countries and continents.[30] It not only manifests in a shift from small private to large corporate modes of ownership, and from public to private.[31] Moreover, private development consortia develop these projects; the role of public agencies is minimal. Lekki Free Zone fits perfectly in these scheme: 60% is owned by a consortium of Chinese companies, 20% by Lagos State Government and 20% by Lekki Worldwide Investment Limited.[32] The opinions of ordinary citizens or directly affected residents are hardly considered; democratic and public decision-making and opinion-forming processes are little executed.

In this sense, UN Habitat warns that under the cloak of 'strategic urban plans' an entrepreneurial view of the city have effectively been imposed, "promoting mostly economic prosperity and often turning into marketing gimmicks, complete with oversized architecture and mega-developments"[33], often at the expense of the habitat and livelihoods of the poor.

With one or two entrance gates, such developments are typically managed by private firms and owners. This arrangement is practical for the state's urban service providers, who rather than having to deal with an endless number of households and small private businesses, can focus instead on one point of contact for waste collection and electricity supply: the private company that manages the estate.

Taking Lagos State Government at their word that they want to create a "dynamic economy to uplift the millions of Lagosians suffering from poverty"[34], it remains largely unclear how ongoing forced evictions of the poor and glittering, large-scale, and gated new towns shall contribute to a prosperous and inclusive city for everybody. "The new face of Lagos"[35] seems rather to suggest a city for the (extremely wealthy) people yet to come. Today's resident population, however, does not seem to have place in these "prime real estates."[36]

A micro-city under construction: a major corporate building at Eko Atlantic City

Image: Willy Sengewald

One place Nigerian cities could look to is Brazil, a so-called emerging Nation with 200 million inhabitants and closer in the context of its urban planning and development capacities

Today, it is recognized that there are many paths to success. The increasing importance of comparative urban research gains influence in the academic world and the popularity of city-networks like C40 reflects this. One place Nigerian cities could look to is Brazil, a so-called emerging nation with 200 million inhabitants[37] (compared to Nigeria's 170 million) and closer in the context of its urban planning and development capacities and challenges than other West European cities. Brazil is highly urbanized, and amongst the BRIC-nations the only one that is democratically ruled since the military dictatorship ended in 1985. Brazil currently struggles with a series of unveiled corruption scandals with far-reaching impacts that involve the national government and the state-owned oil industry. The ongoing waves of street protests demonstrate that democracy is not an empty shell: people hold the government accountable.

On the level of planning instruments and policies, every Brazilian city with more than one million residents is obliged to implement a strategic masterplan that needs to be approved by the local parliament. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Program[38] 30% of Brazil's population live in slums. This is especially evident in São Paulo, the city of 11 million inhabitants (20 million in the metropolitan area) that pursues a pioneering slum-upgrading program[39] which was awarded the UN Habitat Scroll of Honor in 2012 for being one of Latin America's largest programs of that kind. The program is financed by city tax money, national and international funds. The strategic masterplan of São Paulo[40] contains five 'special zones of social interest' (ZEIS 1- 5) that map all the slums and guarantee the respective slum dwellers by law the right to stay, or where resettlement is necessary, the right to a social housing unit or to a compensation.[41] The strategic masterplan, a joint collaboration of all state ministries, in combination with the electronic slum survey and management system Habisp[42], are powerful and complementary planning tools.

Again by law, the participation of slum dwellers in slum-upgrading projects such as the implementation of infrastructure, schools, health facilities, schools and social housing is mandatory.[44] Each planning and building projects requires the establishment of a board with membership positions evenly divided between government administration and local residents. This top-down approach is complemented by the activities of a huge number of NGOs and neighborhood associations. Some of them were founded within communities that have been fighting for slum-upgrading for many decades. Others were founded by activists who support the cause of slum dwellers, and again others actors that collaborate internationally. Together they forge a network of government programs, bound to laws and policies, safeguarded by defiant NGOs', activists' and residents' initiatives, supported by private architects and planners. When asked, interestingly enough, most slum dwellers see today's engagement of São Paulo's government administration as the result of their decade-long fight for their rights.

Despite of being a democracy, Nigeria struggles with implementing democratic principles. It is currently ranked 104th (of 112) in the Global Democracy Ranking[44] and 136th (of 175) in the Corruption Perception Index[45] that measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption. These numbers do not shed a good light on the capability and trustworthiness of the innovative strength and will of inclusive strategies of the government.

The mentioned case of Badia—forced eviction, often without previous notification—is just one example of how community engagement and proximity is neglected, and how ordinary Lagosians are hindered from exercising their citizenship rights.[46]

Citizens' fora are in turn openly critical of public institutions, personalities and their practices but with few mechanisms to translate their concerns into binding and effective programmes and policies.

Innovation, creativity and initiatives for social and urban transformation have come mainly from NGOs, social and urban activists, and other societal actors, in collaboration with international developing agencies.

While this is tedious and requires endurance, patience, and spirit, it also offers room for new approaches and new fields of engagement and societal relevance for all kinds of urban activists if they are willing to go beyond their traditional role and education.

They can become instances of governance, influence the public opinion, challenge the gov-

Innovation, creativity and initiatives for social and urban transformation have come mainly from NGOs, social and urban activists

ernment and help to shape a better future for broad segments of society.

The power of local-international initiatives and networks

The Makoko Floating School[47] is one such example. Initiated by NLÉ with a network of architects and engineers based in Lagos and Amsterdam, it was firstly implemented illegally and led to harsh government interventions. As the public opinion-forming process developed, greatly supported by a national and international media coverage, Lagos State Government changed their attitude towards the project and recently included the floating structure in their official planning strategy only two years after it threatened to destroy it. Of course, one should be cautious: The strategy behind the change of opinion may not be the original intent of the inventor. The Makoko residents may not be able to afford floating houses, which may lead to new evictions.

The Makoko Regeneration Plan, presented in 2014 to Lagos State Government was a broader initiative to prevent further forced eviction of the community. Developed by large network of professionals and NGOs from different fields, including sociology, urban regeneration, jurisprudence, urban design and architecture, it employed numerous stakeholder meetings with the community, professionals, and government representatives. This initiative is unusual in the

sense that it is at once a bottom-up and grass-roots approach following activist strategies, whilst also a broader strategic planning exercise that incorporates masterplans for the entire neighborhood and covers classic urban planning issues like mobility and connectivity, public spaces and housing, a socio-economic action plan and even a regional strategy. Although a tedious process, once skeptical government representatives started at least to listen to alternative approaches, a dialogue could be established with opportunities to forge and strengthen relationships. The largest challenge remains the continuity of the project. The balance of power between the fragile community that is threatened by forced eviction and the government with power to act is uneven. Moreover, there's a constant lack of funding to finance the activities of the working group of the Makoko Regeneration Plan. One pilot project though, the Makoko Neighborhood Hotspot[48] by Fabulous Urban, is currently under construction.

The Social and Economic Action Center (SERAC), one of the key partners of the Makoko Regeneration Plan has been representing slum dwellers in court for many years, including Makoko and Badia, fighting for the right to stay or at least compensation for resettlement. On a larger scale, they campaign for solidarity, equality and civil rights. The young Lagos- and Port Harcourt-based NGO, Justice & Empowerment Initiatives (JEI) has been providing community-based paralegal services and have been training slum dwellers in Ebute Metta and Agbajowo in law sources. They cooperate with a series of Nigerian and international NGOs to increase impact and leverage capacities and are registered in Nigeria and the United States as charitable non-profit organization. JEI re-

cently launched the petition "Become a friend of Badia East" to fight further forced eviction in the neighborhood without advance notice that will be sent to President Muhammadu Buhari and Lagos' Governor Akinwunmi Ambode.[49] Organizations like the Nigerian Urban Poor Federation have been gathering community data and house numbering across slums in Lagos.

Another promising initiative is WeCyclers[50], a young firm that follows business and entrepreneurial strategies in its efforts to address local issues of urban waste. WeCyclers engages with communities, collects the garbage with eco-friendly cargo bikes and collaborates with the Lagos Authority of Waste Management (LAWMA). They represent a young generation of highly qualified, internationally trained people that pursue social business approaches to deliver social and urban services that are traditionally provided by the state authorities or development aid agencies. Such approaches usually start very small and fill the infrastructure gap by creating business opportunities. Moreover, collaborations with state agencies create new multi-scalar network processes that react to a specific local problem. Over the time, a network of smaller privately owned businesses and large state run institutions can be established. This is an alternative approach to the 'good governance agenda' by the World Bank, which often results in the privatization of public sector tasks such as electricity supply, to the detriment of the poor.[51] [52]

The mentioned initiatives and projects are based on negotiations and collaborations between citizens, the respective NGOs, international organizations, and involve at some point the government authorities and agencies. They represent forms of daily urban governance in

Adapting for urban communities on water, a classic view of the proposed neighbourhood hotspot

Image: Fabulous Urban

Lagos, helping to develop a better, more inclusive open city; a city where people will not only have options but choices. This will also mean dealing with complex traditional and often undemocratic ruling systems, where "hereditary title holders" (i.e. Baales, Obas) still exert an enormous influence. An anthropological approach will be necessary to understand and transform these complexities and also help to develop an autonomous vision of contemporary and future Lagos.

Critically, such initiatives deal with locally existing challenges and gaps. Their solutions differ from the one-size-fits-it-all urban development policies by international institutions, which often result in well-intended projects that do not effectively or precisely respond to the stakeholders' need. Boldness is needed to develop a Lagos that comes out of Lagos— and not of Singapore, Dubai or elsewhere— and includes all Lagosians. This means dealing with informality and poverty, be it in the spatial production or the economic sector. Judging by the experience of Brazil's cities and recent developments in Lagos, it also means that one should not wait for government and other "leaders" to take action. Only engaged civil society representatives and their organizations will be able to transform the city and the society—

and eventually produce the politicians that will responsibly and accountably govern the city. Exact numbers are not available which compounds in the uncertainty on the city's population growth, its mobility and migratory patterns. It is unclear how many people live in the city, how many migrate to the city—on a daily, monthly, yearly basis—, and how many leave the city due to the circular migration patterns of which we understand very little.

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Incubate or die? Assessing the impacts of business support systems on women entrepreneurs in Lagos

Dr. Temilade Sesan

Dr. Temilade Sesan (PhD.) is a development researcher and consultant with expertise in the areas of gender, energy, and the environment. She works across sectors to identify pathways to greater inclusion of women and girls in public and private development initiatives. Her work highlights the social and cultural upheavals that often accompany seemingly benign processes of technological and economic advancement in developing countries like Nigeria.

Row of business units at the Matori Small Scale Industrial Estate.

The establishment of incubation facilities for small and medium businesses has long been a policy imperative for successive Nigerian governments, given the potential of such businesses to alleviate the country's longstanding unemployment problem. Beginning in the late 1950s and continuing well into the postcolonial era, state and federal governments established small-scale industrial estates and larger scale "industrial development centres" to encourage industrialization at a time when the newly emerging nation-state was keen to move away from a mainly agricultural economy and an over-reliance on imports. These incubation centres were furnished with essential inputs such as technical infrastructure and business advisory services in the expectation that local manufacturing would take off as a result. Six decades later, the expectation remains for these centres to deliver on their initial promise. The immediate past governor of Lagos state, for example, is quoted as saying he would rather

work to boost the capacity of state-owned incubation centres than "grandstand" before voters with abstract notions of job creation.

While such lofty visions are inspiring, it is useful to take stock of current realities in government-owned incubation centres – precisely what this essay does using the case of Matori, one of three incubation centres established and run by Lagos state. The piece also shines a spotlight on private and non-governmental efforts at incubation, specifically with regard to their impacts on women, who tend to be underrepresented in such business support schemes, and draws out relevant lessons for the state government and other actors in the space.

Monopolising Opportunity at Matori

The Small Scale Industrial Estate at Matori is a huge agglomeration of business units commissioned decades ago by the Lagos State government. Originally established to provide infrastructural support – accommodation, power, machinery – to nascent manufacturing businesses, the project's achievements have fallen far below the intended mark.

For example, each unit in the estate now has to supply its own power with generators much of the time, with one manufacturer having as many as four generators to cover every possible scenario of power failure. Perhaps more critically, most businesses in the estate are well past the incubation stage and should have long since exited.

However, many of them are not disposed to leave willingly, and there are no enforcement mechanisms by the government to facilitate

The hub ran gender-neutral programmes until it realised that the ratio of female to male participation in those programmes was significantly low at about 1:8.

a system of succession. There is a gender dimension to this monopoly: out of over a hundred businesses in the estate, only three are headed by women. Two of these, a paper sales outfit and a water bottling centre, are barely operational. That leads us to Ruth: a thriving wholesale drinks seller who in fact operates in the estate under the auspices of her husband, a cold room manufacturer to whom the unit was officially leased back in the 1990s.

Her occupation of the unit is so contingent on her husband's ownership of it that she does not even know how much he pays in rent monthly. Yet Ruth is an extraordinarily enterprising woman in her own right: she grew her drinks business from one fridge inside her home to a stall in Ojuwoye, one of the city's most renowned markets, before joining her husband in his cold room store in the late nineties. However, the fact that her current situation at Matori was enabled not so much by the state's intervention but by the support of a male member of her family reinforces gender inequities and offers a mixed story of empowerment at best.

AMEN: "Building a Better Economy…Through Grassroots Industrialization"

The Industrial Development Centre at Ikorodu, is one of about two dozen incubation centres established around the country by the federal government from the 1960s onward. Ikorodu is a sprawling suburb with access to the Lagos lagoon and neighbouring Ogun state — two key locations that facilitate the movement of people and goods in and out of the area. Much like the state-run industrial estate at Matori, the Ikorodu

IDC was originally set up to ease the entry of new manufacturing businesses into the economy by providing local producers with free or subsidised infrastructural inputs. Over time, however, the rambling facility fell into disrepair and was largely unoccupied until a group of determined business people called the Association of Micro Entrepreneurs of Nigeria came along and spotted opportunity amidst the ruins. AMEN sought and received the permission of the government body in charge, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), to renovate the facility. It was all the entrepreneurs needed to break through.

Today, the IDC is a flourishing business park, made so not by any provision from the federal government, but by the initiative of scores of resilient entrepreneurs running a range of manufacturing businesses at a previously underused site. From the start, AMEN members have harnessed the power of the collective to achieve individual business success: the group came into being in 2007 after high-level officials at the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) hinted that it would be easier for 'micro' manufacturers of consumer goods to obtain NAFDAC registration numbers if they approached the agency as an association rather than as individuals. The group strategy worked so well for individuals that the association has grown from a 12-member affair in Lagos to a multi-pronged organisation with

tentacles reaching into other states across the country.

"Because the land was so massive... we organized ourselves as a group and approached SMEDAN, that since this property is there, we want to use it to start up our production. The situation now is that some of the structures that are there – the buildings – we go there and clean up the place, buy generators and then start production. The other thing also is we put up some temporary structures by ourselves and start production there." – Kanayo, AMEN member. AMEN has also succeeded in facilitating other types of input for its members, such as brand exposure through trade fairs and exhibitions, information exchange, representation before stakeholders ranging from media houses to law enforcement agencies, peer-to-peer support, and importantly, access to credit.

One member whose business has benefited in no small measure from AMEN's support structure is Njideka, a recession-hit MBA graduate turned cleaning product-manufacturer. From her beginnings operating out of a "small bucket", she has steadily grown her business to a medium-size enterprise selling a range of household cleaning products, trouncing the competition and supplying major supermarkets across Lagos out of her production plant at the IDC. Her business is doing so well that she is nearly done repaying a loan from the Bank of Industry (which was facilitated and guaranteed by AMEN) and is eager to extend the loan for another term. Crucially, Njideka sees no barriers to her participation in AMEN (or in business more generally) on the basis of her gender, despite there being no strategies or support systems

aimed specifically at women. To the contrary, she says AMEN has given her a "platform" through which she is able to gain exposure to opportunities that might otherwise remain closed to her.

CcHUB: Reinventing the Wheel of Innovation

Co-creation Hub is a social enterprise that incubates aspiring entrepreneurs in fields as diverse as the environment, governance, and agriculture – the only requirement being that whatever innovations they propose utilise information technology tools in their delivery. The hub has a tiered model of membership in which individuals are given support that is commensurate to the market readiness of their ideas, with the highest tiers providing access to business development and grant support.

The hub ran gender-neutral programmes from its Yaba offices until it realised that the ratio of female to male participation in those programmes was significantly low at about 1:8. It then decided to target women specifically through its Women R.I.S.E. (Roots in Science and Engineering) programme, where the all-female cohort was trained to write computer programming languages. (The response rate of women to R.I.S.E. was higher than for general calls, though not by a wide margin.) One of the R.I.S.E. trainees was Anike, who arrived on the programme with an almost fully formed idea for Mamalette.com, an online community of young Nigerian mothers sharing their experiences and trading parenting advice. Her idea was such a big sell that she

immediately got some money in "pre-incubation" funding and was automatically ushered into the higher tiers of membership at the hub.

"I started here in February, and we are now in July. In the past couple of months, [Co-creation Hub] helped me work on my business model. Right now, I am changing my platform to make it more competitive and more appealing to brands. They are trying to make me more attractive so I can make more money... I get the kind of support I want here." Like Njideka, Anike does not feel isolated in the male-dominated environment at CcHub. Instead, she says, the space has opened up possibilities for her to engage with like-minded techpreneurs, even if they happen to be overwhelmingly male.

Towards a More Effective Incubation Model for Lagos

It is apparent that the Lagos State model of incubation, exemplified in Matori, has been the least effective of all those described above. A more productive approach might borrow elements from the self-help system of AMEN and the mentorship model of CcHUB, both of which have demonstrated that incubators may not be so much about physical space as they are about community. In light of this, it might be worthwhile for the state to explore a more manageable incubation model that suspends infrastructure provision and focuses instead on building capacity and soft skills in entrepreneurs.

SMEDAN already runs a programme to that effect in Lagos, out of its "Business Support Centre" coincidentally located within the industrial estate at Matori. The programme provides training and support to entrepreneurs in technical areas such as business plan development and financial management. More broadly, it provides a space in which fledgling entrepreneurs can get access to the information, mentoring and peer-to-peer support they need to navigate their way in the Nigerian business environment.

Although the SMEDAN programme is gender-neutral, it boasts an impressive record of women who have built entrepreneurial capacity in trades such as soap making, shoe making, comic book production, knitting, and embroidery. Lagos State could take this model further. As the CcHUB example shows, targeting women specifically, especially in areas traditionally assumed to be outside their domain, could encourage higher participation (and success) rates in business. The revised programme would need to incorporate the elements of oversight and monitoring that are apparent in CcHUB's model, to ensure that each participant gets support that is tailored to her level of development, and to enable the most promising businesses to thrive. On "graduating" from the state's capacity building programme, these producers and entrepreneurs could then be encouraged to join entrepreneurial associations like AMEN – or even to self-organise into similar groups – where they can gain access to the kinds of input facilitated by such groups.

One of the most remarkable observations from the foregoing is the sheer drive demonstrated by Njideka and her colleagues at the Industrial Development Centre. These entrepreneurs have shown a determination to succeed in spite of, not because of, the policies of their government. If the state needed any impetus to give them a hand, this would be it.

A range of trainees' products
on display at SMEDAN's Matori
Business Support Centre

Image: Temilade Sesan

accommodate this erstwhile outsider group. In the process, partnerships could emerge that blur the rather hard boundaries that currently exist between the "grassroots" manufacturing sector and the considerably higher-tech services sector in the country, with potential benefits for each of those sectors and for the economy as a whole.

Meanwhile, in the absence or paucity of state action in the incubation space, social entrepreneurs have taken on a role of greater significance within it. The current emphasis of privately-run innovation hubs like CcHUB is overwhelmingly on information technology-enabled enterprises, many of which relate to the service rather than the manufacturing sector.

As it happens, these hubs are repositories of soft skills – like branding, packaging, and marketing – which "hard" manufacturers like those at AMEN sorely need to become more competitive in local and global markets. There is scope for social entrepreneurs to establish new IT-enabled hubs dedicated to teaching these soft skills to small-scale manufacturers, and for new spaces to be created within existing incubators like CcHUB to

Smarter Lagos: Using technology to foster inclusion, civic participation, service provision and social innovation

Emeka Okoye

Introduction

India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi wants to create 100 smart cities by 2017[1]. Paris has launched a successful bike and electric vehicle sharing program[2]. Hong Kong is using smart ID cards to allow people access services such as public transit, libraries, building, shopping centres andcar parks by using a single, personal digitally encoded card[3]. San Francisco is offering free Wi-Fi in selected areas and parks of the city for people in search of information about the city, as well as shopping and access to social media[4].The city of Boston created seven mobile apps for residents and visitors to report problems like potholes to the city government, manage trash, pay for parking meters and manage their children's school bus schedules[5]. Seattle is upgrading to smart electricity meters that allow for real-time information that can help customers and the utility managers pinpoint inefficiencies and eliminate the need for technicians to go to people's homes to read the meters[6]. The city of Santander, Spain has 20,000 sensors connecting buildings, infrastructure, transport, and other public facilities[7]. Chile has launched the 'SmartCity Santiago' project[8].

What do these cities have in common?They are all being re-imagined in ways that allow cities to become more sustainable, better able to tackle urban challenges and re-position themselves for the future – and they are all using technology to do this. The evolution of internet technologies, which gave rise to cloud-based services, the Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), smart phones, Radio-Frequency Identification(RFID), Semantic Web[9], and an infectious start-up culture has also opened new pathways for collective action and collaborative problem-solving. These innovations are taking placejust as urban planning and development are moving towards a more participatory direction. The advancement of social media, mobile technologies and Web 3.0 technologies including the Semantic Web have opened up additionalopportunities for people to be involved in planning their environment through the use of pervasive digital technologies which operate outside formal planning processes.

What are 'Smart Cities' and why are they important?

Our cities today face a variety of challenges, including job creation, economic growth, environmental sustainability and social resilience. Many governments find these challenges overwhelming and are unable to grapple with them resulting in severe threats to the well-being of their citizens and geographies. To address these challenges head on, many of the world's major metropolitan cities are getting "smarter" by using digital technology to help them maximize resources and improve the quality of life for their citizens. These technologies are also being used to redefine and expand cultures of planning, focusing attention on the innovation and stimulating new ideas like reducing the carbon footprint of the city or making efficient use of energy. Consequently, being in tune with developments in digital technology is now more than ever considered critical to future city planning and management processes. However, these technologies and innovations are not being applied in abstract, neutral or

Emeka Okoye is the CEO and Chief Architect of Cymantics, a company that makes people, government, cities and machines smarter using Linked Open Data, Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Computing. Over the last 18 years, he has been at the forefront of technology and innovation in Nigeria, designing the first framework for publishing election data in structured formats. He has been listed among the top 20 most influential Technology people in Africa (2013) by South Africa IT News

even identical environments. Every city is unique so its challenges must be seen as such. Digitally driven interventions and reconfigured approaches to managing cities must be laid over existing systems. Key barriers like funding, inventing existing business model, and adapting regulations to this paradigm shift must be effectively dealt with. But most of all a visionary leadership is needed to bring all contributing *elements* together, including the citizens and city officials, to make it happen.

Most advancement in smart city technology has taken place in the United States, Europe, and Asia. Some reasons for this is that these regions all have a pre-existing, substantive technology base and culture as well as having optimized resources geared towards efficiency and effectiveness. However, as a planning and management tool, the Smart City approach which focuses on using ICT technologies to design urban systems and solutions that are more efficient, cost-effective and responsive to local needs and conditions can beapplied to many cities beyond those in wealthier, more developed countries. Smart City initiatives are focused on improving lives, building stronger societies and making better use of resources. Its proponents use digital technologies to enhance the quality of life and performance of urban services, to reduce costs and resource consumption, to engage more effectively and actively with their citizens, to increase the efficient use of resources, and to create a clean and sustainable environment.

There are two ideologically opposed visions of the Smart City framework. On one hand, governments or city officials use sensors, grids and data to create a framework and provide services to the citizens. City planners are seeking new ways to address inefficiencies in their domain by moving away from centralized urban planning towards the more inclusive process of "city making", leveraging connected wisdoms and technology that work for their cities.

On the other hand, citizens around the world are beginning to re-imagine their cities. With the help of smartphones and internet connectivity, increasing numbers of civic groups and organisations are using applications and social networks to expand their civic power by building alliances, advocating on social justice issues, and demanding for more accountable and responsive governments and private sector. In cities like Lagos, ordinary people are also applying the transformative power of technology to solve problems in their environment, for instance, ReVoDa mobile app was created to solve issue of voting transparency.

An Overview of Metropolitan Lagos

One such city that stands to gain significantly from the smart city approachis the coastal city of Lagos −one of the most rapidly urbanising areas in the worl d[10]. Its growth has been phenomenal, both demographically and spatially. From a population of about 25,000 in 1866, Lagos reached 665,000 by 1963. Itbecame over 10 million in 1995 thus attaining, by UN definition, the status of a

mega-city[11]. According to National Geographic,its population is presently about 24 million —a figure the state government estimates will climb at about 500,000 a year[12].

Though Lagos is a mega city, it functions as such with an acute lack of the basic services and public infrastructure deemed essential in traditional urban studies: the provision of water, housing and mass transit systems.Its growth rate has overstretched infrastructure and services and has been marked by severe deterioration in quality of life – high levels of poverty, a proliferation of slums, massive flooding, disrupted sewage network, a dilapidated and congested road system, congested public schools, inadequate health centres, high population of unemployed and homeless residents, poor power supply, and increasing crime rates.

Yet Lagos accounts for about 60 percent of economic growth in Nigeria and about 80 percent of the nation's industry is based in this state. It accounts for 40 percent of Nigeria's electricity consumption but power generation satisfies only 35 percent of Lagos[13]. One of the major challenges in Lagos is the daily occurrence of traffic gridlock on Lagos roads. It takes some people five hours to commute to and from work daily.Another challenge is sanitation. Lagos generates about 12,000 metric tonnes of waste per day. Although waste management and collection services have improved in recent years, indiscriminate dumping still prevails. As a result of this and an overwhelmed drainage system, channels meant to redirect water get clogged far too often, resulting in floods across vulnerable sections of the city whenever it rains.

How the Lagos Citizens are Knitting their Smart City

In the face of institutional collapse and the lack of will, initiative and interest from government, residents are knitting together their own "Smart Lagos" via digital platforms, by creating interesting and productive uses of technology in Lagos with their mobile phones and social media. Such emerging innovations do not depend on big budget marketing campaigns gain visibility. Instead, they depend on a digital "grid": an invisible overlay of the Internet coverage from mobile networks in Lagos, engaged social media platforms, and networked relationships of ordinary people with a demonstrated desire and passion to make a change. As there are still only a few free wi-fi hotspots in the city, most Lagosians plug into this grid from their data plans which are subscribed to from their Internet provider companies and mobile phone service providers. Presently, these data plans are still very expensive for most of the residents thereby excluding them from the smart city revolution[14].

The Smart City focuses on using ICT technologies to design urban systems and solutions that are more efficient, cost-effective and responsive to local needs

The dynamics of social media have been effectively used in recent times to enable civic engagement by supporting rapid and effective mobilisation around incidents and issue-basedcauses. A good example is Occupy Nigeria, a socio-political protest in response to the fuel subsidy removal which was driven by mobile phones and social media – especially Twitter and Facebook – to cause civil disobedience, strike actions, demonstrations and online activism in 2012. Mobile networks and social media have also led to the emergence and granted success to crowd-sourcing platforms like Revoda from EnoughisEnough, which supports crowd-sourcing of election data from polling stations, and allowscitizens to report happenings–from election results to violence – at their polling stations on social media platforms.

Citizens are also helping to solve their traffic challenges (gridlocks, roadblocks, etc) by engaging with solutions or mobile apps created by local developers like Gidi Traffic - a community-based traffic and navigation app that lets users share real-time transit information; TsaboinTrafficTalk - which shares real-time traffic experiences and live traffic cameras; Traffic Butter– an app that provides real-time updates on traffic situations. Other proposed solutions to mobility issues in Lagos focus on decongesting roads. To help reduce the number of vehicles on the roads, Lagosians can either subscribe to the ride sharing service, Jekalo, which allows users hitch a ride with another users on prearranged routes or use one of the many numerous taxi services like Tranzit – where users can book for taxis, car hires and charter their vehicles; Easy Taxi and Afrocab – which allows users to book for cabs from mobile-based apps.

Other citizen-led initiatives include Truppr, a social app that helps fitness lovers organize and find team mates, and WeCyclers, a local low-cost cargo bicycles start-up. The latter deserves a special mention. WeCyclers offers convenient household recycling services in densely populated, low-income neighbourhoods. This social business has given households in Lagos a chance to capture value from their huge waste and at the same time provides a reliable supply of materials to the local recycling industry. The citizens interact with WeCyclers via voice calls, SMS and the web to manage their waste. This model solves the urban waste challenge for households and recyclers and also creates employment opportunities.

One surprising entry on the list comes from the Lagos State government, which recently developed the Lagos Energy Calculator, a mobile-based app to curb emission and manage energy from households and offices. Although primarily atoolto enable better regulation on consumption and help Lagos residents save money on their electricity bills, it also has wider benefits including increased awareness on energy conservation and protection of the environment by reducing carbon emissions[15].

Many of the aforementioned examples are associated with other initiatives noted not just in Lagos, but in many cities across the continent. More a growing trend than a structured movement or formal approach, social innovation involves collaboration amongst actors – technologists, social entrepreneurs, government, entrepreneurs, and hackers – in the innovation system. Driven by an entrepreneurial energy, these innovations tend to start as small, localised, problem-solving interventions that if successful may go to scale as replications or through investor funding. In recent years, lots of incubation hubs have sprung up in Lagos like: CcHUB (Co-creation Hub), iDEA Hub, Wennovation Hub, to name a few.

These hubs have created and supported some of the social enterprises and services that are currently addressing local challenges in Lagos. Although distinct from the Smart City movement in ideology and approach – in that social innovators rarely position themselves as partners of city planning and management, nor is there as strong a use and association with digital technologies, these people-driven, socially-transformative innovations are gaining ground in the city in the absence of an official Smart City Lagos strategy. Investing in incubation programs is critical to unleashing and up-scaling social innovations in Lagos and could help create much-needed alternatives for wealth generation and employment.

How Should Lagos Embrace Smart Cities

1. The following are suggestions of how the Lagos State Government should embrace the Smart City paradigm and surmount these urban challenges:

2. The government needs to rethink, redesign and optimize its services, and place the citizens and businesses at the centre of its operations. It needs to move rapidly and effectively away from bureaucratic business models, management cultures and processes.

3. Lagos also needs to understand that technology increases the number of touch points it can have with their citizens, and that a digital presence in the citizens' lives enables richer relationships. Evoking a participatory alternative to the top-down Smart City approach will point to a new subversive and innovative way to associate with collaboration, openness and participation.

4. As more and more city functions are evolving from analogue to digital, Lagos urgently needs to appoint a CIO (Chief Innovation Officer) that will provide leadership and vision and to oversee these digital implementations of a smart city framework.

5. Lagos should embrace Linked Open Data to create a more conducive environment for innovation, businesses, civic participation and smart city initiatives to thrive. The city of Lagos should make public data available for businesses or community developers to re-use in providing apps to support the

Parking apps with payments will ease the burden of illegal parking, thereby easing traffic flows and reducing fuel consumption

public in using services, and more sophisticated solutions to align services at the city-wide level.

6.   Lagos should also embrace "hackathons" as a new method of developing urban services. Urban hacks are about empowering citizens to organize themselves around communal issues and empowering them to perform aesthetic urban interventions. The government needs to start generating data that urbanists, planners, technologists, or citizens can leverage to build a better city and improve the lives of everyone.

Essential Technologies and Value Propositions

Smart Cities are already taking shape globally. Here are some ways developing a smart framework can be valuable to Lagos:

1.   Environmental Impact Calculators would provide information on calories that will be burned in moving from one destination to another. This would help in the creation of spaces that will be less dependent on burning fuel from vehicles and more accessible to pedestrian and bicyclists.

2.   Wi-Fi Zones would help people to work from home or near their homes, thereby reducing commute time and improving traffic situations. This will also reduce the digital divide and spur economic growth.

3.   Support or development of co-working spaces would ease the burden of office space challenges on young entrepreneurs and start-ups. It would also helpto bring people together.

4.   Open Data Initiatives and Open Innovations make data available to the public and techies to hack solutions or create apps that can improve the city and the living conditions of the residents.

5. Parking apps with payments would ease the burden of illegal parking, thereby easing traffic flows and reducing fuel consumption. They would also show the nearest available parking spot.

6.   Apps that manage city properties or infrastructure like street light, traffic light, bus stops, and so on would allow residents to monitor their use and effectivenesson behalf the city government thereby reducing overhead costs.

7.   Waste management apps would provide more efficient systems for waste disposal using smart bins and sensors. It also creates opportunities for residents to make money from recyclable materials.

8. City guide apps would help citizens and tourists to find points of interests (POI) and improve their experience in the city.

9. Emergency alert or crisis response apps would serve as a guide during emergencies or a crisis in the city. Citizens should have access to vital information about crime and natural disasters.

10.BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)—A public bus service for citizens to traverse the city with speed and low emission.

11.Encouraging carpooling businesses and creating opportunities for people to share rides with others would reduce traffic, emissions, and spending and fuel consumption especially when multiple cars are going to the same place.

Conclusion

Lagos city public policies are yet to support social innovation in any truly substantive way, despite the plethora of positive development and social outcomes evident in Lagos and other exemplary interventions in cities beyond. Although there have been some technologically-driven innovation projects initiated by the State, such as the creation of an app on energy, the formation of a 20-member Innovation Advisory Council, and the mapping of clusters of innovative businesses in Lagos, these first steps will not make any serious impact without having a foundation based on Open Data and Open Government frameworks.

Not only is this fundamental to the social and economic development of the city, but the use of open data frameworks supplemented by data-gathering software if properly implemented will bring about an increased sense of accountability and visibility on the part of government. For a smarter Lagos,we need smart policies. It is fundamental that the LagosState Governmentstrives to achieve this. Making Lagos a smart city requires creativity, vision, leadership, resources, and a culture that disrupts the traditional way of city planning and designing. It also requires a new way of thinking, akin to mastering a new language. For it to succeed in a fast-growing city of complex challenges, Lagos city leadership must understand how the components— people, process, data, and devices — play specific roles, and work together, to make Lagos smarter.

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3. Hong Kong Identity Cards - http://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/hkid/general_info.html

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Makoko, Lagos
Ore Disu

Lagos the Online City?

Olamide Udoma

Olamide Udoma is a project manager, researcher, writer and filmmaker holding degrees in BSc Architecture, MA Design and MPhil Infrastructure Management. At Our Future Cities NPO, she is the Future Lagos founder, manager and editor.

Recently Lagos has manifested online through the voices and images of city dwellers and visitors alike. During the 2015 elections, tens of thousands of people tweeted with the hashtag #nigeriadecides to have their say on what happens next in Nigeria. From the postponed date in February, the hashtag grew with popularity to trend through the vote count in March. Lagosians were at the forefront of this movement and continue since then to represent their city and establish a digital presence for its on-going public debates online. Nigeria has over 92 million mobile Internet users[1] (51.1% of the population) and the Internet growth in the largest economy in Africa is increasing rapidly mainly due to mobile phone subscriptions. In the first half of 2015 the Nigerian Communication Commission reported that Nigeria had 148.5 million mobile phone subscriptions and with about 10% of them being smartphone users[2]. In 2013, being the most populated[3] city in Nigeria, Lagos boasted 15% of total mobile phone subscriptions in Nigeria with almost half of them accessing the internet via their mobile phones. The largest percentage of mobile phone users who access the internet regularly are aged between 26 and 35 years old.[4]

Apart from connecting through mobile phones, internet cafes are popular within this age group, while household access stands at 7.6% of internet usage in Lagos[5]. Google is the most frequented site, followed by Facebook, Yahoo, YouTube, Blogger, Nairaland, LinkedIn, Twitter and then Wikipedia. Interesting ocial media is at the forefront of internet usage[6]. Like other tech-savvy urbanites around the world, people who live or have lived in Lagos are progressively building an online city, where people can shout, hide, protest, declare, report and gossip about

their lives and their city wherever they are in the world. This online voice can have political power and therefore could be used as an avenue to increase citizen participation within governance.Africa Practice[7] magazine observed that worldwide, engagements over social media platforms led to revolutions; it noted the way these collective digital voices encouraged, demanded and monitored best practices during elections and contributed to political growth in Africa through accountability and conversation[8]. Apart from the recent elections, Occupy Nigeria – a homegrown public protest leveraging on the popular prefix first promoted in Arab Spring – marked a significant shift, bringing social media and politics closer together. In 2012 when the then president Goodluck Jonathan removed the fuel subsidy protests ensued, fuelled by social media and organized via Twitter. During the protest there was an estimated tweet every second.

Occupy Nigeria is an example of the transfer from interactions to offline mobilization and showed the strength that social media can have on governance. Due to negations with the leaders of the movement, who were given the opportunity to make the people's demands known in close-door meetings with government officials, President Goodluck Jonathan, restored part of the subsidy. The movement has led to the growth of government officials' and politicians' activity on Facebook and Twitter.

However the number of people online and engaged is still limited. The digital divide in Nigeria means that many Nigerians remain unconnected to the internet. Due to fear of technology, affordability of accessible phones, affordability of internet connection and

infrastructural limitations, a high percentage of the Lagos population is excluded from engaging online. This limits both the number of voices heard and range of people engaging from different socioeconomic backgrounds, leading to a limited understanding of the needs of people living in Lagos. This situation is rapidly changing and with the continued expansion of mobile phone penetration, particularly cheaper smartphones there is no and doubt that this is the new online Lagos will continue to grow. With this happening the pertinent issue is language and literacy. This may seem like a significant barrier for engagement on social media platforms, especially in a country like Nigeria where there are 520 different languages[9] and a literacy rate of 78.6%[10] but 'pictures are worth a thousand words'. While in India, Shriram Venkatraman, a social media researcher at University College London, met some social media users (YouTube and Facebook specifically), who had no formal education, in a couple of cases did not know how to read or write, and spoke only Tamil. They navigated through the platforms and apps using recognisable symbols and they "Liked" and "Shared" but did not 'Comment'. The users Venkatraman met were on Facebook and YouTube everyday watching videos, looking at pictures and engaging with their friends only via this medium[11].

Such studies show the potential for citizen engagement to be seemingly endless, yet perspectives from Lagos' current social media actors may give a better indication of what is to come. How could online interactions affect what is happening on the ground? How has the Lagos online city influenced governance and urban planning? Can the Internet connect citizens with decision makers? And, can this connection result in an improved city and quality of life for people who live in Lagos?

As part of #OpenCityLagos project, Future Lagos hosted a tweetchat on 11 July 2015, 6-7pm (West Africa Time). A tweetchat is just like any other discussion, except it happens on Twitter. Six questions, with a focus as Lagos as an online city, were asked and answers came from all over the globe with opinions and examples of technology, citizenship, and urban development in Lagos.

The one-hour tweetchat led to a break away discussion on technology being an enhancer and not a solution. Therefore the emphasis should be on creating sustainable, people-centred governance and administrative systems that are supplemented by technology. Other strands of the conversation focused on online governance where decisions are made within 140 characters and if this is effective or not. One of the highlights of the chat was the realisation that the majority of Nigerians are not tech savvy. Therefore, even though with technological advances and the growth of affordable smartphones there is still a majority of the population remains offline and unable to enagage in discussions online.

Although the tweetchat lasted one hour, this is an on-going and relevant discussion on how people who live in Lagos, have lived in Lagos or have knowledge on Lagos, through social media can engage, discuss and influence the future of Lagos. If you are interested in airing your views, you can still join the conversation by logging on to twitter and using the hashtag #OCLchat.

Future Lagos
@FutureLagos

Q1. Does technology make Lagos an open city? Join the tweetchat #OCLchat @christineDV @clara_aden @snapitoga @DrKems @Nsibidinst
6:00 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A1. You can have an open city without #technology - depends on your definition of "open" :) #OCLchat
6:14 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Adeola
@mineadeby

@FutureLagos @ChristineDV @clara_aden @snapitoga @Drkems @Nsibidinst A1 Yes, in terms of its accessibility through technology #OCLchat
6:10 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Future Lagos
@FutureLagos

Q2. Can the Internet connect citizens with decision makers? #OCLchat
6:09 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Rashiq Fataar
@RashiqFataar

@FutureLagos A2. Absolutely , both through information, education and platforms #OCLchat
6:21 PM - 11 Jul 2015

ChristineDalleVedove
@ChristineDV

@africanurbanism @victoria_okoye Agree. that's why technology isn't the first criteria of an open city #OCLchat
6:20 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Adeola
@mineadeby

@FutureLagos A2 Yes, if the platform is made possible #OCLchat. Taking a cue from effects of social media activities in the last elections
6:14 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A2. Ex of new way of using tech: @budgiting app helps #Nigeria's citizens better understand govt budgets. @FutureLagos @ChristineDV #OCLchat
6:25 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Fabienne Hoelzel
@FabienneHoelzel

@FutureLagos A2. Internet is surely an important mean of communication but cannot replace face-to-face negotiations interactions #OCLchat
6:15 PM - 11 Jul 2015 - Zurich, Switzerland, Schweiz

Future Cape Town
@futurecapetown

@FutureLagos The Internet is a powerful tool in making urban development and change more transparent & accessible...#OCLchat
6:29 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A2. If governmt isn't interested in listening to citizens in 1st place, Internet, open data, etc. won't change this. #OCLchat
6:13 PM - 11 Jul 2015

BnY Urbanism
@BYUrbanism

@FutureLagos A2: Technology definitely helps. Case studies: Occupy Lagos and #BBOG #OCLchat
6:24 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A2. I think this relies first and foremost between solid participatory measures btwn govt + citizens. Internet can complement this #OCLchat
6:11 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Kems
@Drkems

A2. The Internet can & already connects citizens with decision makers. Connectivity is essential for decision makers at all levels #OCLchat
6:13 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Future Cape Town
@futurecapetown

...but we must ask ourselves how can those without internet access make be heard? How can the city itself be a platform? #OCLchat
6:21 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Future Lagos
@FutureLagos

Q3 How can an online community influence what happens on ground? #OCLchat
6:20 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A1. You can have an open city without #technology - depends on your definition of "open" :) #OCLchat
6:14 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Future Cape Town
@futurecapetown

Social change/movements start at many different scales, on many different fronts. Simultaneously. #OCLchat
6:46 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Fabienne Hoelzel
@FabienneHoelzel

@FutureLagos By smartly connecting both. Use internet to promote/ raise awareness. Use 'real world' to work, engage, build. #OCLchat
6:30 PM - 11 Jul 2015 - Zurich, Switzerland, Schweiz

Future Cape Town
@futurecapetown

A3. Online communities can allow for public space to be better utilized as a space to be heard. #OCLchat twitter.com/FutureLagos/st...
6:39 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Adeola
@mineadeby

@FutureLagos A3 By passing the required message effectively across to the decision makers involved in bringing such to reality #OCLchat
6:26 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Rashiq Fataar
@RashiqFataar

@FutureLagos A3. By meeting in person, identifying the skills available & taking action led by a basic strategy #OCLchat
6:25 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Future Lagos
@FutureLagos

Q4 Are there any examples local or worldwide of interventions online with offline results? #OCLchat

8:30 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Adeola
@mineadety

@FutureLagos A4 Recently in Nigeria, many cases of forms of abuses has benefited from offline help simply through online awareness #OCLchat

8:39 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A4. Recent floods in Accra: Ppl, organizations, govt shared info, warnings using social media + other channels #OCLchat @FutureLagos

8:28 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Naibidi Institute
@Naibidiinst

Q4: better access to information and coordination between ministries. Can technology help us achieve real-time governance? #OCLchat

8:48 PM - 11 Jul 2015

African Urbanism
@africanurbanism

A4 #OccupyNigeria protests - crowdsourcing information, resources #OCLchat @FutureLagos

8:31 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Ini Udoma
@inkuto

A4 I guess maybe Traffic radio and LASTMA on Twitter - help inform Lagosians on traffic but more can be done. #OCLchat

8:36 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Sesto Elemento
@s_id

@FutureLagos An online petition to stop the redevelopment of Tempelhof airport in Berlin comes to mind #OCLchat

7:00 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Ini Udoma
@inkuto

@Naibidiinst real time governance sounds like a disaster. Maybe faster but real time decisions can't be made in 140 characters #OCLchat

8:51 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Kems
@Dkems

A4 @lindaikeji reporting Apapa traffic conditions, other reports on twitter and @Gidi_Traffic #OCLchat twitter.com/FutureLagos/st...

8:44 PM - 11 Jul 2015

BnY Urbanism
@BYUrbanism

@FutureLagos A4 Again Occupy Lagos, the London riots, Occupy Wall Street. Other media platforms like radio definitely help as well #OCLchat

8:48 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Fabienne Hoelzel
@FabienneHoelzel

@FutureLagos A4. Maybe NextZürich and NextHamburg nexthamburg.de/en/ nextzuerich.ch possibly also thehighline.org

8:36 PM - 11 Jul 2015 - Zürich, Switzerland, Schweiz

Future Lagos
@FutureLagos

Q5 What mechanism can help politicians become more responsive to citizens? #OCLchat

8:41 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Victoria Okoye
@victoria_okoye

A5. Good question. I'm not sure how. but I bet successful example would encourage two-way dialogue + offline, on-the-ground action #OCLchat

8:44 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Fabienne Hoelzel
@FabienneHoelzel

@FutureLagos A5 Accountability + transparency=democracy. (Re) election due to capacity + achievement. Strengthen local government! #OCLchat

8:48 PM - 11 Jul 2015 - Zürich, Switzerland, Schweiz

Adeola
@mineadety

@FutureLagos A5 Dialogues, through interest groups, associations or community/public representatives #OCLchat

8:51 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Future Lagos
@FutureLagos

Q6 Do we need scientifically trained political decision makers? #OCLchat

8:50 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Derin Ajao
@theverydarin

A6 Enough can't be said of putting appropriately-skilled people in the right positions if a govt. is serious about impacting lives #OCLchat

7:03 PM - 11 Jul 2015

BnY Urbanism
@BYUrbanism

@FutureLagos Not at all. See Jane Jacobs #OCLchat

7:03 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Kems
@Dkems

A6. Decision makers need scientifically trained advisors/advice. We need smart decision makers with empathy #OCLchat twitter.com/FutureLagos/st...

7:03 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Mike Klink
@mikeklinkd

@futurecapetown: In the end, the citizen has expertise and extensive training to understand what needs to be changed in her city. #OCLchat

7:05 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Ini Udoma
@inkuto

A6 No but decision makers need to work together so there is a better understanding of context as well as shared skills #OCLchat

8:59 PM - 11 Jul 2015

Fabienne Hoelzel
@FabienneHoelzel

@FutureLagos A6 Education=seed/ beginning of most if not all.Politicians need political thinking,will,integrity. Politics=business!? #OCLchat

7:00 PM - 11 Jul 2015 - Zürich, Switzerland, Schweiz

1   Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), 2015

2   Ibukun. Y, Uber Links With Kia to Add Drivers in Africa's Biggest City, Washington Post, September 2015,

3   National Population Commission of Nigeria, in 2014, estimated that
     Lagos has a population of approximately 21 million.

4   42% Of Lagos residents in Nigeria Access Internet Via Mobile Phones, 40% Don't Access It At
     All, http://www.dashboard.co.za/index.php/exploresub/136-42-of-lagos-residents-in-nigeria-
     access-internet-via-mobile-phones-40-don-t-access-it-at-all, visited September 2015

5   Ibid

6   Ibid

7   Africa Practice is a strategy and communications consultancy (www.africapractice.com)

8   Africa Practice, The Social Media Landscape in Nigeria, 2014: the who, the what, the when,

9   Nigeria, http://www.ethnologue.com/country/NG, Visited September 2015

10   The World Fact Book, Central Intelligence Agency, 2014, https://www.cia.gov/library/
     publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html, Visited September 2015

11   Venkatraman. S, Illiteracy and social media: a picture is worth a thousand words,
     2014, http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/global-social-media/2014/01/17/illiteracy-and-social-
     media-a-picture-is-worth-a-thousand-words/, Visited September 2015

Istanbul
Moyan Brenn

Pilots for Open City:
The Case of Jakarta, Indonesia

Florian Heinzelmann and Daliana Suryawinata

Daliana Suryawinata and Florian Heinzelmann are co-founding partners of SHAU, an architectural design firm with offices in Rotterdam, Munich and Jakarta. SHAU offers a broad scope of services ranging from project commissions, international exhibition curatorial, international design competitions, teaching, writing, lectures and workshops. SHAU is mostly interested in delivering outstanding design solutions while embedding societal as well as energy related concepts in the design process.

Jakarta is the cultural, economic and political capital of Indonesia. With around 10 million 'official' inhabitants and a climbing figure of over 28 million people in its larger metropolitan area, it is one of the world's largest urban agglomerations. New government at national level, a populist president and recent high but slowing economic growth of 6 per cent still give many hope on the potential transformation for this country. But dire problems and heavy challenges that lie in the city remain unsolved.

For this reason Jakarta is also a sexy, surreal, problem-saturated research zone for urban researchers and garnering large interest as a learning and testing field for architecture and urban design, practice and research. From ETH Zurich to Harvard GSD, from Hong Kong University to TU Delft, numerous topics, papers, studies, urban design proposals have been made, researched, analysed, studied and published.

Despite the current trend of researching into Jakarta, actual implementation of specific pilots is rare. There are still too few connections between academic work and practical solutions, echoing a reoccurring issue facing glamorized cities predominantly in the global South. Yet it is a pity that for a place in urgent need for change, pilots are rarely realised. The problem is not everyone wants to commit or knows how to proceed.

This article highlights some initiatives where a few committed stakeholders have creatively put together design efforts into reality, not only for Jakarta but also Bandung – a small, thriving city of 2.5 million just 2.5 hours from Jakarta by car, and the capital of West Java, nicknamed the Paris van Java since the Dutch colonial era

After the Dutch left Indonesia in 1945, there was hardly any formal city planning and most Indonesian cities developed without clear direction. Developers built gated communities to accommodate mass housing for middle-to-high income families. Shopping malls and commercial developments were favored over public parks and libraries.

Such developments were more profitable and also provided an easier means for building permit bribes. Building regulations, such as the mandatory provision for water retention areas, were often violated.

Today Jakarta is riddled by a constantly sinking ground, which affects the built environment and leads to flooding during rainy seasons. This is caused in part by a lack of infrastructure and the flouting of planning regulations, but also the inability of the Ciliwung River to cope with the increased volume of water which makes flooding a biannual happening.

That said, the single most challenging aspect in Jakarta, shared by other major urban centers of emerging markets or developing economies, is heavy traffic. An ineffective public transport system and overpopulation due to a continuous stream of new inhabitants compounds the issue.

A typical short-distance commute demands between two and five hours of family and personal time everyday, due to the traffic gridlock.

Despite such complexities, there is an influx of migrants, and land prices and property values are still soaring, making the city unaffordable for many especially within the inner city area.

Becoming Jakarta: Inherited Urbanism & Contemporary Challenges of Public Space

The urban story of Jakarta is told succinctly in 'Five Layers of Jakarta', an exhibit and publication authored by renowned urban planner Jo Santoso at the 4th International Architecture Biennale in Rotterdam, 2009. In his book, Jo Santoso explains how Jakarta is a result of juxtapositions of many historical, economical and political layers in five different and influential periods: the pre-colonial Javanese City; the Dutch colonial settlement during which Jakarta was reconfigured to fulfill its administrative role; the Soekarno period of national building led by and named after Indonesia's first president; followed by the Soeharto era – a 30-year period strongly influenced by market demands and corruption practices, during which Jakarta's urbanization was guided by a clear doctrine: "the City as a Growth Machine". After the Soeharto era, mending the city became an almost impossible task. Problems after problems occurred, eventually crystallizing in Jakarta being tagged the second worst city to live in, according to Business Week 2009. Jo Santoso describes this fifth and current layer as a moment locked in a battle 'to preserve and/or to develop'. The question is what to do now in this indecisive fifth layer: How to direct urban changes? How to make the city livable? How to strengthen the local economy - the formal and informal? How to generate a city framework by enhancing a new form of urban spatial entity?

Public space provides an important lens to study, test and refine what Jakarta's new urban identity could be and how urban development can be used to foster a city that is better regulated,

Jakarta is sinking up to 18cm a year. Currently, 40% of the city lies below sea level causing regular flooding

more inclusive and maintains a balance between economic pulls and socio-spatial imperatives. Rather than the open, green spaces nominally associated with more European and Western cities, Jakarta typically provides privatized alternatives: subscription-based gyms, private swimming pool(s), ticketed indoor playgrounds, air-conditioned shopping malls. Few are able to access these due to their premium price tags. Even residents of mid-to-high income gated communities still have to pay a fee to access outdoor playgrounds. Although the City of Jakarta has a set of public space standards, the prescribed ration of public space per person is regarded as unrealistic by developers and architects, which is partly to blame for its poor implementation in the city. For example, for every residential building with 250 occupants, it stipulates that there should be a playground of 300m2. As a result few neighborhoods incorporate playgrounds in adherence to these policies, except for some very high-end housing areas that are not accessible to everybody.

Despite these challenges, a few residents – mainly architects, environmentalists and urban enthusiasts – have proactively contributed towards the city's progress, especially in greening the city. Their movements have received support from impacted communities and neighbourhoods. Actors like Ridwan Kamil, an architect who became Bandung's mayor, Sigit Kusumawijaya, and social-media expert Shafiq Pontoh among others were initiators of 'Indonesia Berkebun', a grassroots initiative to

The upgraded Kampung Herbal, an urban village. One of the concepts to come out of a studio and workshop at the Why Factory in collaboration with the Berlage Institute.
Image : The Why Factory 2012

Image : SHAU

activate neighbourhoods through urban farming. Started in 2011 in Springhill, a mid-income gated neighbourhood in Jakarta, this initiative achieved a Google Asia Pacific Award in 2011 for the Web Heros category. Another initiative by Nadine Zamira from Leafplus, a fashion model, environmentalist and founder of 'Hidden Park' movement in Jakarta, claims there are actually no less than one thousand parks in Jakarta. But they are not accessible, under-maintained, and hidden, thus effectively non-existent. Her team activates as many parks as they can - one park at a time - engaging residents to use the parks as their backyard, cleaning and maintaining them.

Redefining the City through visionary and effective leadership

Since October 2012 Jakarta has had new hopes embodied in the persons of Jokowi (Joko Widodo) and Ahok (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama), serving respectively as the governor and deputy governor up to 2014. Despite difficult circumstances for Jokowi during his time as mayor of Solo (Surakarta), a city of 600,000 citizens, he was able to develop parts of the city's slum-like settlements at the riverfront, transform it into a clean, green strip and relocate the inhabitants into affordable housing projects. Solo's market revitalisation projects

are also worth noting. Improving traditional markets meant upgrading and developing its surrounding neighbourhood and equipping the existing market with daycare, clinic and other public functions. Despite occurring on a smaller scale compared to Jakarta, these successes along with Jokowi's knack for getting things done and his perceived incorruptible nature (Indonesia being ranked 100 by Transparency Watch in 2011) was the basis for the trust he inspired in people and his resulting governorship appointment.

Jokowi's previous vice governor, the incumbent governor of Jakarta, Ahok left a similarly impressive track record as a regent in the small town of Belitung Timur. In the few years after becoming a regent, he pulled together an integrated healthcare system and established a pension system exclusively for the residents of Belitung Timur. Though a Christian Chinese Indonesian, he won over native Moslems by being transparent in his management of public spending and providing funds for local leaders to attend the customary Hajj trip. Still Ahok has not escaped criticism. Commentators like Andre Vitchek have been dismissive of his perceived achievements, noting: "At this point, many citizens of Jakarta are, it appears, ready to believe in just any flowery fairytale;

their city is already in such a dreadful condition that the situation could get hardly any worse." Nevertheless, in late 2014 Jokowi became the president of Indonesia. Jokowi is now trying to scale up Solo's success nationwide, while Ahok is reforming the way Jakarta governance runs, by cutting out and reshuffling corrupt officers and declaring a war on corruption.

Also worth noting are the contributions of Ridwan Kamil, the architect turned mayor mentioned earlier. As the head of URBANE, an architecture and urban design practice in Bandung, Kamil was involved in community projects such as Indonesia Berkebun, Bandung Creative City Forum, and many other meaningful small-to-medium scale progresses in Bandung. Now, with his power as the new mayor, the city of Bandung has enjoyed great progress never seen before, such as the pedestrianisation of major roads, the greening urban villages and most interestingly the revitalisation of large and small urban parks under his program 'thematic parks.' This latter program included a series of mini-parks under the Pasupati highways: single-person park, skate park, film park; as well as the renovation of the main alun-alun plaza. Kamil also initiated a mutual agreement with investors on many projects including public transportation

like cable cars and a Maglev train trajectory between Bandung and Jakarta among others.

Ridwan's programs are directed towards openness between the city and citizens, and take into consideration residents' aspirations in its agenda and budget plan. Though not without hassle and hindrances, so far the aspiring mayor has incorporated CSR and sponsorship to support many projects and developed the long-term project with subsidies incorporated into its business plan.

It is important to note that despite the marked change of leadership and governance, bureaucracy remains rife. Translating budget allocation for Indonesia's cities into actually public expenditure is slowed by approval processes from DPRD - a legislative body created to serve each of Indonesias 34 provinces composed of bureaucrats, some of whom do not share the same visions with sitting governors and mayors . This means the national budget allocation cannot be diverted easily to allow planning, design and construction of massive urban renewal projects, public housing, public transportation and facilities. In the budget planning, most of the items have to be carried out in one year, and the allocated budget has

Public Installation at the Kota Tua Creative Festival 2014

Image: Paskalis K A

to be spent fully within the year, making it hard to create a multi-year projects such as infrastructural and large-scale developments. To be able to plan and carry out special projects, corporate social responsibility investments from large Indonesian companies have become the major source for alternative funding.

Moving from Design & Urban Studies to Pilot Projects

Meanwhile since 2009, more initiatives have risen in Jakarta, originating from within and outside the country. Edinburgh, Rotterdam and Jakarta-based architects formed several initiatives labeled Open City Jakarta, comprising several proposals on diverse scales focused on how to bring reciprocity back to urban design and architecture practices. The Netherlands Embassy through its culture department Erasmus Huis, has supported several prominent Dutch and Indonesian architects and urban

designers to work out innovative yet challenging issues and proposals, from social housing, to vertical living, public space and heritage site activation on several sites in and beyond Jakarta.

The Why Factory, Berlage Institute, Tarumanagara University together with SHAU have initiated an urban activation idea called Superkampung: a concept to turn potential urban slums into a productive urban oasis. The resulting study and publication, Vertical Village (2013) went on to inform pilot implementation, namely 'Kampung Deret' or row village-houses, one of Jokowi's recent and most successful programs in Jakarta. ETH Zurich also runs a program with NUS Singapore and Universitas Indonesia, on the Ciliwung River program headed by Prof. Christophe Girot of the landscape architecture department. Earlier this year, 10-15 Jakarta-based architects proposed designs of public toilets to the city of Jakarta. Several Dutch-based architects -OMA and MVRDV-

Proposed housing development for the Muara Angke fishing village pilot project 2014

Image: SHAU

among others, are working on interesting revitalisation projects at Koja Tua, North Jakarta.

We would like to highlight three locations in North Jakarta currently undergoing major planning and where we have been involved in as architects or consultants under our architectural practice, SHAU. One is Kota Tua, an abandoned historical compound and the original city centre of Jakarta. Another one is Muara Angke, a traditional fishing village undergoing threats of extinction and eviction. The biggest one is a reclamation of seventeen islands with a giant sea wall which will totally change the whole of Jakarta and its relationship with the sea.

The Kota Tua Creative Festival: Place-making & urban regeneration

Let's begin with Kota Tua, a decaying area after being neglected for decades. Despite its decaying buildings, smelly canals, and lack of points of interests. It has become one of Jakarta's

hotspots for social and tourist activities. People frequently visit Kota Tua to take photographs, bike, explore the neighborhood, sit around and chat, and play chess. In a city saturated with privatization, Kota Tua is one of the few remaining open spaces in Jakarta, a true public space. But currently, due to lack of infrastructural support, a dirty canal and poor perceptions of safety, not many believe that the area can be revitalized. The Kota Tua Creative Festival challenged this perception. Organized by Windi Salomo, Diana Ang and SHAU with the back up of Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy and the Indonesian Diaspora Network, it successfully attempted to engage young creative thinkers and residents in a two-day event.

Heritage buildings and museums which are usually closed, were open and hosted different programs during the event. Nearly forty thousand people flooded the area, enjoying diverse programs: architecture and art exhibitions, community workshops, bike tours, sketching,

Jakarta Jaya, the Green Manhattan, an alternative for Giant Sea Wall reclamation

Image: Jesse Kuijper

gathering, design pop-up shops, good music, and more. Like Venice, which hosts three of the world's most prestigious creative festivals: The Venice Art Biennale, The Venice Architecture Biennale, and *the Venice Film Festival, the Kota Tua Creative Festival* took place against the backdrop of the city's historical buildings and canals, employing place-making techniques.

Soon after the Kota Tua Creative Festival, reconstruction of the heritage buildings gathered steam. Architects have been hired by building owners and operators to propose new functions and to design interior layouts of the old buildings. Investments have also risen incrementally, led by an active board called JOTRC (Jakarta Old Town Revitalisation Corporation) which helps gather investment for profit and to support the renovation and management of historic buildings. UNESCO has also granted funds to help structural renovation on some buildings including a community cafe at Jalan Pintu Besar in Kota Tua, Jakarta. Overall, building owners' awareness and engagement have risen. However, there are still some major problems with street vendors relocation and management, hosting target visitors, the festering canal, the 'premans' hooligans and other unsolved issues.

The Muara Angke Masterplan & Housing Proposal

The second project worth noting along the coastline of Jakarta is the Muara Angke Vertical Kampung - an Indonesian Diaspora Network and SHAU project supported by the City of Jakarta and a local, large development company. Muara Angke plays a special role, as one of the few remaining fishing settlements, supported by industrial and port-related activities. While on the

one hand traditional methods of fish-processing play an important part in the livelihood of many of Muara Angke's inhabitants, on the other hand an efficient fishing port and related industry provide a strong economic base for the area. The adjacent mangrove forest adds another special characteristic to the area: this is the last remaining of its kind of vegetation in all of Jakarta. Muara Angke's location along the coastline at the same time poses a threat. With rising sea levels, increasingly fluctuating water levels of the rivers and ongoing land subsidence, the area is subject to regular flooding and an increasing flood risk.

SHAU has been entrusted by the city of Jakarta to deliver a masterplan for the Muara Angke area, and to provide architectural design for a 660-unit vertical housing pilot. As a large part of the housing is in a bad condition, the primary aim of the masterplan is to provide new residential areas of improved quality, while also creating favourable conditions for eco-tourism and attract other people to the site. The proposal for the first stage of 600 housing units focused on multifunctional spaces beyond residential program - thus introducing small shops and a working area on the ground, while a musholla (small mosque) and housing begins on the first floor. The design maximizes air flow for passive cooling managed by two kinds of voids: semi-public courtyards between the buildings, where mixed activities from fish drying to aquaponic farming can take place, and secondly semi-private courtyards within every building which guarantees natural light for every unit, ensuring less energy consumption. Stairs are the main circulation, accessible from the semi-private courtyards, while there are units on the ground for the disabled. Each building

has a differentiated façade, yet within a modular system to keep the cost feasible. Green plants are maximized, outside and inside, running down the courtyards, up to the roof garden.

However, not all has gone as smoothly as intended. Residents initially misunderstood the scheme and feared their eviction and replacement by a middle-class residential tower. Previous sessions with the community have involved negotiations and unrest at times, due to miscommunication with the local government. Yet the architects and community held several workshop sessions together, which informed the development an integrated program called IKAN MAS- Integrasi Kampung Anugerah Nelayan Muara Angke Sejahtera (integrated fishing village of prosperous Muara Angke). IKAN MAS also means goldfish. The proposal has now been finalised in form of construction and detailed engineering drawings and now awaits approval for possible construction this year.

The Giant Sea Wall – Satellite greenfield & mass reclamation development schemes

The third project we would like to highlight is the largest project being undertaken by the national government at the coast of Jakarta, called the Giant Sea Wall. The current plan includes a giant dike to prevent seawater flooding, and a reclamation scheme in the shape of a bird - a nonsensical figure in terms of urban planning since it does not serve any purpose besides high-level lobbying. The Dutch government and engineers have been working out the overall plans amidst questions on how the Indonesian government should follow it up, and on what levels are both parties' to

commit. On the other hand, in reaction to this giant master plan, coastal communities have voiced out their disagreements. Even though groundbreaking has been set, reviews are being made to whether or not to go on with such a plan. Several questions remain unanswered: For whom is the new development? Will it eventually become a new traffic and environmental burden to the city? To what extent is the Dubai-style reclamation being mimicked and is this a negative approach to urban design in Jakarta?

Jakarta Jaya Foundation, led by the Borneo Initiative CEO- Jesse Kuijper, initiated an alternative masterplan on the same location called Jakarta Jaya: the Green Manhattan with the help of SHAU as their urban designer. An oval-shaped island designed for 1.9 million inhabitants, The Green Manhattan is envisioned as a multitude of all visionary, ecological and social projects combined in one project to make Jakarta a better performing city in all sectors in the urban plan. Thus the idea of creating an integrated city is favored over gated community islands as in the planning right now. By using an integral approach, all the proposed investments are gathered to provide an ideal city's requirements: public transportation, great parks, university and research centers, housing and offices and at the same time be open to diverse social classes. This plan has been well-received by many, and its implementation really depends on a top-down decision at the national level, as it is a national project beyond the boundary of Jakarta itself.

1   'Five Layers of Jakarta' was curated by
     Prof. Kees Christiaanse and sub-curated by
     Stephen Cairns and Daliana Suryawinata.

2   Vltchek, Andre (2012). "Governor 'Jokowi' Enter
     Jakarta on a Wooden Horse". November 23,
     2012. Available at: http://www.counterpunch.
     org/2012/11/23/governor-jokowi-enters-jakar-
     ta-on-a-wooden-horse/

3   Indonesia has 34 provinces, each province
     has a capital city. Each capital city's budget
     depends on the approval of the legislative body
     in the province

4   SHAU stands for Suryawinata-Heinzelmann
     Architecture and Urbanism. It is a young
     German-Indonesian architecture practice
     based in Munich, Rotterdam and Bandung with
     three partners in charge: Florian Heinzelmann,
     Tobias Hofmann and Daliana Suryawinata.

Being Berlin.
A Tale of Two Cities

Lukas Feireiss

Lukas Feireiss is the founder of StudioLukasFeireiss based in Berlin which focuses on the cultivation of contemporary cultural reflexivity through the discussion and mediation of architecture, art and visual culture in the urban realm. The editor and curator of numerous books and exhibitions, Feireiss teaches at various universities worldwide and is in the Advisory Board of the Aedes Network Campus Berlin.

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. For the last couple of decades Berlin has been internationally hailed as Europe's creative capital, elected by a young generation of 'creatives' from around the globe, it is regarded as a unique artistic haven and libertine playground: cosmopolitan, open-minded, edgy and affordable. Architects and city planners from across the globe have observed with equal fascination and bewilderment how this notoriously bankrupt city attracted creative types to the city, and developed seemingly by itself from the bottom up with its 'poor but sexy' appeal.

Despite this outstanding international reputation as a truly open city, Berlin is currently experiencing a serious identity crisis, whose outcome will very likely determine the future of the city. The city's surprisingly low rents compared with other European capitals and an abundance of unclaimed space have helped draw artists and other creative professionals people from across the world to the city. This is partly due to the Berlin's extraordinary history as a divided city, which created an equally isolated and privileged condition with generally lower rents than the rest of the country. After the four decade long separation and the fall of the socialist regime, the city was furthermore confronted with many redundant infrastructures that were again open for reinterpretation and alternative appropriation. By now however, Berlin has received the attention of the international real estate market. Renting prices have nearly doubled in only a few years. Gentrification and an exodus of poorer social groups to the outskirts have become emotionally highly charged political issues, questioning established models of coexistence. Even novel forms of local patriotism emerge. Berlin's unique

quality of providing a somewhat unforeseeable urban landscape, which escapes the restraints of organized public space and time (and the main reason for its current fame) is currently at risk of being lost to more conservative and generic interpretations of city development.

Berlin is therefore a prime example of the phenomenon that every city is to some extent both a benefiter and prisoner of its own myth and cliché. The city's identity crisis can actually only be understood against the backdrop of Berlin's very own myths. The current debate on Berlin's urban development for example is strongly influenced by two myths that stand in stark contrast to one another: a tale of two cities. One argues for a heterogeneous Berlin as a place of social and spatial coexistence, fond of its harsh spatial character. The other, for a homogeneous Berlin that tries to eradicate the spatial and social remains of its recent history by simulating historic continuity, most apparent in the reconstruction of the destroyed Berliner Stadtschloss, the royal and imperial palace and historical capital of Prussia in the centre of Berlin. This moment of crisis in finding its own identity is a turning point for the city of Berlin. Important changes will take place - for better or for worse. How the story of the city unfolds we cannot say. For now we can only turn towards its beginning and learn from the past.

Plurality and diversity, fractures, contradictions and inconsistencies make up the eventful history of Berlin. The latter have been constitutional to the city for centuries. Since the initiation of policies promoting immigration and religious tolerance for Berlin in the aftermath of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648), a series of wars in Central Europe that damaged and destroyed

View of the destroyed Berlin with Branderburger Gate in 1945.

Credit: Berlin at the end of the War, 1945. Source: www. rarehistoricalphotos.com

more then one third of the city's houses and killed almost half of its population. Immigrants from Bohemia, Poland and Salzburg came to the city, but most and foremost were the French Huguenots who were offered asylum in the city. By 1700, approximately 30 percent of Berlin's residents were actually French as a result of the massive and unprecedented Huguenot immigration. Bringing with them discernment and skill for aesthetic facility, this immigrant population in turn laid the foundation for Berlin as a capital of trade and crafts.

Indeed the industrialization of the city in the middle of the 19th century would have been impossible without the numerous workers, who came to the city from all parts of Germany and its neighbouring countries. The city's economy and population expanded dramatically, and Berlin soon positioned itself as the main railway hub and economic centre of Germany. In 1920 came the Greater Berlin Act, which incorporated dozens of suburban cities, villages, and estates around Berlin into an expanded city ten times its original size, and resulted in the population rising to around four million. Despite the political unrest due to by economic uncertainties of the Weimarer Era, Berlin became a renowned center of the Roaring Twenties, strongly influenced in its overall character by Russian-Jewish immigrants; a major world capital known for its leadership roles in science,

View of the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin in 1914

Image Source:
Bundesarchiv
Image183-R52689

technology, the humanities, city planning, film, higher education, government, and industry.

Then in 1933, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power and effectively destroyed Berlin's Jewish community. Terror reigned. But the city was also spatially affected by the Nazi regime between 1933 and 1945. A number of monumental buildings such as the Olympic Stadium and the Tempelhof Airport were built as part of the projected renewal of the German capital after the planned victory of World War II. The creation of an East-West axis (today Straße des 17. Juni) and the replacement of the Berlin victory column in its centre, far away from its original position, are some of the other successfully completed projects. Although most of the Nazi era's comprehensive construction plan for Berlin was shelved due to the beginning of the war, a large number of old buildings in many of the planned construction areas were demolished before the war. The Battle of Berlin in the last years of World War II contributed to this trend for zeroing in on buildings, leaving large parts of the city completely in ruins and around 125,000 civilians dead.

After the end of the war in Europe in 1945, Berlin received large numbers of refugees from the Eastern provinces. The victorious powers quartered the city into four sectors, analogous to the occupation zones into which Germany

A model of Adolf Hitler's Germania plan for Berlin by Albert Speer from 1939

Image Source: Bundesarchiv Image 146III-373

Almost overnight the city's footprint doubled and extensive resources of space were suddenly available

was divided. The sectors of the Western Allies (the United States, the United Kingdom and France) formed West Berlin, while the Soviet Sector formed East Berlin. Only a few years later in 1949, the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in West Germany, while the Marxist-Leninist German Democratic Republic was proclaimed in East Germany. In 1961 the Berlin Wall was constructed by German Democratic Republic, completely cutting off West Berlin from surrounding East Germany and from East Berlin

In particular for West-Berlin, this meant the establishment of a unique and highly contested spatio-political condition as a Western island in an Eastern ocean. A free city and political enclave surrounded by East Berlin and East Germany, accessible by West Germany only by a narrow rail and highway corridor. Despite West-Berlin's close political affiliation to West Germany, it was not part of it but had a special and unique legal status. In the midst of the leaden post-war era, an initial economic revival began to bloom in the western part of the city after the construction of the wall, thanks to the massive recruitment of working force from Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Turkey and Greece in the 1960s. In East Berlin, labourers from Vietnam, Mozambique and other socialist countries were recruited in the last years of the GDR and kept the city functioning.

Beyond marking the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was symbolic of geo-political, economic, social and spatial realignments of significant proportions. Almost

overnight the city's footprint doubled and extensive resources of space were suddenly available: enormous amounts of infill and fallow land, superfluous infrastructures and questionable property rights. Abandoned sites inherited from WWII and the GDR era became breeding grounds from which a new culture emerged. In contrast to other European cities, low prices, depopulation and an abundance of space led to a high social diversity in centrally located areas. The freedom that these spaces offered inspired locals and newcomers to appropriate them and to experiment with new initiatives and business models. All of this triggered a phase of urban exploration, in which residual space and public space somewhat lost their definitions. The celebration of the perennial interim solution became the status quo, transforming the city into an open laboratory and propagating its experimental spirit way beyond the city limits.

These events imprinted themselves onto the city and generated a city of heterogeneity and coexistence in which opposing architectures and lifestyles co-exist. However it is this very quality that is currently at danger of being lost. Simply speaking, Berlin is experiencing the equally recognised and controversial, double-edged global phenomenon of urban gentrification, right now and at first hand. Property values increase; low-income inhabitants relocate. However it is important to keep Berlin's truly unique history in mind whist recalling the aforementioned identity crisis of the city. Crisis calls for a decision, as connoted by the Greek noun from which the term is derived: krisis meaning 'decision').

Although the narrative thus far has focused on the dynamics of population, market forces, political

situations and people's actions in reshaping the urbanscape, professional urban practice and planning instruments still play a vital role worth considering. An urban planning that rejects the inherent complexity, beauty and chaos of the city never succeeds because it fundamentally rejects the city in its very being. Every city strives from this diversity: it needs consensus as much as it needs conflict as its enabling forces. This interaction on different levels may be symbiotic or conflictual, but it is exactly this multiple constitution that is essential for the ultimate survival of the city. Therein urbanity lies – in the unceasing flux from confrontation and contradiction, from spontaneity and continuity.

Today urban planners, architects and other 'creatives' alike need not think and act in oppositional terms when engaging with the design of the city but should strive to learn from one another - critically and wholeheartedly. In the case of Berlin, which in the last decades served as a progressive example of an alternative and somewhat self-regulating model of urban planning for many city planners across the world, I am keeping my hopes up for my hometown to not become one of many gentrified and 'finished' cities. There is more to this city. There maybe even still is the chance to go down a different road than the rest and remain the

great unfinished, evocative space. Let's see if we succeed or fail in the process. In the end, it is this process of negotiation and the people themselves who apply meaning to the city.

A divided street between former East and West Berlin in the 1980s

Image:
Bouchestrasse, Harzer Strasse, Berliner Mauer, 1989

Image Source:
Wiki Commons

APPLE TEA
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2.0 Cultural Narratives, Urban Aesthetics

Istanbul
Moyan Brenn

Rogue Flânerie: Cultural *Takhawalu* In Urban Extremes

Dr. Jenny F Mbaye

Dr. Jenny Mbaye (PhD.) is a lecturer in Culture and Creative Industries at the School of Arts and Social Science, City University London. Prior to this, she was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town. Her work focuses on cultural labour and creative production processes, as well as the work and policy practices of urban creativity in African contexts.

On rogue encounters

"You are not supposed to leave your tour group!"

I was standing on the deck, bewildered, watching the boat I came with slowly moving away from the harbour.

Our tour guide warned us while we were reaching the shores of Robben Island that the boat would leave sharply at 4.30pm. At 4pm, we had done the bus tour around the Island, seen the clay sites where prisoners were slowly loosing sight and strength; we had taken 'the' picture facing Table Mountain and the CBD from the other side of the ocean; we had learnt about the wedding option with free boat ride on every February 14th; we had witnessed the mostly deserted houses, the school now closed since 2011, forcing the kids of the museum staff living on the island to commute by boat to Cape Town everyday; we had done the tour of the prison guided by one of the ex-cons, victim of the Apartheid regime; we had followed and proceeded to the whole script and I had 30min to pay my respect to Sheikh Abdur Rahmaan Matura buried about 260 years ago on the island after having defied Dutch colonial rule and being imprisoned there in the 17th century.

I thus went to the burial of this historic figure that is not included in the tour package and came back at 4.20pm to witness my boat leaving the harbour. As said, bewildered.

(Personal notes, November, 11th, 2014)

This ethnographic snapshot allows me to introduce a personal reflection, which is located in two distinctive extremities of the continent, southern and western, Cape Town and Dakar. This contribution suggests an experiential analysis that is essentially about stressing and telling two specific stories of culture, creativity and urban development, while focusing on day-to-day experiences of distinctive African cities that were/have been homelands for me: as a diasporic returnee to Dakar for a couple months over ten years, and as a foreign worker establishing herself in Cape Town during three years.

Looking into a schizophrenic Dakar, singularly diverse, with its traditional republic *Lébou*, its myths and mystics that regulates the city and cohabits with a formal institutional system, with its cosmopolitan sites and its 'CFA rhythm', there is much to learn from *Dakar l'Ineffable*[1]. In its overwhelming humanity of interlaced urban extremes, which Sow Fall (2001) in her *La Grève des báttu* so imaginatively describes, Dakar does not sleep. This state of affair is reflected in both the symbolic and physical invasion of public space; streets, squares, sidewalks and other public locations are not to everyone but rather to nobody; a free-rider *praxis* applies, whereby each feels free to appropriate it for commercial purpose, from street vendors to shop extensions[2].

There is in Dakar, an overwhelming freedom of movements, of participation, always constrained by the already used and abused

Dakar displays a spatial mixity in its urban fabric. The area of Parcelles Assainies suitably illustrates this observation, for there, the high civil servant lives nearby working class and unemployed people.

liberty taken by the other, in her/his desperate humanity, ready for interaction, communication, exchange, *waxalé*[3] of all kinds.The Cape Town I experienced, on the other hand, is marked by a certain Northern efficiency that can restrict improvisation, but also one that is pregnant with suspicion, if not fear of the other, where eye-avoidance, let alone physical contact with street or random encounters is a rare dynamic in a 'clicky' city; and where the central market (Greenmarket Square?), which always occupies such a central socialising position in African cities[4] (Simone, 2008; Grabski, 2013) stands as a pale figure of its diverse and cosmopolitan citizenry[5].

Moreover, and with its political ambition of a 24-hour city (Charman and Govender, forthcoming), Cape Town certainly does not want to sleep. However, the clean and secured streets of the CBD reveal empty places where taxis are – rather than stopped or hailed at – called through a company. Rather than infering

security and convenience, this reminds how the question of safety is always being at the back of one's mind. This feeling is reinforced in numerous places and encounters across the city: the many shops where entry is permitted by buzzing a gated door; where the use of public transports is discouraged[6], and acquiring an individual car is highly recommended.

Mapping improbable contrasts of urban extremes

As most African contexts, Cape Town and Dakar, are characterised by a more and more deeply divided urban complex (Myers, 2015).

Taxi rank in Cape Town against the backdrop of table mountain.

Image: Tseliso Monaheng

However, the way such a fragmented composite unfolds on their respective landscape is quite singular. Cape Town as a South African city scarred by the apartheid era is rather marked by a persisting spatial segregation. Townships such as *Mitchell Plains* or *Kayelitsha* are far removed from wealthy gated communities as well as from the trendy neighbourhoods such as *Green Point* or *Camps Bay*. Some popular areas are showing signs of spatial mixity, such as Woodstock or Sea Point. This however mostly stems from a gentrifying process, whereby the most vulnerable part of the population are slowly but surely being pushed away.

Dakar, on another hand, displays a spatial mixity in its urban fabric. The area of *Parcelles Assainies* suitably illustrates this observation, for there, the high civil servant lives nearby working class and unemployed people; the businessmen and CEOs near by the street vendors and second-hand goods dealers. More generally, the CBD *(Plateau)* is juxtaposed to *Médina*, and the privileged residential areas of *Fann Residence* and *Point E* are only minutes away from the much popular neighbourhoods of *Fass-Colobane* and *Gueule Tapée*.

Hence, variegated urban extremes are evident in these continental extremities. Yet both Cape Town and Dakar share an increasingly neoliberal urban development agenda, whereby a market-led form of city governance is more or less implicitly animated by two guiding principles. One pertains to the economics of tourism, whereby the city develops a cultural strategy for place marketing, relying on a tourist imaginary and aiming for urban tourist attraction; the second, a rationality potentially defined per what Ghertner (2011) calls 'a world-class aesthetics'[7] — a very

globalising discourse that has been shaping cultural and urban policies, and which finality is to reach this 'global/world' city status and image. In a way, this is an aesthetic follow-up of the 'world city hypothesis (Friedmann, 1986) and the 'global city discourse' (Sassen, 2001), whereby cities have become the new 'command and control centres' of the world, increasingly competing with one another in a context of ever increasing economic and social polarisation. In this global urban competition, in 2014, Cape Town became the World Design Capital, and in 2015 Dakar, one of the Cities of Digital Arts, as part of UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Both acquired titles somehow translate this neoliberal aspiration of imagining and inscribing cities on the competitive and hierarchical global urban map.

Looking closer into such an agenda, Dakar recently saw its seafront *(La corniche)* completely revamped with the emergence of luxury hotel complexes (such as Sea Plaza in 2010) as well as major refurbishment of its road systems — right on time for the Summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (2008). Inscribing Dakar on the global urban map has also implied 'Grand Works' under Abdoulaye Wade's presidency, such as the Monument of African Renaissance (2010), the third edition of the FESMAN, World Festival of Black Arts (2010) and the National Grand Theatre (2011), West Africa's largest one yet.

In Cape Town, this neoliberal articulation of culture, creativity and urban development was confirmed by the Central City Improvement District that issued a call for the establishment of 'A Cape Town that's alive 24/7'[8]. In fact, a public-private partnership in charge of advising

Rooftop Panorama looking towards Central Dakar

Image: Jenny Mbaye

and informing the city's urban and cultural policy, Cape Town Partnership has been advocating a '24 hours city', one that is 'safe, clean, caring and open for business' hence attracting tourism, culture and creativity[9] In this regard, policy action and implementation strategies are just one overt side of the 'coin of urban development'.

The other one and much less obvious side – which is often compromised for the sake of policy imperatives of quick turn-out and delivery – has to do with the thinking process that precedes any realisation and which necessarily calls for some 'spatial literacy' of the city and its creativity.

Situating the zones of Flânerie

"In storytelling, there is always transgression as in all art. Without transgression, without the red boundary, there is no risk, no danger, no frisson, no experiment, no discovery, and no creativity" (Okri, 1997, pp.63–66)

An informed spatial literacy refers to the capacity to read and connect all the different knowledge that exists in silos within a city, which once identified and explored, can improve urban development policies. Indeed, governing an inclusive and open city involves attention to issues of appropriation and sustainability. These in turn imply an acute focus and a genuine recognition of the multi-layered spaces and publics inhabiting, using, 'owning' and often 'transgressing' the city. A spatial literacy of reading in-between the lines of multiple urban *worlds*[10] can as such be paralleled with 'seeing through' the 'threshold', the borderlands' of our urban environment in such a way it becomes a refreshing opportunity to revisit the simultaneous processes of closure and openness.

Moving beyond restrictive binaries of inside versus outside, planned versus organic, centre versus periphery, or formal versus informal (to name a few), to embrace the 'threshold' and 'borderlands' of the city can reinvigorate our spatial literacy, allowing a space/lens to regard the interactions between culture, creativity and urban development in African cities. As such, the spatial literacy comes back to the question of how far one can engage in one's own terms with the city s/he inhabits, though still in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power. Indeed, a process in which urban openness is always conditional to the equipotentiality of individuals[11].

Here, Benjamin's contribution is of peculiar relevance for his *flâneur's* contemplative stance belongs to a foreigner[12]. Indeed, such a stance can allow us to further our learning, our literacy of how to inhabit a city, for "to stand on the threshold, to stand in the zone, means to be able to possess the gaze of a foreigner in one's own homeland" (Nuselovici, 2014, p.28). Similarly, in his praise of a public space where the *flâneur* can still go by wandering in the streets of the city, where everything is not all planned or hence devitalised, La Cecla (1988) stresses the progressive contribution of 'getting lost in the city'. Such a borderline stance of the loss of the body onto an urban territory is a way of creating singular perceptions of space, as a value and a purpose for distinctive 'writing of the voice' (Rubin, 2004)[13] within the urban fabric of foreigners at home.

The *zones of the flâneur* who purposely gets lost into the city, this interstitial space that allows the contemplative stance of the foreigner on his homeland to emerge, thus highlight how the main infrastructural unit in the African city or at
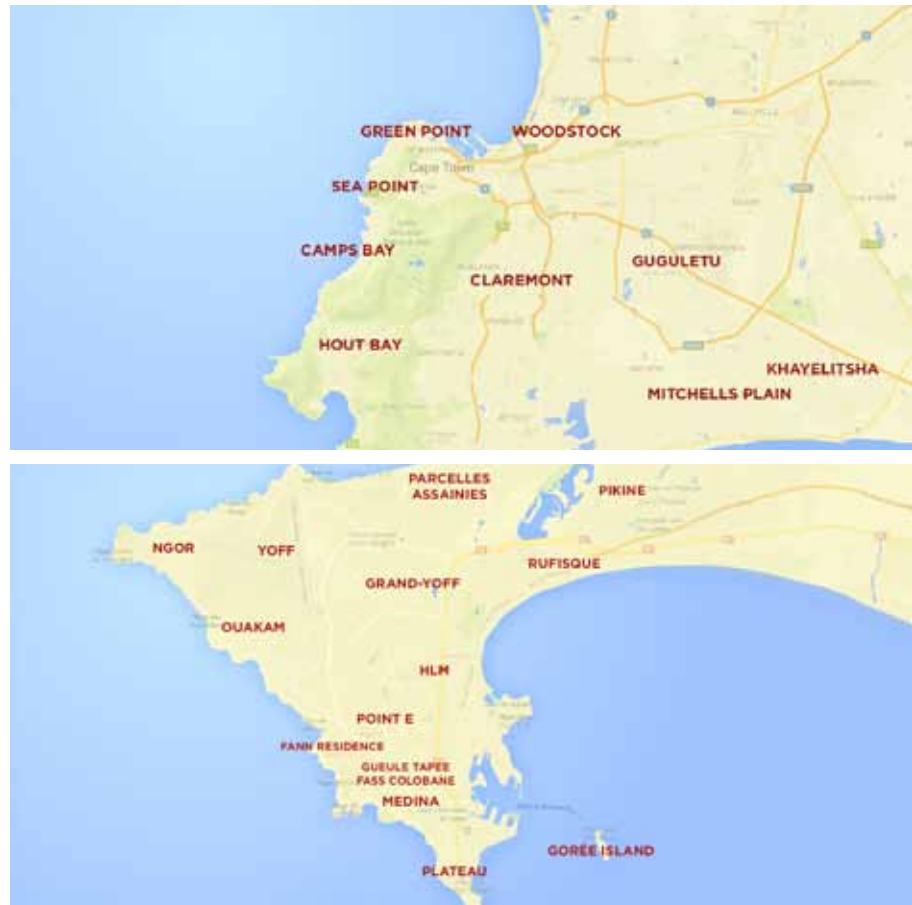
Map of Cape Town (above) and Carte Darker (below)

Image: Alioune Ba

least its principal element of construction is the human body (De Boeck and Plissart, 2005, p.236): in fact, "people as infrastructure" (Simone, 2004).

Beyond the reflection: entreprise of Takhawalu

"Please proceed to the Nauticat", "Please proceed to the buses"

After over two years of my Capetonian citizenry, I visited Robben Island, which to my surprise was not a systematic trip undergone by Cape Town residents. Located ten kilometres away from Cape Town coast, this heritage site suggested for me the capacity of an insular retreat from the Babylonian rhythm of the city. I was naturally drawing on my experience of another island located few miles away from another cosmopolitan and diverse African city that is Dakar: Gorée Island (3km), which for so many Dakarois remains a common way to escape the city in order to go and 'breath'. To enjoy the contemplative stance of the foreigner at home, to 'get lost' on the island, and away from these hustler-improvised-tour-guides, requires

some linguistic capacities and some distinctive socialising skills, such as a convincing *"Fii la dëkk!"* ("I live here!").

Robben Island was another kind of experience, where an impersonal loudspeaker welcomes and farewells you, orders you around. As the introductory snapshot highlighted, my individual *flânerie* on the island implied that I missed my boat and was left to wait another 45min to be able to catch the next one. "The boat does not leave at 4.30pm sharply", a staff member later explained me, "but when everybody is here". And added with an accusing, reprimanding tone and a scolding look: "You are not supposed to leave your tour group!"

I draw on these experiences of heritage sites in two of my African homelands to reassess how a *rogue flânerie* in contexts of urban extremes provides a way to look between the buildings and beyond the technological fixes and tricks, and to focus on actual processes of urban citizens' experience. Indeed, the in-between movement that our body in the city allows, this *entre-prise*[14] that reveals the capacity for a multiplicity of

individuals to inscribe their aspirations and trajectories in the city, can significantly inform our spatial literacy of an urban fabric.

I would like to conclude by suggesting the practice of *takhawalu*[15]. The expression comes from '*bantu takhawalu*' that translates into the "pilgrim's stick". In the past, in Dakar, when kids were too agitated in the house, (grand) -mothers would send them to pick up this imaginary object at neighbours' houses.

This practice permitted preserving social relations, while keeping the kids busy, freely circulating in a traceable environment. In many respects, takhawalu stands as a practical reiteration of "the spatial and temporal openness of the city as a place of manifold rhythms forged through daily encounters and multiple experiences of time and space" (Mbembé and Nuttall, 2004, p.361).

Takhawalu[16] is this possible potentiality to meander, to drift through the city, to get lost and become emotionally and imaginatively engaged with the city. More importantly, this notion permits a productive focus to revisit critical questions regarding the relationships between participation and operational modalities as far as culture, creativity and urban development are concerned.

To be sure, it reaffirms how the city, still in contexts of urban extremes, always operates as "a site of fantasy, desire, and imagination" (Mbembé and Nuttall, 2004, pp.355).

Genuine urban governance then becomes a question of informed and grounded spatial literacy indeed – one which challenges

established relationships and insular networks, and reinvests in movement and mobility.

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1 This is a title of a coffee-table book written by late Oumar Ndao, with photographs by Djibril Sy; published in 2012 by Vives Voix, Dakar

2 I am however acknowledging the significant battle the city hall of Dakar has led on this issue in the past couple of years; and its effective clearing-up of the central market Sandaga, and its surroundings, among other places.

3 Wolof term that means bargaining, negotiation

4 Markets indeed often emerge as crossroads of every extremes of African urban composite, between people who come for grocery and daily care products and others for souvenirs and other craft products

5 I am here indebted to the participants in the 'Talking Heads' session I had the pleasure of being invited to in December 2014 organised by the Africa Centre; their reflection and insights have further fed into my experiential analysis

6 I am however acknowledging the development of Myciti buses, which have somehow changed this dynamic, with the introduction of a public transport system as a (partial) alternative to the (wider and more frequent) transport system of minitaxis

7 A distinct observational grid used for making normative assessments of urban space, and establishing clear aesthetic criteria for self-evaluation

8 Central City Improvement District (2014) A Cape Town that's alive 24/7. http://www.capetowncid.co.za/news/staying-in-the-central-city/Cape-Town-as-an-alive-24-hour-city/. Accessed 30 July 2015.

9 Cape Town Partnership (2014) Towards a 24-hour city for Cape Town. http://www.capetownpartnership.co.za/towards-a-24-hour-city-for-cape-town/. Accessed 30 July 2015.
10 I here refer to a French term 'monde', which simultaneously stands for 'people' and 'world' –reminding by the same token of the human dimension of any urban trajectory formation

11 This concept has been suggested by (Bauwens, 2005) in his theory of 'peer production'. For a detailed application, I discussed this concept of equipotentiality in reference to the Senegalese hip hop community in (Mbaye, 2014a) p.407

12 Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century", in Reflections, p. 156. ["Diese Dichtung ist keine Heimatkunst, vielmehr ist der Blick des Allegorikers, der die Stadt trifft, der Blick des Entfremdeten"]; quoted in (Nuselovici, 2014, p.28)

13 I have used that concept in relation to urban cultural and music workers, drawing on the practice of the biopolitics to explore the production of space at the intersection of the society and the city; See (Mbaye, 2015, 2014b)

14 Where entrepreneurship studies emerge as a true inter-discipline for entre-prendre (undertake) literally meaning 'an-in-between'

15 I am here grateful to late Oumar Ndao for reminding the historical genealogy of this concept in an interview conducted in Dakar by Jenny F. Mbaye on 23 May 2013; as well as to Awa Mounaya Yanni aka Moona for originally twisting the word in reference to an urban experience of this 'takhawalu mode'.

16 There are also resonances with the work of (De Certeau, 1984) and (Debord, 1994) here; this is not a celebration of irrationality; it is an appreciation of modalities of action, not derived from normative order, and that strategically open up the possibilities of innovative and creative actions.

Negotiating and narrating urban public spaces as forms of bordering practices[1]

Mohamad Hafeda

Mohamad Hafeda (PhD.) is an artist and a designer whose current research investigates the negotiation of spaces of political-sectarian conflict and the interplay between material and immaterial borderlines in contemporary Beirut. He is a founding partner of Febrik, a collaborative platform for participatory art and design research active in Palestinian refugee camps in the Middle East and housing estates in London. Currently he is a senior lecturer at the School of Art, Architecture and Design at the Leeds Beckett University UK.

From 2009 to 2013, I embarked on a site-specific and practice-led research project in the Mazraa district in Beirut. My activities were focused particularly in the adjacent Tarik al-Jdide and Mazraa: These areas that have witnessed political and sectarian violent clashes and saw demarcation lines in 2007 and 2008, installed on the Mazraa main road separating one neighbourhood from the other. These events were the results of the resurfaced civil unrest in Lebanon after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafic Hariri on 14 February 2005. The assassination led to the polarization of the country into two main political blocs – the 8 March bloc and the 14 March bloc.

The conflict between these two blocs was played out at close proximity between the two areas within Beirut's municipal borders.[1]

As a researcher, my aim was to explore the impact of the political situation on residents' spatial practices and everyday life, and to examine the interplay between material and immaterial borders.

I asked the following questions:

What are the bordering practices of political and sectarian conflict existing in urban public space? And what are the bordering practices of art and research operating in urban public space? How effective are they as tools to negotiate, document, transform and narrate the conflict mechanisms and borders? How do art and research practices offer openness in situations of spatial and political division?

To answer these questions, I worked with residents across the two areas in and from their interior spaces – houses, shops, offices and cars – engaging them through visits, conversations, interviews and research exercises in different media.

The investigation is my attempt to follow the shift from 'border' as a noun to 'bordering' as a verb, as suggested in the field of borders studies by Alexander Diener and Joshua Hagen.[2] 'Bordering' as an action word recognizes the proliferation of the logic and practices of border into the domain of social life. It also refers to the transformation of the borders' materiality and the changing of their locations from traditional border-control sites into city spaces due to globalization, technology, security, surveillance and sovereignty. This is a discussion on bordering in the case of Beirut's political-sectarian conflict and its resulting impact on everyday life and practices of urban public spaces in the city.[3] I consider bordering practices as specific kinds of spatial practices – particularly those of residents, militias and politicians, whether as tactics or strategies.[4] Bordering practices also operate as critical spatial practices– particularly those of art and research, which negotiate conflict mechanisms and act as sites of resistance in everyday life.[5] I propose negotiating and narrating as two main aspects of bordering practices in Beirut today for their relational and immaterial aspects in the making and crossing of border.

The presence and practices of different political parties personnel (or militias) operating in urban public spaces since 2005 turned the supposedly

communal public spaces into interior domains utilised for the parties' practices of control. Whilst the unrest has been on-going since 2005, its intensity and spatial manifestation have varied in response to the political situation of each period within the subsequent years. The spatial manifestations have gradually transformed from demonstrations (2005) and long sit- ins (2006-2008) to street fights (2007) and later on, into armed clashes (2008). These events were exacerbated by the Israeli war on Lebanon (2006) that deepened the internal political divisions in the country due to conflicting assessment on the causes and aftermaths of the war. The events mentioned were accompanied by sporadic street bombings and assassinations (2005-2008) that further legitimized the act of neighbourhood security by political parties.[6] The impact of those parties' practices extended into residents' domestic and interior spaces through direct (material) and indirect (immaterial/ emotional) reach. Consequently the borders between public and private, exterior and interior, public and domestic, domesticity and privacy were not fixed or defined. Rather these borders have been negotiated and stretched beyond the confinement of the mentioned spatial, social and political domains. Judith Squires argues for 'privacy as political possibility' and as 'a value crucial to the development of a fully articulated radical pluralism'. Her argument considers our current modes of practices in an age where the distinctions and definitions of private/public are constantly changing, and privacy within domestic borders is not granted particularly due to surveillance and technology.

In the context of Beirut's conflict the aim of my research was to examine and question the border condition between spaces and people.

Thus the idea was to construct a research method that would allow me to access and exist in urban public spaces from residents' interior spaces. My first purpose was to carry out art and research practices that included activities against the will of political parties personnel such as the taking of photographs, video and audio recording, and the writing of notes in public. The second purpose was to take into account residents' political differences, positions and subjectivities while narrating experiences about the political-sectarian conflict.

As acts against convention, my method were symbolic acts: a stance against border restrictions and attempt to resist what borders usually posit with regard to geographic fixity, the domination of one political and cultural hegemony, and the imposition of a single political narrative. Thus, the research method as a (spatial) bordering practice between spaces, whether private and public or interior and exterior, helped in crossing the site's physical conditions and political restrictions, as well as in the construction of other types of border/ bordering as further explored below.

The exercises I carried out in the sites of Tarik al-Jdide and Mazraa with the residents (Fig. 1) identified strategic border conditions and activities practised by political parties, and positioned my research (and myself) in-between-places.

The first in-between-place or position the project acquired is the threshold of two women's balconies living in a close proximity in the same neighbourhood (Barbour) in Mazraa. This threshold of interest was the space between their interior domestic space and the exterior
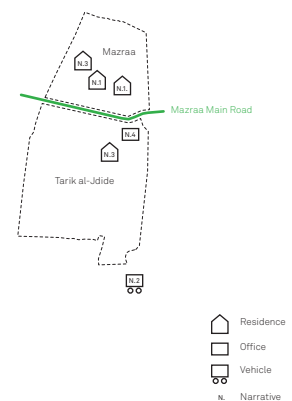

Fig. 1
Image: Mohammed Hafeda

of the neighbourhood where political parties personnel exist at different distances and operate surveillance.

One woman was sympathetic with the Amal movement located in her neighbourhood. In contrast, the other woman was allied with the Mustaqbal movement located in the adjacent Tarik al-Jdide and opposed the one positioned in her own neighbourhood. I wanted to negotiate the border activity of *Surveillance*. I asked each woman if I could take a photograph of the street from her balcony particularly to capture an image of surveillance. One woman was eager although cautious whereas the other was more apprehensive. Later on I took a car journey using a camouflaged video camera and documented the experience passing by the militia's surveillance mechanisms mentioned by the two women mentioned and also captured passing by the two balconies where the two photographs had been taken.

The second position relating to the project is the semi-private space of several taxis while crossing between Tarik al-Jdide and Mazraa. I wanted to examine the border activity of *Sound* such as the use of political and sectarian songs and speeches as confrontational material across spaces. I asked drivers about what they listen to and I video recorded the journeys and the sounds heard inside the cars and those overheard from the streets outside.

After being stopped by the state's internal security forces to investigate the purposes of my filming, I conducted a walking journey across the two areas using a hidden sound recorder and documented the sounds overheard from shops, cars and on pavements. Political control

interferes on the documentation processes and on the sensory experience at the site as it does between the interior/exterior divisions of spaces.

The third position is between twin sisters and their husbands in their homes. The sisters were married to men of different political allegiances, and in residing with the twins their husbands were living in the 'wrong' areas – that is, neighbourhoods at odds with their politics. One husband worked for the Mustaqbal movement and lived in Mazraa (Burj Abu Haidar), and the other husband worked for Hezbollah and Amal movement and lived in Tarik al-Jdide. The sisters decided to swap houses across Mazraa and Tarik al-Jdide to match their husbands' political affiliation with that of their place of residence as a response to the border activity of *Displacement*. I asked each sister to draw the route map between the two houses and to find the other house from her high level window using a video camera.

The fourth position is between modes of representation, cultural and political, and between past and present times. This was investigated through a dialogue I constructed between a current mukhtar character, an elected administrator for the area, and a fictional mukhtar character played in a Lebanese TV series from the 1970 and 80s, E'Dinyeh Heik. I asked the current mukhtar about the administrative borders and the history of the district, and what he thought of the fictional mukhtar in order to reveal the operations of the border activity of *Administration*.

According to Jane Rendell, the 'place between' that is created out of certain art and architectural projects operates as critical spatial practices

The 'place between' that is created out of certain art and architectural projects allow the rethinking of binary positions, disciplines, spatial conditions, and eventually, a negotiation of certain border positions.

in the public realm. Such spaces allow the rethinking of binary positions, disciplines, spatial conditions, and eventually, I would argue, a negotiation of certain border positions.[7] Parker and Vaughan-Williams suggest that, in order to challenge the political imagination of modern geopolitics and of borders, we need to think of spatial alternatives to borders, such as 'the margin' and 'the threshold'.[8] The in-between-places that I occupied through my research in Beirut mainly operated as tactics to allow me to retreat from urban public space due to the presence of the different political powers controlling it, while allowing me to be present in those public spaces at the same time. In these situations I 'trusted' the person who offered me the chance to occupy their 'interior' spaces, and this trust provided a certain protection.

This position of an in-between offered through trust, and for a short period of time, sets up the possibility for alternative practices in urban public spaces and offers openness in city spaces through art practices at times of conflict. The openness is manifested in the type of power I gained through this process, first as a resident of Beirut and second as a practitioner, by engaging critically and through activities in situations of exclusion and division. I have described the restrictions on spatial practices in urban public space in this essay in relation to the presence and control of political

parties, but these restrictions also involve other factors that should be considered. These are embodied in the presence and influence of state authority, capital, and the private sector.[9] Now this suggestion of an alternative in-between-place could operate and/or be considered in two different directions as resistance tactics: either as a passive place of resistance into which to retreat and hide, or as an active place of resistance through which to negotiate through politics, and to claim a position for democratic practices and rights in the public arena.

There are also notable differences in mechanisms and intentions of bordering practices noted in Tarik al-Jdide and Mazraa. On one hand, bordering practices that operate around conflict tend to be perpetuated as tactics or as strategies that aim to segregate, restrict and control all kinds of movements, bodily and imagined. However, the bordering practices of art and research come as a form of critical spatial practice to create 'transportable limits',[10] to use one of Michel de Certeau's terms, and

Fig. 2
Image: Mohammed Hafeda

aim to construct or occupy a place between, as suggested by Rendell. In addition to the research method at the site, the artworks and art installations produced out of the research displaced and transformed the conditions of the borders as well as the materiality between the borders of two sites: the urban space under research and the gallery space under construction. In addition to the exposition of the strategies and tactics of political parties' bordering practices, this process allowed the production of new bordering practices. One good example of this is the crossing of surveillance borders as a visual and a physical activity through the use of photography and video recording at the two women balconies. This activity of *crossing* distances that are geographical, emotional and political, allowed expanding the neighbourhood panorama scene that had been restricted due to surveillance. It also situates the 'seeing' of surveillance between the two women's subjectivities as well as my own, and as an interpretive process that is politically and culturally negotiated and not merely optical. (Fig. 2).

The *translating* of the immateriality of sound borders into the materiality of words to be seen and read in the taxi and walking journeys, is itself another act of negotiating their border positions. This translation is between Arabic and English and between sound and image. It aimed to reveal how normalized and unnoticed these sonic borders are by local residents. This process of translation and transcription removed these sounds from their original spatial and temporal context and collapsed time-space distances between them. In so doing, it revealed that the content of current sonic events such as political events and news transmitted is similar to that of

the past civil war (1975- 1990) and ably mixed with people's conersations about present issues on the streets.[11] (Fig. 3).
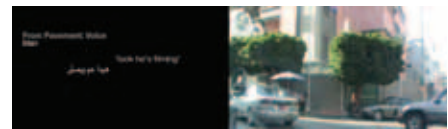

Fig. 3
Image: Mohammed Hafeda

There was also the exercise of *matching* lines of displacement: finding spatial moments of twinning between two sisters while narrating a journey drawn on a map and tracking it on the city skyline across a visual horizon. This aimed to perform and visualize the sisters' invisible displacement in comparison to the visibility of forced displacements such as that of refugees (Fig. 4).
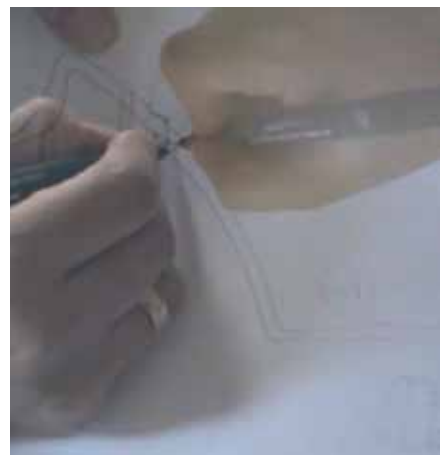

Fig. 4
Image: Mohammed Hafeda

Finally, there was also hiding behind the border of administration, through the actual mukhtar's use of official documents as answers to my questions. This proposition is to consider how the administrative practices seek to 'hide' borders either intentionally for political reasons or unintentionally because of the inadequacy of the representational techniques themselves. The juxtaposition of the fictional and actual in one space exposed the discrepancy in the workings of representation, and narrative, in both history writing and in administration (Fig. 5).

practice the project challenged the rigidity of existing narratives in and about sites of conflict.

Fig. 5
Image: Mohammed Hafeda

The research project's method implicated the researchers and artists' own practices, media, and positions as an inseparable part from the politics of the borders they investigate and the narratives they produce. The bordering practices offered through this process transformed borders into multiple shifting practices and representations that divide and connect simultaneously through acts of negotiating and narrating. By considering narrating as a bordering

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1   The research project with the residents at the
     site was conducted prior to the outbreak of the
     Syrian war; hence the essay does not address
     the influence of the Syrian war on Lebanon.

2   Alexander C. Diener and Joshua Hagen,
     Borders : A Very Short Introduction(New
     York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p.59.

3   Henri Lefebvre, The Production
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     ripheries : Edge Conditions in Architecture,
     ed. Ruth Morrow and M. Gamal Abdelmo-
     nem(London: Routledge, 2012), p.251.

7   Rendell, Art and Architecture : A
     Place Between, pp.1-12.

8   Noel Parker and Nick Vaughan-Wil-
     liams, "Lines in the Sand? Towards an
     Agenda for Critical Border Studies,"
     Geopolitics 14, no. 3 (2009): p.584.

9   Mona Harb, "Public Spaces and Spatial Prac-
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     25, 2013), Accessed July 07, 2014, http://www.
     jadaliyya.com/pages/index/14710/public-
     spaces-and-spatial-practices_claims-from-be.

10   Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life, p.129.

11   Hafeda, "This Is How Stories of Conflict
     Circulate and Resonate," pp.262-3.

Drawing Attention: Tracing Heritage & Interactions in the Brazilian Quarter of Lagos

Nele Brönner & Prof. Frank Eckardt

Frank Eckardt (Prof.) holds a PhD in Political Science and is a professor for urban studies and regional research at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. A widely published scholar, his research is focused on the cultural diversity and social inequalities in the city. He has been the coordinator of the exchange project "Urban Minorities" (2012-14) with 5 universities in the Middle East. Most recent publication is City of Crisis (edited with Javier Ruiz) and The Multiple Contestation of Southern European Cities (Bielefeld: transcript 2015).

DRAWING ATTENTION

LAGOS ISLAND

All drawings in this essay were produced by Nele Brönner

The rain has just stopped but left behind a scattering of puddles – brown water holes on a street in Lagos Island. Most seem unperturbed, as though they do not notice these pitfalls. Instead they melt into the blur of cars, people and workmen wielding carts across the fragmented ground – itself a melange of pieces of asphalt, stones, water lines and other leftovers of the city's infrastructure.

Street vendors offer a myriad of goods and transform the pavement into a labyrinthine market. Numerous shops spill out from their buildings onto the pavement. This is Bamgbose Street, and we have missed the Central Mosque which should be impossible because of its obvious and impressive appearance – but we did. Too occupied with navigating through the dense crowd of people and a million small things, we lost our way. A female street vendor gives us directions, but at the end of the block we assume that we have missed our destination.

Our intended destination was a small mosque that was built by the "Brazilians" in the 19th century. We knew only that it was near the Central Mosque, which didn't do much to help our orientation. On turning into one of the narrow side streets, we recalled Walter Benjamin's famous answer on how to get to understand 20th century Berlin: "If you want to know a city, you have to get lost in it."

As though heeding Benjamin's words, just around the next corner, we got lost again. A group of elderly men were stationed there, like rocks in the stream of people moving through this narrow path. With their calm posture they embodied the kind of assuredness that comes with a situatedness and local knowledge. They seemed subtly amused to see two oyinbos (white people) approaching, and turned to us with a friendly open gaze.

On Bamgbose Street, we were not only addressed by a flow of stimuli and attractions but a profound game of the visible and the invisible. Benjamin's advice is truer for the external than the internal urbanite. If it is your city, you see the order in the movements, the hidden patterns of the comings-and-goings in the everyday life. Losing yourself is possible once you have overcome your own desire for the exotic and the fear of the strangeness of 'the other'.

Cities are to a large extent the visible, material and concrete manifestations of our attempts to order life. They are the ground where our feet touch the earth; the buildings and places constructed before our birth. But cities are also the invisible part of society that determine the rules on belonging, mobility and behaviour which are much harder to decipher from the outside. Rules inscribed into our routines, interactions with others, and with ideas, plans and our secret dreams. Our reason for being there was to draw some of this visible and invisible Lagos.

For days, we strolled through the city and looked for places to sit down. We struggled too with the stream of perceptions in this unfamiliar terrain, not pretending to understand anything

that we saw, heard and thought while in those places. The intention was to carefully reconstruct parcels of the city by paying special attention to particular buildings as icons of the visible, and at the same time – by bringing in our perceptions through the drawings – we wanted to interact with the people we met there in-situ.

Interaction is probably overstating what was finally achieved. We started drawing only where people would let us be with them for the time we could complete a drawing. As neither of us speak Yoruba, the local vernacular, our understanding of the audible side of Lagos was limited to non-verbal sounds and parts related in English – some of which came in form of Pidgin, yet even that we have little understanding of. We focused instead on studying the behaviour of people around us and the way events unfolded. We also limited verbal interaction such as interviews, in their rather strict manner, would have put us in a different role and redefined the situation, ultimately hampering our ability to observe the nuances of public life.

We went to the famous Water House in Kakawa Street – an icon of the heritage of the Amaros or Agudas who came to Lagos as freed slaves from Brazil, mostly trained craftsmen and traders who concentrated around Campos Square and Igbosere Road. Architecturally speaking, the design style of the houses is commonly referred to as Brazilian or Portuguese but shows elements of all kinds of Mediterranean culture. In themselves, these buildings are products of a heterogeneous cultural heritage and the cement-loving ideals of post-colonial Lagos and Nigerian modernity. These houses represent a multitude of colours, forms and shapes – a richness that is threatening to vanish from the city.

Nele Brönner is a Berlin-based visual artist, author and illustrator. She divides her time between artistic projects, teaching at the university and collaborative work in the field of artistic research, dealing with transformations of cities. Her most recent publication, the children's book Affenfalle which won the Serafinapreis 2015 of Deutsche Akademie für Kinder- und Jugendliteratur and Frankfurther Buchmesse.

At present, the Water House is closed, and seemingly has no role to play in the urban fabric of Lagos Island. Across the street, booksellers offered school material to parents
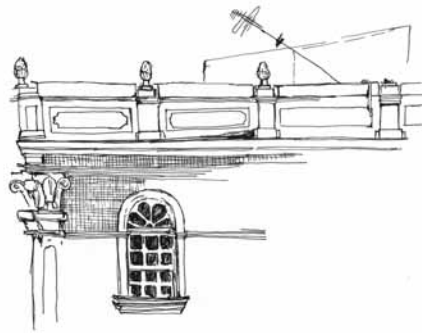
Unfinished drawing of the right corner of the famous Waterhouse on Kakawa Street

Image: Nele Brönner

and schoolchildren. Although for the most part busy attending to potential clients, they allowed us to sit between two stalls and draw. We were paid little attention; even the elders seated to our right behaved as though we were not even there. Like Water House, we were allowed to be part of this world as long as we did not interrupt their patterns of bargaining, promoting and transacting their goods. When a young man stopped to look at our drawing, he could not recognize which building we had put down on paper.

When a building becomes invisible, in terms of its use and valuable integration into public life and the cityscape, it has already lost its meaning and will be prone to further degradation. As in many other cities globally, down-to-earth calculations of economic benefits are a major

trigger for letting old buildings rot and eventually be pulled down. Mostly the forces of the property market are embedded into juridical and political interests that favour destruction in some form or the other.

Sometimes these processes are supported by images of modernity that convey a misguided anti-heritage ideology that the past stands for all the bad or unattractive in a locality. Sometimes, however, a simple a lack of public debate on most issues, exacerbated by a host of so many other existential challenges, relegates the discussion of architectural styles to only the elite. Heritage is not an objective in itself; it is a necessary resource to trigger, support and guide discussions about the future of society.

The neglected, sad appearance of the Water House and the obvious detachment from it, intrinsically shows that general understanding and recognition of the need for a public debate on the diversity of Lagos is lacking. A more than necessary reflection on what Lagos was, is and can be is confronted with neglect. Fast-changing and growing cities are especially in search of some kind of continuity so people can anchor themselves against the waves of social and emotional change. The Water House, and other remaining historic houses alongside Igbosere Road – the Vaughn and Lumpkin Houses – tell the story of Lagos' migratory origins, of a city founded upon diversity, whose very beginnings are rooted in a layered mosaic of identities.

Their presence prevents any dangerous fixation on the "essence" of Lagos that suggests the dynamism and multi-faceted nature of the city is a recent occurrence. These buildings hold the key to revelations that could be the

undoing of the predominance of a singular or reductive reading of the city's past.

Sketching places and houses is a small, rather personal attempt to draw attention to this invisible layer of Lagos. Our foreign gaze on older buildings and spaces led us to a narrative of the city that is in variance to the widely circulated account of a faceless capitalistic monster mega city. Together with our snatches of conversation, the drawing exercise is a step to understanding where the lines of individual urban narratives and the social structures around them intersect.

We came to see whether, or to what extent, our perception and valorization of the city's built heritage is echoed by the persons living in the neighbourhoods that host these old and historic buildings. While architect John Godwin and others have been campaigning for the protection of these buildings for decades, a "Brazilian" residential house at Campos Square has been turned into a public toilet, as a big white sign tells us, making us question whether more than specialists have a sense of what is at stake here. Do such examples reflect what local authorities deem as the value of the architectural past and what they consider to be an adequate treatment of this? Do officials and property developers assume that the average citizen does not care and thus will not resist the devalorization and destruction of heritage buildings? Are they right in their assessment of public sentiment and whose prerogative is it to challenge that?

In our observation, nobody really found it strange that we thought these buildings were worth sketching. Two people spoke to us about the loss of demolished houses. One man described the long avenue of Igbosere

Tall, narrow terrace building on Igbosere Rd

Image: Nele Brönner

Road as it once was, with beautiful trees skirting the frontages of "Portuguese" houses. Another, working as a state official, related with grief and anger that he considered the loss of this architecture as symbolic of what goes wrong in society in general. Whether his interpretation is wrong, exaggerated, or holds any merit is not so important. What matters is the ability of built heritage to allow reflection on a personal account, and that – in addition to place-making and heritage protection – is exactly its societal function. Inspired by the challenge to the Brazilian quarter and the question of its historical identity, we decided to search for less well-known inherited buildings. The vague idea was that the area around the Central Mosque would offer similar architectural heritage links
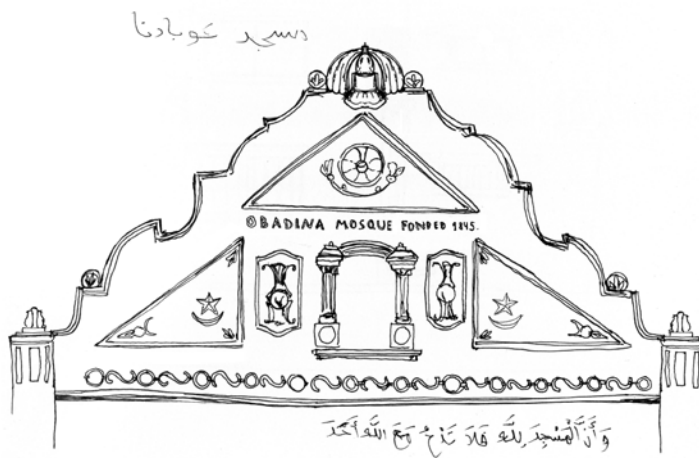
Obadina Mosque
Founded 1845

Image: Nele Brönner

and also allow a more intimate atmosphere for drawing.

Soon after, we spotted a building in the same distinct architectural style, across from which people sat on benches and plastic chairs. For the sake of having direct view of the mosque, we approached the gathering. Even on a closer look, we could not figure out what kind of place this was. It was neither a bar nor a commercial enterprise. A group of middle-aged men occupied the chairs and a rather corpulent bald-headed man fixed us with his eyes. An enthroned television at one end of its open sky veranda however signalled a permanent use for some kind of meeting. The porch offered a good view of the façade of a Brazilian style mosque with "Badina Mosque founded 1845" inscribed on its front. Our request to sit and draw the nearby building was granted, and after a bit of rearranging, chairs were provided.

Two forms of sketches were rendered here. One a drawing of the mosque, the physical

entity; the other a tracing of the social order and exchanges in these spaces – the intention being to document the underlying logic and dynamic of local interactions. Seventeen interactions between us and the people of the drawing situation were noted here, including the open looks and comments directed at us.

These were of course not unexpected – after all we were unusual visitors encroaching on their communal space. "Why you laugh at me?" one woman in the back asked with irritation in her voice. "Talking back" was also not in line with her expectations of social decorum. Right after we settled down, one man – an opportunist – aggressively asked for money before we would be allowed to continue drawing. Once appeased, he sat down taking a more protective stance. Later, many of those passing by took pictures of us without asking for permission, smiling when we acknowledged them. Smiling too, we asked for money from them to test the grounds for humour. It did not work and served only to trigger a general agitation which was only tempered by our repeated appeals that "it was only a joke."

Clearly, the social order was made uneasy by our presence resulting in or perhaps reinforcing a social 'othering'. Who determines who is 'local' and who is not? Who has the power to let externals enter? What are they permitted to do and on what grounds? The drawing process of the mosque made something of the invisible social order and interactions in the public space evident to us, yet it was a reaction to our presence and not in spite of it.

A special moment occurred when requested for someone to write down the Arabic inscription for us. A teenager from the Koran school, elegantly
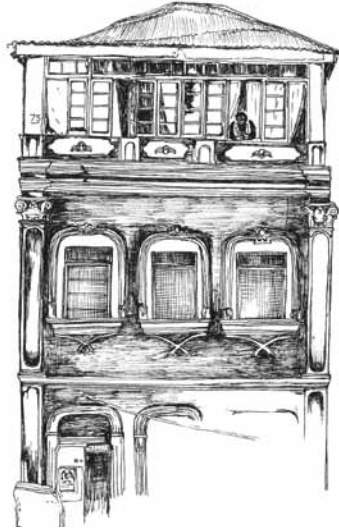
Building with corrugated iron sheets and person on balcony

Image: Nele Brönner

dressed all white, was called for. He hesitated at first but then quickly wrote down the Arab verse with noticeable discomfort. Soon after, the Iman himself came along. He joined the gathering, issuing greetings in an order that reinforced our earlier impressions of who was considered important and the relative positions of those amongst us. Everyone gravitated towards him, displacing us until we occupied the edge of the scene. After a brief explanation from one of the spokespersons, he came to us and in a soft voice asked only about the drawing. He nodded to signal his consent and, on our request, wrote down beneath the on-going sketch, the inscription from the mosque's façade.

And so it was that the drawing of the mosque established our being there and created an incident. It also informed the dynamic of the observation. When an impasse occurred in our interactions with our hosts, a return to the drawing was the safest point for both the outsiders and observers. Details were critically taken into account by some bystanders; others used their mobile phones to take photographs of the façade and then the drawing. Question were asked about the reason for including 'ugly' details into the drawing, speaking more from an aesthetic position than of the integrity of the creative process. At the end, when asked to judge the drawing, mostly appreciation was shown openly and authentically. "You try! You try!" they kept saying, in contrast to remarks granted at a different spot the next day, where people insisted on changes as parts of the building had been left out.

While the whole negotiation and drawing exercise did not take more of one or two hours, the experience lingered intensively, marked by the high degree of self-conscious behaviour, open-minded observation and technical concentration.

Drawing Lagos has become in this way a kind of contribution for a necessary but not yet existing documentation of vanishing heritage and establishing a small irritation of the blindness about it. With these few drawings, we want to show that there is room in this city to create these little irritations to let people become aware of what is slowly disappearing. Drawing Lagos brings the idea to combine perceptual drawing with the technique of participatory observation into the city of Lagos, a place that appeared quite inaccessible to us on our first visit.

The research technique enabled us to experience highly interesting interactions with the inhabitants of Lagos Island and to review notions and opinions we had heard about the Brazilian Quarter. Possibly the most interesting insight we gained was that people in the Brazilian Quarter are not ignorant about the structure of their neighborhood. Instead there is a kind of blindness that prevents people from actually perceiving the old houses.

In this way Drawing Lagos contributes to the necessary but under-addressed documentation of vanishing heritage and can thus stir some unease about its persisting invisibility. With these first drawings we hope to show that there is the possibitiy of perceiving old buildings in the Brazilian Quarter as something worthwhile and even interesting, and to let people become aware of what is slowly disappearing.

Monochrome Lagos:
In Praise of Black & White

Logo Oluwamuyiwa

Oluwamuyiwa Logo is a photographer, predominantly focused on black and white photography. His long term projects explore the themes of public spaces and daily life interactions, migration and human rights from a conceptual and documentary perspective. He runs "Monochrome Lagos" - a digital archive highlighting the aesthetics and idiosyncrasies' of the city. He currently lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria.

"A torrent of humanity poured out of buses and streamed along the streets and bridges as is heading towards a big event. To the novice eye, Lagos looks a chaotic jumble, but I could see there was a method in the madness, a tapestry of interweaving lives and agendas criss-crossing each other a million times over."

Noo Saro-Wiwa, Looking for Transwonderland, 2012

Black and yellow: colours that allude to the tempo and dizzying dynamism of Lagos, drawn from the sanctioned colours of its danfos, commercial minibuses that pervade the city's expansive networks of roads, flyovers and highways with the intensity of locusts. Africa's largest and most notorious city, Lagos confronts all senses. Choked with smoke, sirens, goods and masses, all vying for attention. Even the quiet of the night is subverted by the hum of private generators and late night calls for passengers.

Finding the still and minimal amidst the flurry of layered spaces and activity is a feat for most. This is an even more laudable challenge for a freelance photographer in a city where the average full-time artist often earns less than US$ 100 a week. Logo Oluwamuyiwa, whose visual interpretations of Lagos recently featured in the exhibition Lagos Open Range, explains his own personal motivations. "I set out to photograph Lagos seeking to capture the intangible aspects of her character: the mystique of the city's quarters, its ebb and flow, the poetic juxtapositions of people and space, and the theatrical arrangements and transactions that govern them."

Monochrome Lagos is the visual response to a critical reflection on this complex city: "What remains of Lagos, once she is stripped of her colour?" It is a poetic body of work that – whether intentionally or by chance – subtly admonishes the cascade of stereotypical portraits of the city, stripping away the cacophony of colour and associated symbols that breed sentimentality to reveal the intimate, the humane, the isolated and the ordinary. It is an act that requires both discipline and creative vigilance. "I ignore the tenacity of the human spirit embodied in the cart pusher, the persistence of the cloth sellers in Yaba and choose not to romanticise their poverty". Monochrome Lagos is an on-going photographic odyssey in praise of black and white. More than an aesthetic or technical expression, it is a means of refocusing on the object and subject of photography; a fast from the usual in hope of learning a new truth or awakening a deeper insight.

Iganmu

Ojuelegba

Man under Third Mainland Bridge

Men Gathered

Girl on Broken Down Train

Dancers Rehearse

3.0 Economic Opportunities / Real life stories

The Hair Dresser
Emilien Efienne

On the Uses of Micro-Managing

Bharati Chaturvedi

Bharati Chaturvedi is the founder and director of the Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group, an organization that focuses on issues of urban poverty, consumption, and sustainable livelihoods for informal sector workers in India. A founder of student-led environmental group, Srishti, she holds Master's degrees in history (Delhi University) and in international public policy (School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University).

"No one has come to pick my trash today, "she yelled into my ear over the phone.

"It's Sunday, "I reminded her, suppressing my annoyance. "It is a holiday for everyone."

"But no one has come all week," she persisted.

It was then I realized perhaps the client calling our customer service line hadn't paid her monthly dues. When people don't pay - like any service provider - we don't collect their trash.

"Have you paid for last month?" I asked.

"How does money matter? When the dirt makes me ill and I die as a result, will you take the blame?" she persisted.

She was self-righteous as hell, and I was furious.

"OK. Then please die. Because obviously you don't think your life is worth 50 rupees, as you never bother to pay. I have your records open on my computer. It's showing everything." By this time, I had taken a look at the payment reports from the previous month. She had not paid for over six months.

Her tone heightened with almost uncontrollable irritation. "I am going to lodge a complaint against you!" she persisted. "You want me to die?" Losing her patience, she furiously listed names of important, influential people, who she claimed to be closely connected to, who could at her request make things difficult for our business. It was a clear threat and verging on harassment.

"You want me to ensure we pick your waste for free? We won't and I don't want to talk to arrogant

Members of Parliament and their wives. Please feel free to send in formal statement of complaint."

I had had enough. It was clear that as the wife of a Member-of-Parliament, hers was not a problem of affordability but a misguided sense of entitlement and the stubborn refusal to accept the structures and conditions in place that made waste collection possible. I put the phone away. She called back several times. I took her call some hours later - after concluding lunch, which she had interrupted, walking my dog and reading the features in the Sunday supplement.

"I will have your waste picked up at 8AM tomorrow morning, but only if you pay all your dues by 6PM today," I tried to be firm.

"You don't know me. I have seen lots of people like you. You nobodies populate every corner of the country. Anyway, next time my servant will call you. Send someone to take the money by 5PM."

Our negotiation was final. Her rant and abuse over.

The waste-picker for her locality of South Avenue was kind enough to go over and collect the fees. Being considerate and perhaps, bullied by her, he collected her waste that very evening and gave her his cell number if she needed it for a future crisis.

It was just another weekend afternoon for the waste collector, Rakesh and me. Although discussions around handling waste are increasingly popular in the media and amongst the general public, the issue is equally this: what about the people who do plan and manage these systems? Why do we do this utterly banal work on a daily basis? What are our challenges?This acquires a whole new urgency given India's high

profile campaign, the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan-the Prime Minister's Clean India Campaign.

Chintan – the non-profit I founded, works in the urban space as part of the movement for equitable consumption and sustainability in many parts of North India. Our understanding of waste is both systemic and multi-dimensional – considering not simply the material of trash, but the larger ecosystem of processes and people who collect, transfer and recycle or resell it. Here is how we think of our world of work: India is drowning under its own trash of over 70 millions tons a day, polluting our waters and soil, breeding disease-carrying flies and mosquitoes, and spewing greenhouse gases into the air. On the other hand, millions of urban poor scavenge for recyclables at great cost to their health and dignity. We ask why such people should not be trained to provide the much-needed services to Indian cities-ensuring a win-win situation. Through our work at Chintan, we have organized over 12,000 people, enabled over 2,000 livelihoods and sent over 5,000 children to school. Our advocacy has resulted in the reorientation of more than five rules and policies that include the waste workers we represent in solving urban environmental problems.

But our work conditions constantly shift. Sometimes, we find that gated communities impede urban inclusion, and at other times, the fact that large corporate companies have taken over waste handling leaves out even organized wastepickers in the cold. Sometimes, they have been able to negotiate with the companies for

Night time activities
Image: Axel Marnet-Srevers

continuing their work, but that still means they remain under- or un-acknowledged in the city's narrative by the municipalities. In part, this is because in the mind of the municipal official, the task of cleaning up is best done by a corporate entity because waste management is as much about generating large capital as about managing the dirt on the ground. Yet, local models show the opposite, because personalized relationships put pressure on quality service delivery and cumulate to significant earnings for wastepickers and their organisations.

Our on-ground partners are Safai Sena - the Hindi expression for 'an army of cleaners' - an association of waste-pickers and small waste traders who share our vision for stable livelihoods and education for their children. To help them meet their idea of stable livelihoods, one of the initiatives Chintan is to work with various municipalities who are responsible for the waste handling, to enable waste-pickers shift from scavenging on the streets to collecting waste from the doorstep for a service fee.

The municipalities pay and contract Chintan, which in turn trains wastepickers from Safai Sena to deliver the collection services and oversees data handling and quality of services. This helps engender a degree of income security and ensure waste-pickers are able to experience formalized livelihoods. It also importantly reduces the risk of harassment from police who often disallow their waste-picking on grounds that wastepickers are a security threat.

Collecting waste directly from the doorstop also reduces environmental health risks as the waste is less contaminated and more organised. In the earlier account, the woman who marred both

our Sundays with her unsavory comments lived in the New Delhi Municipal Council area. Her locality is one of 50 neighbourhoods within the municipality's 42 square kilometer area, where over 90 waste-pickers earn their living. This makes it the most well-served part of country and India's Very-Important-Person municipality in this regard. Residents are charged 50 rupees, equivalent to one US dollar a month. In Delhi state, that is a fifth of a person's minimum daily wages.

Waste-pickers have long held a distinct and deeply embedded position in India's urban procedural and social structure. When Chintan organizes waste-pickers, we do not just help them to collect trash. We help them to negotiate the city, as citizens with as many rights as any other citizens. A strong narrative is about being valuable to the city, just as much as the police, or the postman. Building on this perspective is the statement that we are part and also retain rights to the city as much as any other user of its resources and as contributors to the city. Part of this involves taking the hit along with them, though much less often and much less violently than the treatment directed towards them. My colleague Imran Khan who leads Chintan's *Voice for Waste* programme explains how often surprises spring up unexpectedly: "The problem is anything can happen. Who knows when someone needs help because a car has hit them? We can't just them be on their own."

On the other hand, waste generators expect efficient services. This is only fair. For these people, like us – those facilitating the service – have to learn from the system waste-pickers like to follow and devise processes on this basis. Consider holidays – not a weekend, but six good

weeks during harvest season. Waste-pickers like to go back to their villages then. Who replaces a waste-picker at such times? And under what terms? It can only be a social contract, when a waste-picker finds his or her own replacement and can take back the work upon returning.

My colleagues at Chintan ensure they bring along their replacement and train them on the job. Hopefully, the substitute will be same size, because then the outgoing waste picker will wash their uniform and pass it on. The police will know about the new collector too and the residents will be informed. When such as shift happens, we have to ensure the complaints from clients are well and promptly handled, so that the new waste-picker does not quit in frustration. Not everyone can make sense of this. "Why do you keep changing the waste collector every 4-5 months? Sometimes one shows up, sometimes the other. We want one person – whichever you decide," a constable from another area insisted.

There were no complaints about the service, so we pressed our case. We solved the problem by calling one a back-up of the other instead of explaining ad nauseam that they were both each other's alternatives and close friends. Turns out, the solution indeed lay in a mutually acceptable label. The back-up waste-picker, who could save everyone from trash doom, was embraced within this newly invented hierarchy.

But residents depend on not only waste-pickers, but also itinerant buyers, who offer to buy up old newspapers, old furniture and beer bottles. Often and across the New Delhi area, only a few are allowed into the many newly gated communities. The rest simply lose access to their markets – in other words, the residents who once lived in non-gated communities. Restricting entry to such few people damages the residents' own interests, because they lose their bargaining power. Access strongly determines the market. The few buyers allowed in know they have a monopoly and will refuse to buy waste at more than the minimum rate, even if other excluded recyclers just a few kilometers away pay higher rates.

The Residents' Welfare Association in the NDMC area, a group of 120 households, with eight gates, tried to sort out this issue in the long term with notable success. Most residents wanted to hire a security agency to reduce the dozens of thefts every year. With security as a priority, our challenge was to be inclusive of those who served us, without disrupting their livelihoods. Neighbourhood and street vendors came in multiple forms: fruit and vegetable vendors, furniture repairmen, itinerant waste buyers and trinket sellers. Some of these services were in big demand, especially from the maids and other household who lived in outhouses attached to the main residence and had limited time to attend to their own affairs outside the NDMC area.

Whilst I am not an advocate of gated communities, I knew this was the way we were heading driven by popular demand. In order for Chintan to fulfill its mandate, we would have to develop strategies that could be effected in such neighbourhoods where restrictions of access would be regularly enforced. An inclusive gated community may seem a paradoxical notion. For me, a single sight on a warm March afternoon, summed up this complexity: an elderly food vendor had put down his bamboo stool and basket in the shade in one of our many tiny parks. Next to it, he slept deep, oblivious of the crows perched on his stand. Everyone who walked

by, or who lived along the park, could see this afternoon snoozer. No one minded. But would it – and could it - stay this way? How could our locality stay accessible for such vendors? How could residents access their services? In a time when the odd case of motorcycle robbers was becoming our reality, it was a challenge.

We instructed the guards at the main gate not to stop any vendor but instead, to send each vendor to a few of our homes. At the allocated home, each vendor received a simple form about his address, occupation, the years he has spent in the area, emergency contacts and other information that we can use to show his need and association to the locality. Most vendors needed help to fill in the form, since they are illiterate, which they returned with three passport photographs of themselves. After a week or so, they would get an identity card, i-Card, which entitled them to ply their trade in our locality. When registering waste-pickers, we based our judgment on whether the wastepicker in questions was able to tell us who their clients in the neighbourhood were, and phoning up the client to confirm. In every case, multiple clients vouched for them. One was even nervous we would stop the dhoti clad vegetable vendor from coming in, because he had taken a loan that would take a year to repay. "I have known him for 7 years, how could I say no to his little request? He is such a reliable man," a lady who picked up the phone pointed out.

Skimming through the vendor forms, it occurred to me how time really does fly. Most of those serving our community had been around for at least 15 years – much longer than most of the residents, who shifted frequently. We've always had about eight itinerant buyers for 120 households. This works well for everyone, because at no given point are all of them in Delhi. We rarely find more than 5 of them, although in truth, each spent at least seven months in our colony. Had we excluded some of them, it would have been our loss. Waste from our doorstep is collected by one individual, Dileep. When he twisted his ankle, this replacement was Kanhaiya, who was already well trained. The residents' complaints and suggestions about the services are addressed through an existing WhatsApp Group.

Chintan seems to have excelled in micro-management, and this seems to be essential to our mission. We are not around to merely pick the trash; we hope to create sustainable livelihoods and inclusive cities. This requires us to bridge communications between diverse constituencies who do not typically speak to each other. We also must deploy transactional conversations to build alliances. And when wastepickers, or other informal actors confront a city changing faster than they can adapt, we must understand the local context and leverage it with them. Without this, the very partnership that wastepickers expect from Chintan, that

keeps the social and political conversations alive, is likely to be lost. We know this because on occasion when we have created sustainable livelihood models and moved on, they have withered away when the local context has changed, which indeed, every context does.

Needless to say, this sort of highly personalized relationship both drives Chintan to be able to deliver incredibly high quality results, but impedes our ability to scale up. How can you possibly create this kind of micro-network across a hundred municipalities, our donors ask despondently? On the other hand, wastepickers and recyclers across small and medium towns in North India call us, asking for similar help. What we are now doing is to train Safai Sena members to help organize, and strengthen existing networks through improved livelihood capacity, advocacy and peer-learning. Ideally, where interested citizens groups exist, we share with them our work.

More recently, we have put out much more of our training materials on our website, so others can use them as they wish, saving time and resources. Despite difficulties with scaling up, we have expanded our work to specific cities in five Indian states, so that wastepickers from there have a model other, similar cultural contexts can glean from.

Micro-negotiations are what make it possible for waste-pickers to benefit from a partnership with an organization like Chintan, driven by middle class activists. In a city like Delhi, populated by either the over-powerful or the almost dis-empowered, being able to earn well and feel respected from one's livelihood is a sure indicator of being recognized as relevant person

in Delhi. Many of them don't flow naturally to the poor or less privileged. They have to be wrested using skills and local support. Without our kind of micro-management, the very politics of our practice would be lost.

Fig 2
Image: Mackenzie Berg
Source: hub.witness.org

Moving ahead when the chips are down: Livelihood insecurities of street food businesses

Dr. Temilade Sesan

It has been many years since Philo left her village in the southeast of Nigeria to pursue her dream of making it big in Lagos. Like many migrants to the city, she started out by squatting with a relative who arrived long before she did. Soon after though, she had to leave to make room for the relative's growing family, and ended up settling by herself in Ketu – a dense residential area just a stone's throw from Mile 12, one of the city's largest wholesale markets.

The city does seem to have offered Philo an array of opportunities, some of them running concurrently, even if none of them have fully delivered on their promise: she had a stint at an insurance company; ran a small jewellery business; helped run a fish farming business; and is currently working as an administrative assistant for the entrepreneurs' association she belongs to. Her experience has been the very definition of fluidity: it would seem that every time one career option was winding down, another was opening up to her. It was at some point between all of these jobs that she took the opportunity to learn the ropes of the plantain chips business from an acquaintance and decided to make it her primary career.

It is a career that she has high hopes for, nevermind that her present reality seems to dictate otherwise. Her long-term goal is to brand her product so professionally that it appeals to markets "beyond Ketu and beyond Lagos". In the meantime, her limited capital only allows her to seal individual packets of chips with a small machine and manually stick labels on them – a touch she considers an upgrade to the widespread practice among her competitors of tying their packets by hand. She says even these small embellishments made a discernible dent on her profits especially at the beginning, but she was determined to follow through with them.

The local chips market is flooded: armed with a bunch of plantains and a few cooking utensils, it seems anybody can begin frying and tying their way out of unemployment. The harder part is breaking into the market and scaling operations to capture a sizeable portion of the high demand that exists for the product nationally. There are only a handful of brands that have achieved this feat and which are therefore several notches above the rest. Those brands, many of which are widely recognised, tick many boxes – relatively large factory operations, decent packaging, registration with the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (which certifies that the product is safe enough to eat), and great taste – all of which Philo aspires to.

Unsurprisingly, such brands are carried by many major supermarkets and every other itinerant hawker in the city's infamous traffic. Like these big players, Philo usually offloads her product wholesale to retailers, including smaller supermarkets. However, the reach of her product is so much smaller that she cannot compete with them in any real sense- at least not until she is able to expand her operations like she plans to.

Philo's entry into the market in the first instance was facilitated by her church, which regularly draws large crowds for its crusades. At a crusade three years ago, the teeming congregation provided the first outlet for marketing her new product. Some of her sales at subsequent crusades yielded follow-up orders, and that was when she started making regular supplies to two companies and a few supermarkets.

Dr. Temilade Sesan (PhD.) is a development researcher and consultant with expertise in the areas of gender, energy, and the environment. She works across sectors to identify pathways to greater inclusion of women and girls in public and private development initiatives. Her work highlights the social and cultural upheavals that often accompany seemingly benign processes of technological and economic advancement in developing countries like Nigeria.

Her business model is simple. From her base in Ketu, she gets her raw materials — unripe plantains, oil, salt, pepper — from the nearby Mile 12 market, thereby keeping her transportation costs to a minimum. She cuts production costs further by frying the chips on an "industrial" kerosene stove rather than a more expensive gas stove. All told, she spends between N13,350 and N16,350 (approximately US$ 67 - US$ 82, August 2015) to produce a batch of chips consisting of between 15 and 20 large packs, "depending on several factors". Each pack, sold to retailers at a wholesale price of N1,000, contains about 25 individually wrapped packets. Associated costs include those for frying oil, salt, pepper, plastic wrappers, labels, kerosene and of course the all-important and seasonally priced plantains. An entire batch can take up to two weeks to distribute, which means that the maximum profit she can get from the business on a monthly basis is about N13,300 (about US$ 67, in August 2015) — a significantly lower sum than the already low government-stipulated monthly minimum wage of N18,000 (US$ 90).

The Ketu-Mile 12 axis is a thriving commercial hub, with traders and small businesses located all along the busy expressway

Image: Temilade Sesan

Table 1. Summary of Philo's production costs and profits based on a 2-week distribution cycle

Inputs	Lowest-cost scenario (N)	Highest-cost scenario (N)
Unripe plantains	7,000	10,000
Frying oil	3,500	3,500
Salt	50	50
Pepper	100	100
Plastic wrappers	1,200	1,200
Labels	1,000	1,000
Fuel (kerosene)	500	500
Total cost	13,350	16,350
Minimum profit (based on sale of 15 packs at N1,000 each)	1,650	-1,350 (Maximum loss in 2 weeks)
Maximum profit (based on sale of 20 packs at N1,000 each)	6,650 (Maximum possible profit in 2 weeks)	3,650

Nevertheless, Philo could at least count on the income from the business to supplement her meagre administrative assistant salary – that is, until three months ago when she was suddenly evicted from her home in Ketu, along with all the other tenants in the building, on the grounds that the landlord needed to carry out redevelopment work on the premises. Her home had been her production base up until then. Without a dedicated production space, not enough savings to pay the substantial upfront rent for a new home, and no immediate recourse to any other place, Philo was forced to put the business on hold. For now, she is back to squatting – this time with a member of her church. Being a squatter means that she cannot take up more space than is necessary in the home of her host, hence her decision to

pack up her chips production apparatus for the time being. This is a Catch-22 for Philo, because accommodation was one thing she had been able to take care of with the proceeds from her chips business. The longer she stays out of business, the longer she is likely to be without a home, but she cannot resume the business until she finds a place of her own. She plans to eventually get production space outside of her home, but this is contingent on her getting a place to live first, from where she can work towards saving enough money to rent shop space. Her perennial inability to secure production space can therefore be seen as an extension of her private accommodation problems. Indeed, the issue of accommodation is at the heart of Philo's experience in the city, which seems to have been marked by continuous displacement. This week, the office where she works as an administrative assistant moved the last of its

properties out after being evicted from the building it shared with several other businesses. The building, two streets away from Philo's old home, is apparently one of several in the path of redevelopment in the area. In fact, construction has already begun in back of the premises, ahead of the departure of the last set of tenants.

It is evident that Philo's core support network consists of members of her church and the entrepreneurs' association she belongs to. Of the latter, she says "joining… has been a great thing, helping me to see far and realize that I belong somewhere". When asked if she felt the government had contributed to her business in any way, she responded with an emphatic "no". The kind of support she imagines government giving her business includes grants for expansion – not loans because, in her words, "my business has not yet grown to a level where

Redevelopment began on the premises of Philo's former office building even before the departure of the last set of tenants.

Image: Temilade Sesan

I will be collecting loans". Instructively, she does not have any ideas about how government might intervene in the area that has constituted such a central challenge to her social and economic mobility in the city, that of accommodation.

It is easy to see from the above how government policies that protect citizens from arbitrary evictions can go a long way in contributing to socio-economic stability for individuals and families. The 2011 state legislation mandating dramatic reductions in the period for which landlords require their tenants to pay rent upfront, for example, was a step in the right direction. Experience however shows that enforcement of the law has been lax. What is really needed is legislation that has teeth, with enforceable penalties for defaulting property owners and developers. It remains to be seen how much economic potential would be unleashed if such legislation were to begin helping small-scale entrepreneurs finally find space in the city that they can call their own.

The good news is that the required legislation can be helped along by human rights activists. The pattern of evictions and ensuing displacement effectively amount to a violation of those basic rights of shelter and security. Given that small-scale traders usually have very little bargaining power on their own and do not necessarily identify with any trade associations, their voices and views need to be sought out and amplified by non-governmental organisations with greater capacity to engage with formal political structures. Trade associations, where they are operational, should be sensitised to see themselves as being much more than enablers of economic opportunity for their members and instead recognise the capacity they have to

exert political pressure on government actors regarding the issues that affect them. The kind of change that is likely to result from this bottom-up approach holds the promise of sustainability and scalability, two ingredients that are critical to achieving inclusive growth in such a multi-layered and diverse society as Lagos.

Squatting to Survive: Accommodating women traders at the margins of Ajah market

Dr. Temilade Sesan

Dr. Temilade Sesan (PhD.) is a development researcher and consultant with expertise in the areas of gender, energy, and the environment. She works across sectors to identify pathways to greater inclusion of women and girls in public and private development initiatives. Her work highlights the social and cultural upheavals that often accompany seemingly benign processes of technological and economic advancement in developing countries like Nigeria.

Neat rows of yellow-painted bungalows line the fenced-off premises of the glistening Ajah market complex. Supporting facilities abound for the shops housed within the bungalows: a spacious car park; a voluminous refuse skip; even a small branch of a large bank there just to cater to the needs of the market population. Business is apparently good: the bank is now constructing a bigger one-storey structure just a few feet away to help it handle the daily influx of customers better. Outside the gates of the market complex, still more shops and stalls line both sides of adjacent streets – a sight which may not be as impressive to behold as the shops inside the gates, but one which is no less structured.

At first glance, it looks like the definition of order, precisely what the Lagos State government must have had in mind when it moved to tear down the old market that existed on the same site and construct this new one. Look more closely, however, and you will notice the men and women living at the fringes of the market – petty traders, some of them casualties of the upheaval all those years ago, who move from spot to spot toting their scantily laden trays because they have no permanent spots in this shiny new order. Oddly enough, it is very difficult to find media reports of this Great Displacement anywhere – a testament, perhaps, to the desire of the government to keep things as quiet as possible, or even a reflection of its broader strategy in dealing with the aftermath of its myriad redevelopment schemes.

The desire of state actors to keep things as orderly as possible is reflected by the presence of a "market management association" comprising local government officials who collect taxes from the traders and oversee the provision of public services such as waste management. This constitutes a different sphere of authority from the more traditional market leadership structure – the Market Traders' Association – headed by the Iyaloja, or "Mother of the Market". Despite the order maintained on the surface, the coexistence of the two structures in the market environment does not always imply cooperation, given that the modernisation outlook of the government (witness the branding of the new market as an "ultramodern" complex), with its focus on revenue generation, does not leave a lot of room for the observance of traditional arrangements or "backward" practices. Still, government actors have a stake in keeping this uneasy relationship going, as the traditional market leaders often have more legitimacy with grassroots traders and therefore routinely serve as government's entry point into the space.

In theory, the traders uprooted from their stalls in the old market were welcome to rent the new shops once they were completed. However, according to the traders, the asking price was three to four times as high as what they had been paying for their old stalls – effectively leaving them with no choice but to leave, even when they had nowhere else to go.

The real wonder, then, is how these formally displaced traders have managed to stay on and carve spaces for themselves out of the new (dis) order, amidst constant harassment from formal and informal authorities – the former hounding them and imposing hefty fines on the premise that they are not supposed to be in the market, and the latter profiting off them in smaller but more regular chunks precisely because they are in the market. A meat seller stops to pose

for a photograph while the market moves on around him – a rare display of stillness amid the customary bustle of the space.

Madam Augusta is one of those traders. A mild-mannered, well-spoken woman in her late forties, she sells uncooked pap (a local maize cereal) from a metal tray perched precariously in front of a grain seller who occupies one of the shops just outside the market complex. After Augusta's stall in the old market was pulled down, she survived by finding work as a teacher in a nursery school in the Ajah area. She hung on to the job for about seven years, but then left because the salary was too low and she needed to earn more.

So she returned to the market where, although unable to afford one of the new shops, she sought the grain seller's permission to occupy his stall front and he consented, albeit grudgingly. Augusta's resilience becomes even more apparent in light of the fact that there is a third party involved in this arrangement, another petty trader who uses the same spot in front of the grain stall on alternate days, so that they each get to use the spot for approximately half of the week. This arrangement underscores the tacit scramble for space that goes on beneath the everyday bustle of the market. Shop owners are guaranteed a space everyday they come to the market, but the rest are left to jostle for the periphery and have to constantly negotiate for their space. This most traditional of market settings is where the commoditisation of space in the city and the competition it stirs comes most to life.

Augusta's tray and stool constitute an almost-natural extension of the grain stall, which has come to serve as her shelter from threatening elements, be it a torrential rain or task force agents on periodic missions to purge the market of its irrepressible squatters. Augusta does not pay the grain seller a dime to use the space, but there are other costs to her tenancy, such as the taxes she pays daily to various market associations – some of them of doubtful legitimacy – which eat up half of her already meagre profits

The informal rules regulating Augusta's existence in the market – the fact that she can

Augusta at her spot in front of the grain stall

Image: Temilade Sesan

only work half of the week, and even then half of her profits go toward paying dubious taxes – mean that the income she could potentially earn as a squatter has been halved twice over. Her options for support are limited: her husband only earns a meagre income doing "small, small work", and she has no friends or extended family to fall back on. "It's just me and my husband," she says. "I don't have anyone to help me."

She has coped mostly by scaling back on her already minimal expenses, the bulk of which go towards her children's education. She has had to withdraw all four of them from a fee-paying private school and enrol them in a cheaper public school, where she says they are not thriving as well academically. She takes care of substantial expenses by saving "bit by bit", like she did when she needed to raise N24,000 (US$ 120 in August 2015) to buy GCE forms for two of her children. Neither of them passed the exam. When asked how she might raise another round of funds for a follow-up attempt, she responded flatly: "I don't know. I depend on God."

"If I have money to expand my market, money to buy the necessary things that will be in the shop, I will not be doing these small, small things... from hand to mouth."

It is clear that Augusta needs more material support to enable her to maximise the opportunities presented by the open market where she trades. At the moment, her shaky existence at the margins of the market is only enabled by the support of the grain seller, and she is only too aware of the fickleness of that support. She yearns for permanence and stability and getting a shop in a market like Ajah is her expressed single most important business

need. In her view, the government can help, by letting low-cost (up to N5,000, or US$ 25, per month) shops to her and other women in similar circumstances, and providing them with soft loans to expand and even diversify their businesses. Her rationale is straightforward: with permanence and increased capital will come growth, enabling the women to make enough profit to gradually pay back their debt to the government.

It seems then that the building of permanent shop units like the one in Ajah is a step in the right direction – it is indeed a felt need of women traders like Augusta – but the evidence suggests that it needs to take place within the context of supporting policies such as concessions on rent and access to credit.

There are other indirect support strategies that would not necessitate a cash outlay by the government but which could still be effective in opening up spaces for the women. Commercial loans, particularly microcredit, might be an option worth exploring for the women. However, many potential beneficiaries do not know anything about how such schemes work or how one might participate in them. Government could step in to fill this information gap, pointing the women to credible microfinance institutions and possibly guaranteeing small loans for their businesses. Remarkably, the state government runs an agency – the Lagos State Microfinance Institution – that claims to provide these kinds of services to "poor and unbanked" entrepreneurs in the city. That the agency is not well known among informal traders who stand to benefit greatly from those services points to a schism between the government and the classes of people it is attempting to reach. One issue for the

agency to consider is its messaging: it needs to ask what types of people are currently reached by its marketing strategies, and whether it will be necessary to review those strategies in order to reach a broader spectrum of citizens.

Business actors themselves can have a more direct role in opening up opportunities for informal traders. Private microfinance institutions, for example, can leverage group dynamics where they exist by giving members loans that are guaranteed by collective trust rather than by individual possessions which are usually scarce to begin with. Experience elsewhere has shown that the social pressure exerted by the group is often a reliable driver of loan repayments even among the very poor. Those financial institutions would not be working from scratch to proselytize prospective customers: research shows that people on very low incomes are willing to take credit lines to incrementally grow their businesses, especially if the repayment terms are favourable. However, given the negative experiences that have been associated with the microfinance industry globally, the activities of those institutions will need to be strictly regulated by the government to ensure that maximum gains accrue to the otherwise vulnerable traders.

Whether publicly or privately funded, truly inclusive models of microfinance are needed to reduce the current bias of the local industry towards medium-scale enterprises. Indeed, one weakness of supposedly bottom-of-the-pyramid solutions, particularly ones that are established on market principles, is that they often fail to reach the 'poorest of the poor', that famed group of people living under US$ 1-2 a day. The requirements of smaller-scale

Business as usual in the pouring rain. Brick-and-mortar shops would offer better protection to traders like these

Image: Temilade Sesan

businesses, like the acquisition of shop space (and the consequent conferment of legal status on them), need to feature more prominently on the agendas of public and private microfinance institutions alike.

Finally, harking back to the nagging issue of incessant harassment by informal tax collectors, informal traders themselves could agitate to be accorded a more formal status within the market, for example, by having representation in the Market Traders' Association. This would provide a legitimate route for them to negotiate terms of coexistence with other actors in the market space, notwithstanding their status with the government. The money saved from the reduction of informal taxes would at least make more resources available to the traders to fulfil familial responsibilities, such as paying for their children's schooling, while they wait on government and businesses to rise to the challenge ahead of them. Given the centrality of education to the opening up of opportunity and social mobility everywhere, this may just be those families' best hope for the future.

Nairobi
Xiaojun Deng

What Jane Jacobs saw:
The Unrehearsed Choreography
of Urban Dwellers in Lagos

Omolara Adenugba

Omolara Adenugba (also known as Clara Aden) specialises in drawing and painting. She has won awards in several competitions, including at the 1999 UNFPA International poster contest (third place), and at the National Patriot Portraiture and Immortalisation awards (2010). She is also the winner of the Global Network Research Development (GNRD) Freedom of Expression 2015, an international art competition in Norway.

"… the street works harder than any other part of downtown. It is the nervous system; it communicates the flavor, the feel, the sights. It is the major point of transaction and communication. "
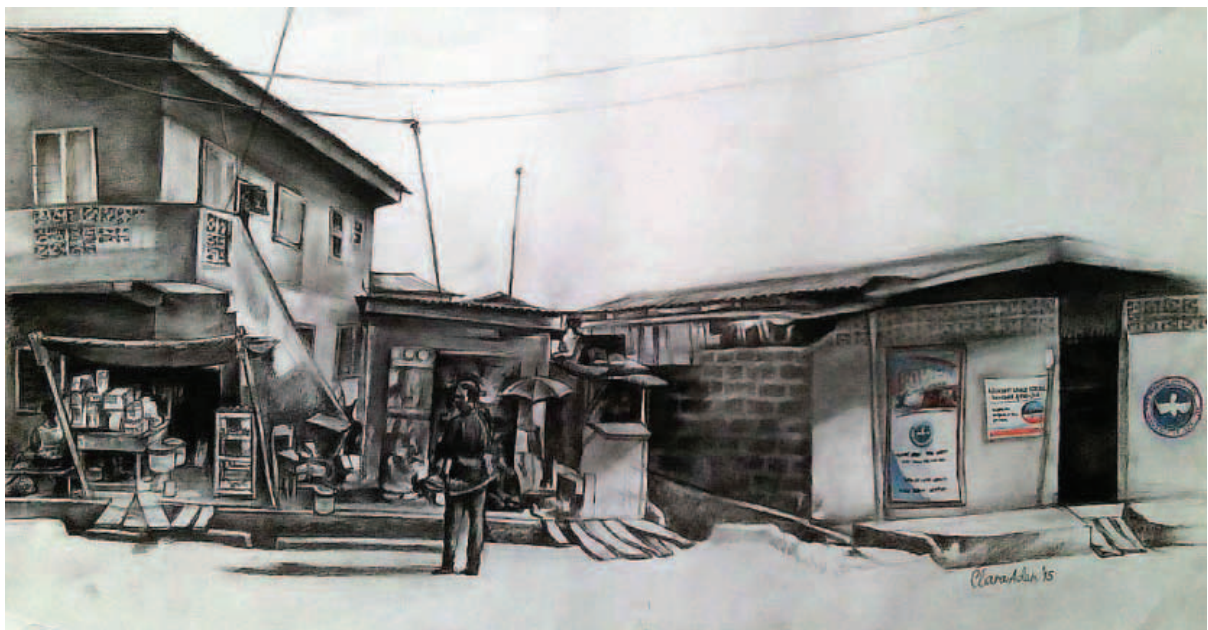
Jane Jacobs, Downtown is for People, 1958

Jacobs puts it brilliantly; street-life embodies the character of a city. These are illustrated observations in pastel from Bakare and Oriola – two intersecting streets in the Kosofe area of Lagos Mainland. These streets host a variety of co-existing spatial functions and mixed activities whose processes are so intertwined with the street that they are almost inseparable – qualities that Jane Jacobs believed were integral to city life. Pedestrian bridges work as pathways and vertical markets. Parking bays that transform to interim 'pubs' for beer-lugging men at the close of day. These bold mixes give the streets of Lagos an air of nonchalant practicality with little pretense. In a sense, this translates into an openness, albeit an openness borne out of a need to find and achieve a sustainable livelihood. Yet as obvious these transactional spaces are, suspicion of the unfamiliar and esoteric interactions exclude outsiders and leave observers baffled.

On closer inspection, do the flanking shacks of the restaurant and daycare centre or the pedestrians and okada (commercial motorcycle) riders that plow the same litter-strewn thoroughfare really typify Jacobs' vision of the city that make people the centre of planning? Even she admits that most cities need just the right amount of overhaul.

More Joy Restaurant and its neighboring daycare are no longer there, the ominous 'X' making good on its promise. Its absence is a testament to overriding planning interests as Lagos keeps morphing and mutating in its quest to attain model city status.

4.0 Migration / Spaces of Negotiation

Nairobi Railway Station
Babak Fakhamzadeh

The Cities of Sanctuary movement in the UK: building a culture of hospitality for refugees and asylum seekers

Carole Rakodi
Emeritus Professor, International Development Department,
School of Government and Society, University of Birmingham, UK[1]

Carole Rakodi is Emeritus Professor at the University of Birmingham, in its International Development Department, School of Government and Society. Between 2005 - 2011, she was Director of the DFID-funded research program on Religions and Development, coordinating a team of over a hundred researchers across four UK universities and partner institutions in India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania.

Cities of Sanctuary

Flows of refugees from war, civil conflict and political persecution across, into and out of Europe have waxed and waned for hundreds of years. Most settle in urban areas and, along with their descendants, have made immeasurable economic and social contributions to their host countries and communities. The latest influxes are driven by war and persecution in the Middle East (especially Syria) and countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Eritrea and South Sudan. In the 12 months to mid-2015, nearly half a million people crossed the Mediterranean to Europe, mostly on unseaworthy boats supplied by people smugglers. Nearly 3,000 are thought to have died during the crossing. Those that survive are joined by the increasing numbers travelling overland, who arrive in the eastern and southern European countries least able to cope with processing claims for asylum, providing somewhere to live and offering economic support and opportunities.

The goal of most is to reach Germany and other northern and western European countries. Even though all EU countries have systems in place to process asylum applications and provide initial support to refugees, the rapid increase in numbers in recent months has panicked both those who oppose migration and governments, whose responses to date have been hasty, incoherent and uncoordinated. Some support the exclusionary measures adopted by some governments. However, people's movements in many countries and cities have expressed solidarity with the refugees, sent financial

and material donations to temporary camps, pressured their national and local governments to increase the numbers of refugees they accept, called for a coordinated EU strategy and promised support when refugees arrive. One such city is Sheffield: a city of just over half a million people (2011) with a tradition of welcoming refugees, notably those from Pinochet's Chile in the 1970s (Darling, 2009). In 2005, it became the birthplace of the Cities of Sanctuary movement. Two years later, with the support of the City Council and over seventy community organisations, Sheffield became one of the UK's first City of Sanctuary, "a city that takes pride in the welcome it offers to people in need of safety".

A manifesto was drawn up by an alliance of NGOs, asylum seekers and supporters and adopted by the Council in 2009. It reflects key areas of concern to asylum seekers (community, health, employment, access to services, education, housing and destitution, children, solidarity), enabling the alliance to hold the Council to account for its claim to be welcoming.

Today there are more than 40 City of Sanctuary groups in over 30 cities and towns in the UK. Those involved commit to building a culture of hospitality and inclusion for people seeking sanctuary from violence and persecution in their own countries. The city-level alliances of individuals, organisations and groups seek to make asylum seekers and refugees[1] welcome, provide support for them, help them integrate into local communities and recognise their contribution to the host city or town.

The strength of the Cities of Sanctuary movement is its emphasis on partnering with existing service providers and incorporating diverse groups.

In each aspiring City of Sanctuary, local groups work to build coalitions, not just of refugee groups but of organisations from all sectors: faith and voluntary groups, the business sector, educational establishments, etc. These organisations make a commitment to welcome asylum seekers and refugees and include them in their activities. The intention is to create opportunities for relationships to develop between local people and those seeking sanctuary and to improve coordination between existing service providers; although service provision is not the movement's primary purpose, occasionally its initiatives fill gaps.

A national network has been established to stimulate and guide local initiatives by providing resources and encouraging practical actions designed to improve the lives of asylum seekers and refugees.[2] There are nationally agreed criteria and guidelines for when a city should be recognised as a City of Sanctuary (http://cityofsanctuary.org). In 2009, the network produced a handbook to provide inspiration and guidance (Barnett and Bhogal, 2009), and some groups have adopted this approach, adapted to the local context. However, from the outset towns and cities were encouraged to develop their own approach and to identify activities that suit local circumstances. In addition, international developments (such as the war in Syria) and constant changes to national policies have made it difficult for groups to strategise and plan, and forced them to be more reactive.

Unlike more traditional support programmes, it takes a city-wide and inter-city approach to cultivating an environment that positively affects the day-to-day lives of refugees. Local groups and organisations are encouraged to link up to develop 'streams' of activity: educational institutions, health providers, arts centres, religious organisations, sports and community groups and businesses. The first stream was Schools of Sanctuary, with groups in 14 cities, which has produced a schools' resource pack. The maternity stream has made two videos on *Childbirth in the UK – a guide for refugees*, which have been sent to schools of midwifery and medical schools. By linking people and organisations within (and sometimes across) cities around a particular theme or campaign, services can be coordinated and good practices, resources and ideas shared.

Changing local perceptions and attitudes on both sides is crucial to bringing about peaceful and productive co-existence. To help achieve this, participating organisations are encouraged to enable asylum seekers and refugees to play active roles by participating in decision-making and communicating their experiences to local residents through cultural activities, exhibitions, visits or storytelling. Refugees are also helped to take initiatives to meet their own needs. For example, with the help of the City of Sanctuary network, a group of immigrants and refugees in Coventry, a city in central England (population 0.34 million in 2014), set up a hate crime helpline for people who have suffered racist abuse (Hunt, 2011). The creation of a welcoming culture is regarded as an ongoing process. Local networks that demonstrate commitment to this way of working can, if they choose, apply to be recognised as a City of Sanctuary by the national network, which is also introducing a Sanctuary

Award, to be given to groups or organisations that can demonstrate how their activities reflect the core values of the movement.

However, the movement works in a policy and legal context over which it and the urban authorities have no control and which makes life very difficult for asylum seekers and refugees. It therefore encourages city groups to stand up for the rights of asylum seekers and refugees by lobbying local politicians and their Members of Parliament (Darling et al, 2010). In addition, at the national level, it seeks to lend its support to longer-standing refugee organisations campaigning to change government policies towards asylum seekers and refugees. In 2014 it was instrumental in bringing together 22 such organisations to host a Sanctuary Summit with 400 participants, as well as organising an event for MPs in the Houses of Parliament. The summit resulted in a declaration which has been signed up to by more than 300 organisations.[3]

The emergence of the Cities of Sanctuary movement

Cities of Sanctuary movement emerged in the early years of the new millennium. The circumstances of the time help to explain why it emerged, many of its characteristics, its growth and success, and also the challenges it faces. At the beginning of the 2000s, the UK experienced a rapid increase in the number of asylum seekers applying for refugee status. The number of applicants (excluding dependents) rose from 4,246 in 1987 to a peak of 84,130 in 2002, when asylum seekers made up nearly half of all net immigration, largely driven by the Balkan wars in the 1990s (Blinder, 2014). In a national and European context, these numbers

are relatively modest and numbers of new arrivals have fallen to 25,000 or fewer in most years since.[4] However, the rapid increase in numbers taxed the ability of the national system to process asylum applications, leading to long delays in decision-making. Many arrived (by sea or air) in the south-east of England, where they created additional demands for housing and services provided by hard-pressed local authorities and voluntary organisations, leading to widespread public alarm that Britain and some of its local areas in particular were being overwhelmed. Matters were made worse by an increasingly hostile government attitude and coverage by some sections of the media characterised by sensationalism and the use of derogatory language, stereotyped images and inaccurate information (ICAR, 2012).

The public debate and government responses converged on the need to reduce numbers and restrict the rights and movements of asylum seekers while their claims were being processed (Wren, 2004). New legislation in the 1990s sought to prevent or deter the arrival of asylum seekers and ensure their speedy departure from the country (of their own volition or under the threat of coercion) if their application failed, which many do. In particular, the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act eroded asylum seekers' legal rights and welfare entitlements and introduced a new dispersal policy. Prior to this, asylum seekers were not treated differently from poor citizens with respect to accessing welfare assistance, relocation to another city was optional and they could apply for permission to work six months after lodging their application if it had not been determined. Since 1999, "They [asylum seekers] are forbidden from seeking paid employment and receive welfare

at a fraction of the level of residents, they are routinely detained if adjudged to be at risk of disappearing into the community or deemed to have a weak claim, they cannot live where they want (if they wish to receive state accommodation and other support) but are 'dispersed' around the UK (typically outside the SE), often to its most marginalised and least salubrious parts" (Gibney, 2011, p 3).

Some consider these measures to be discriminatory and inhumane but this has not prevented the government, sections of the media and much public opinion from portraying asylum seekers and refugees as a burden and a drain on the public purse at both national and local levels.

In particular, the dispersal policy seeks to reduce demand for public sector housing in areas where it is in short supply. The national government contracted with local governments in selected localities to provide housing and services to an agreed number of asylum seekers and their dependents. All those who apply for financial assistance and housing have to accept an offer of accommodation in a 'dispersal area'.[5] These were supposed to be areas with black or ethnic minority populations and appropriate services, but in practice were cities which happened to have housing surpluses, usually because of economic and population decline, and where the vacant housing was in unpopular neighbourhoods (typically in deprived inner city estates) or housing types (often high rise flats) (Wren, 2004). The programme started in 2000, ten cities were signed up by 2002 and many more followed, mainly in the north of England and Scotland (especially Glasgow).[6] The dispersal programme faced both teething problems and longer term issues. In many of

the cities with available housing, the existing occupants of public housing were themselves marginalised and unprepared for the influx, and public resources were under strain. Not only were the asylum seekers removed from their existing support networks, they often faced unprepared service providers (schools, health facilities etc.), a dearth of refugee support organisations (which were concentrated in London), an (initial) lack of specialist services (e.g. English as a second language, translators, immigration lawyers) and community hostility (Audit Commission Report 2000, reported in Gibney, 2011; Wren, 2004).

Even less attention was paid to the programme's spatial (and urban) dimension. Longer term issues included the 'ghettoisation' of asylum seekers in deprived areas where, according to a 2005 Home Office report, they were more likely to suffer racial assaults and harassment and less likely to be able to accomplish long term social and economic integration (Anie et al, 2005). Outcomes were more positive where the regional or local political climate was more favourable and in Scotland and Wales, which had devolved regional governments. There were also fewer problems where support organisations had started to emerge and the local authority, police, National Asylum Support Service, public and private landlords and community organisations had begun to work together to monitor the impact of the new arrivals on services, provide new services (e.g. English as a second language tuition), monitor community

Refugee week event in Sheffield. Photo by Ambrose Musiyiwa

tension and involve existing residents in the process (Anie et al, 2005). By December 2006, the top ten dispersal cities (including Glasgow in Scotland, Cardiff and Swansea in Wales and seven cities in England) accommodated 16,635 asylum seekers and their dependents (Bennett et al 2007, p 62). However, promising approaches have subsequently been threatened by direct cuts to the funding of the relevant national agencies and local authorities, and so indirect cuts to the funding of NGOs, especially the larger service-providing organisations, and community organisations, as well as the privatisation of asylum accommodation contracts.

The Cities of Sanctuary movement is based on a belief that instead of its current harsh regime that penalises and discriminates against people who are fleeing persecution and panders to ill-informed and alarmist anti-refugee sentiments, the British government should build on the country's long tradition of offering asylum to refugees, honouring its international obligation to provide protection and recognising the contributions refugees have made to the country.

In addition, in response to the antagonistic, unprepared and uncoordinated response that greeted many relocated asylum seekers in the early years of the dispersal programme, it is based on a belief that better local responses are both necessary and possible.

Some strengths and successes of the Cities of Sanctuary movement

The idea of sanctuary has wide appeal, helping to explain how the City of Sanctuary vision has been able to bring concerned people and

organisations together at the local level in over thirty cities in ten years. The "practice that secures the helpless in a safe and sacred place" (Bagelman, 2013, p 59) has an ancient lineage and sacred or religious resonance. However, the notion of sanctuary inspires many beyond faith groups, as the moral imperative of kindness to strangers is common to most cultures (Hintjens and Pouri, 2014). Yet this, the belief that government policy is unjust and concern that local councils, community organisations and service providers are not providing a coherent response to the needs of dispersed asylum seekers is not enough to explain the success of the movement to date.

The Cities of Sanctuary approach is also based on a conceptually sound and workable model, which is place-based, providing "a unifying force for interests within the city" (Darling, 2009, p 133). It is bottom-up rather than initiated by local government and enables participating cities to portray themselves with pride as fulfilling their responsibilities to local residents at the same time as extending a welcome to outsiders. That welcome enables the latter to contribute to local communities, which are in turn strengthened by their provision of hospitality. Locally initiated and adapted to local circumstances, City of Sanctuary activities are able to build on local strengths, improve social relationships within participating cities, and develop responses to failures of service delivery and coordination.

The rapid proliferation of city groups is itself an indicator that the approach is considered appropriate and productive. Furthermore, following pressure from local City of Sanctuary groups and others, twelve city governments to date have passed resolutions condemning

Locally initiated and adapted to local circumstances, City of Sanctuary activities are able to build on local strengths, improve social relationships within participating cities, and develop responses to failures of service delivery and coordination.

the policies that result in some asylum seekers becoming destitute and asking their staff to find ways of addressing this problem. These may include employing a dedicated member of staff, and funding special services and local voluntary groups. Local groups are supported by the national network, jointly providing a strong platform from which to lobby for policy change (Darling, 2009).

The appeal of the idea and the growth of the network are, of course, not sufficient to demonstrate success without evidence that local strategies and expressed commitment are more than fine-sounding statements of intent. To be successful, the approach must improve relationships between host communities and their guests and lead to more appropriate and better-coordinated services. To prove its viability, ultimately it must generate broad-based attitudinal change and result in sustained, legally protected improvements to conditions for asylum seekers and refugees.

Challenges for the Cities of Sanctuary movement

Concern has been expressed that the values of the Cities of Sanctuary network are intangible and hard to translate into practical action. In particular, its vision of dispersal cities as being welcoming to asylum seekers and refugees and benefiting from their presence to build more vibrant/inclusive communities is considered by some to be unrealistic. The model will not necessarily work in all cities for political and cultural reasons. Indeed groups of activists in some cities have decided not to become part of the network (Darling et al, 2010). It

can also be difficult to manage in large cities. For example, in London (population 9.79m in 2011), where many relevant organisations have either a national or local rather than city-wide focus, to date there are only a few fragmented local City of Sanctuary initiatives.

Some also express a concern that while making asylum seekers welcome alleviates the worst aspects of the British asylum system by making the indefinite (and often lengthy) wait for a decision more tolerable, it does not remove the uncertainty, with its debilitating psychological and practical effects on applicants. Moreover, making asylum seekers and refugees welcome and providing opportunities for them to develop skills that can aid the process of eventual social integration (such as English language tuition, opportunities for voluntary work and work-related training) fuels hope that this will occur. Some fear that such hopes may be illusory, since failed asylum seekers face deportation or destitution and many of those whose applications are successful find it hard to access work and face long term dependency and poverty (Bagelman, 2013). In contrast, the Wales Refugee Inclusion Strategy is based on the principle that "integration should begin on day one".

The Cities of Sanctuary movement portrays its aim as cultural transformation rather than

political change. However, the idea of hospitality implies host/guest relationships, in which guests are dependent on their hosts. Such relationships can be difficult and unequal, leading Squire and Darling (2013) to advocate that programmes should be based on a rights-based approach in which refugees are seen as having a 'rightful presence' and not merely welcomed as guests. This would imply more overt political engagement, which might undermine the wide local support which a less explicitly political approach has generated.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to existing and prospective Cities of Sanctuary in the UK is that they are dealing with the effects of policies that they do not control and often oppose – namely centrally controlled policies and public spending. While the British government provides significant financial help for refugees living in camps in the Middle East, and in September 2015 reluctantly committed itself to accommodating 20,000 of the most vulnerable Syrian refugees from those

Sheffield City of Sanctuary sends a delegation to Parliament. Photo by Ambrose Musiyiwa

camps over the next five years, progressive legislative change is unlikely. As well as having ideological preferences for more selective provision of welfare and private provision of services, in its second term the Conservative government continues to prioritise reducing the national debt and annual budget deficits.

The ongoing cuts in central and local government expenditure, including legal aid and grants to the larger more professionalised NGOs, have reduced the scope for local action to tackle social problems, including the delivery of services tailored to refugees' needs. It is doubtful that local NGOs will be able to fill all the gaps in service provision for existing and new refugees, although City of Sanctuary groups may be able to help by mobilising local voluntary support. The Cities of Sanctuary approach was a response to the policy regime of the 2000s. Some elements of this have not changed very much and seem unlikely to do so in the near future. Others are already changing. For example, there is a move away from concentrated dispersal locations in areas with surplus public housing stock to the use of more scattered private accommodation. The socio-cultural geography of asylum seekers and refugees will change as a result, with implications for service provision and socio-economic integration. However, it remains to be seen what the implications of the new dispersal regime will be, and what this will mean for existing and new Cities of Sanctuary.

The City of Sanctuary approach was devised as a locally driven way of making asylum seekers and refugees welcome, providing them with appropriate support and easing the eventual integration (of at least some) into their host communities. It has spread widely, to nearly 40

towns and cities in the UK, helped by national networking. It has indeed proved possible to tap into a desire on the part of people of goodwill for a just and humane approach to people seeking sanctuary. It does this by emphasising the need for a welcoming culture in cities and organisations, engaging in a wide variety of initiatives to improve communication and provide support, and encouraging the social and economic inclusion of refugees in local communities, at least to the extent permitted by inhospitable national policies. Better informed and coordinated service delivery and improvements to local conditions for asylum seekers and refugees have been reported, and as the network expands and matures into a movement, its influence on national government may increase.

Whether the City of Sanctuary approach in the UK has wider applicability still needs to be assessed.[7] Its responsiveness and adaptability to local circumstances has won it wide support in participating cities. It is distinctive in that it positions cities as critical sites for ensuring inclusion and effective intervention in an anti-social economic, social and political context. Finally, openness is regarded as more than an ideal or a virtue. Rather, it is considered to be a goal that can be achieved by deliberate ongoing action in partnership with diverse constituencies across the city.

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1 Signatories to the 1951 Geneva Convention have a legal obligation to protect those who have a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries. In the UK, an asylum seeker only officially becomes a refugee if his or her claim is successful. Government policy and practice is primarily concerned with the system for processing asylum claims and only secondarily with the integration of refugees. The number of people who consider themselves refugees greatly exceeds the number of asylum seekers, although they are not captured in the official statistics unless they formally apply for asylum.

2 The work of the national network has been funded by a succession of grants from trusts and similar bodies. Its expenditure in 2014 was £89,000.

3 http://cityofsanctuary.org

4 www.refugeecouncil.org It is worth noting that the total population of the UK was 63.18m in 2011, and that total net in-migration (5,000 p.a. in the 1980s, 61,000 p.a. in the 1990s and 191,000 p.a. between 2001 and 2011) greatly exceeds the number of refugees.

5 Local authorities may allocate unoccupied public sector dwellings to asylum seekers or contract private landlords to accommodate them. Since 2009, the government has encouraged the use of private providers rather than public housing and in 2011 the responsibility for managing the programme was, controversially, sub-contracted to three private service companies rather than local authorities (www.producingurbanasylum.com/four-cities/dispersal-in-the-uk).

6 Between 1999 and 2006 the support system was operated by a new agency set up by the Home Office, the National Asylum Support Service, but subsequently it became the responsibility of the UK Border Agency. Eighteen months into the programme, in December 2001, 40,325 asylum seekers (and their dependents) had been accommodated in dispersal areas (Home Office, 2002), and 26,350 were being supported in 2014. In addition, in 2001, 25,310 had asked for financial assistance but not housing, declining to 3,403 in 2014. Most of these were living in cities with established ethnic minority, immigrant or refugee communities, such as London and Birmingham (www.refugeecouncil.org) .

7 For international discussions about the problems faced by refugees in urban areas and possible responses see, for example, UNHCR's Policy on Refugee Protection and Solutions in Urban Areas 2009 http://www.refworld.org/docid/4ab8e7F72.html , UN-HABITAT's Issue Paper on Migration and Refugees in Urban Areas, 2015, http://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-2_Migration-and-Refugees-in-Urban-Areas.pdf and the special issue of Forced Migration Review, 34, 2010 on urban displacement.

What can the rest of Accra learn from one of its oldest neighborhoods?

Victoria Okoye

Victoria Okoye is an urban planner, researcher and writer who uses media and community engagement to document urban development challenges, inform and shape interventions. In 2010, Victoria created the online platform African Urbanism to produce local content on urban development in West Africa. She is based in Accra, Ghana.

In one word: openness.

One might say that the Jamestown and Usshertown neighborhood hold a different personality from the rest of Accra. When one enters this space, it is almost as if entering another realm – where the rules and regulations that hold sway over the rest of the city simply do not apply. And in a way, it's true: the spatial dynamics and street culture of openness here are not ubiquitous across the city, partly because this neighbourhood emerged and forged its own identity before there was any Accra at all.

Here, streets teem with activity. Family and community social activities spill into the streets, sidewalks, unused building and in car parks. Between day, night and community demands, these settings transform into active, multifunctional spaces with evolving uses. Streets, roads and temporary open spaces serve as the stages and venues for football games, races, dancing, ceremonies and celebrations. People lounge at shop fronts and doorways, leaning, sitting, and talking with neighbours. Young children play with friends along the side street, dancing to blaring music and playing games. Customers patronise and chat with street vendors.

On Fridays and weekends, families set up funeral canopies on side streets, closing off car traffic. Under each canopy, rows of plastic chairs are filled with attendants dressed the celebratory black and red. Loud, local music and the din of voices in prayer, song and lamentation float through the air.

Some formal public spaces do exist, such as Bukom Square, Akumajaye Community Park and Otublohum Square, but ironically, it is their nearby streets and sidewalks that community members gravitate toward. Unlike the city's mostly exclusive formal parks, sidewalks and street spaces are democratic, equitable and accessible to all. Most, if not all can participate, and all can observe. These sidewalks and roads belong to everyone and no one – cultivated spaces that are less prone to the methods of exclusion routinely practiced in formal parks and spaces in the city.

History and economic impacts

The indigenous Ga have long called this area Ga Mashie[1]. For centuries, this historic fishing settlement has been home to the Ga people, who migrated from the east and settled in and around present-day Accra, forming a network of indigenous settlements. The development of trade networks with Europeans amplified the settlement's economic status, transforming it into a global trade center and key port in West Africa.

Despite its economic prominence more than a century ago, the settlement's destiny changed course. First, in 1939, a devastating earthquake hit the area and pushed its affluent class to relocate to other parts of Accra. In 1962, the relocation of the port to Tema, Accra's sister city, was a second and final blow. Since then, the area has suffered an economic decline from which it has never fully recovered.

This economic decline informed urban challenges in this working-class community. Today, Jamestown is a slum by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly's standards poor infrastructure, sub-standard and inadequate housing development and high levels of unemployment are rife.[2] A

recent city government survey found that the community continues to remain densely populated, underprivileged and low-income, with high unemployment, dilapidated infrastructure, poor quality of housing, water and sanitation.[3]

Community-creating open spaces: Evolving from public spaces to public life

The openness of community public space in Jamestown extends from the centuries-old design tradition of connected and communal dwelling spaces. Multi-generational living traditions informed the clustered nature of dwellings. Families' private or shared living spaces center around communal kitchens and courtyards for cooking and social activities. The centrally located communal areas of family compounds serve as sites for gatherings, discussions and meetings; nearby larger community shared spaces were sites for masquerades, ceremonies and community interactions.

Today, multigenerational households still pack into densely clustered living quarters. Communal inheritance customs contribute to the extended-family structure of home dwellings, and in some cases houses can accommodate as many as five extended and intergenerational families in a single property. Narrow alleyways connect these clusters of homes, creating a

Ghanaian crazinisT artisT and Natascia Silverio's performance installation afriCan resurrect" recreated the religious sculpture Pieta (the Lamentation), with Silverio representing Mary and CrazinisT artisT representing Jesus.
Chale Wote Street Art Festival 2015

Source: Victoria Okoye

CHALE WOTE
STREET ART
FESTIVAL
2015

JAMES TOWN HIGHS TREET
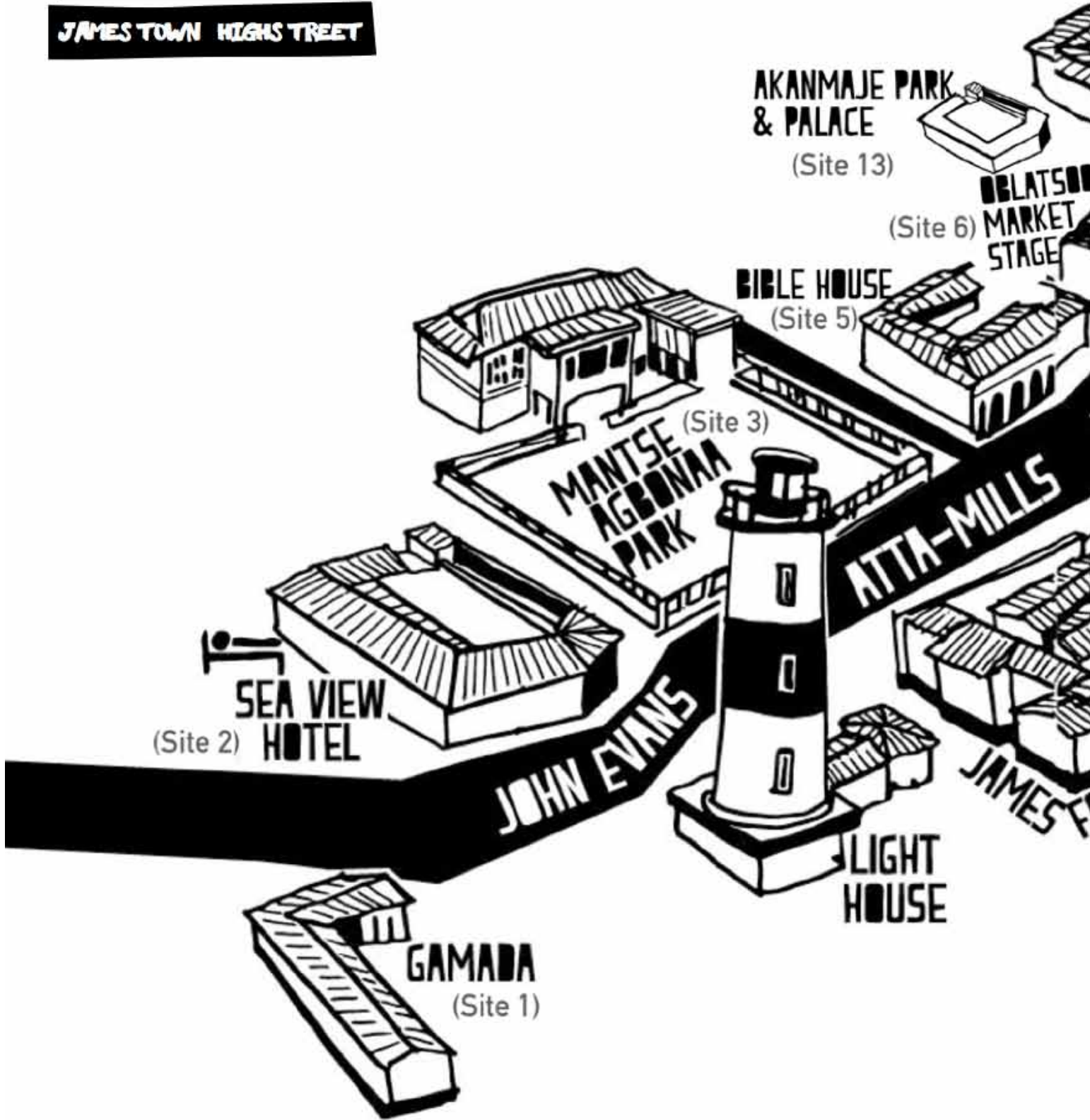
AKANMAJE PARK
& PALACE
(Site 13)

OBLATSO
(Site 6) MARKET
STAGE

BIBLE HOUSE
(Site 5)

(Site 3)

MANTSE
AGBONAA
PARK

ATTA-MILLS

SEA VIEW
(Site 2) HOTEL

JOHN EVANS

JAMES

LIGHT
HOUSE

GAMADA
(Site 1)

DEO GRATIAS
(Site 9) PHOTO STUDIO

SEMPE
MANTSE'S
PALACE
(Site 8)

APPOINTED
TIME)
(Site 12)

USSHER FORT

FRANKLIN
HOUSE
(Site 11)

OTOBLOHUM
SQUARE (Site 7)

BRAZIL
HOUSE (Site 10)

GHANA CUSTOMS
(Site 6)

HIGH STREET

CAR PARK
JAMES TOWN
POST
OFFICE (Site 6)

(Site 4)
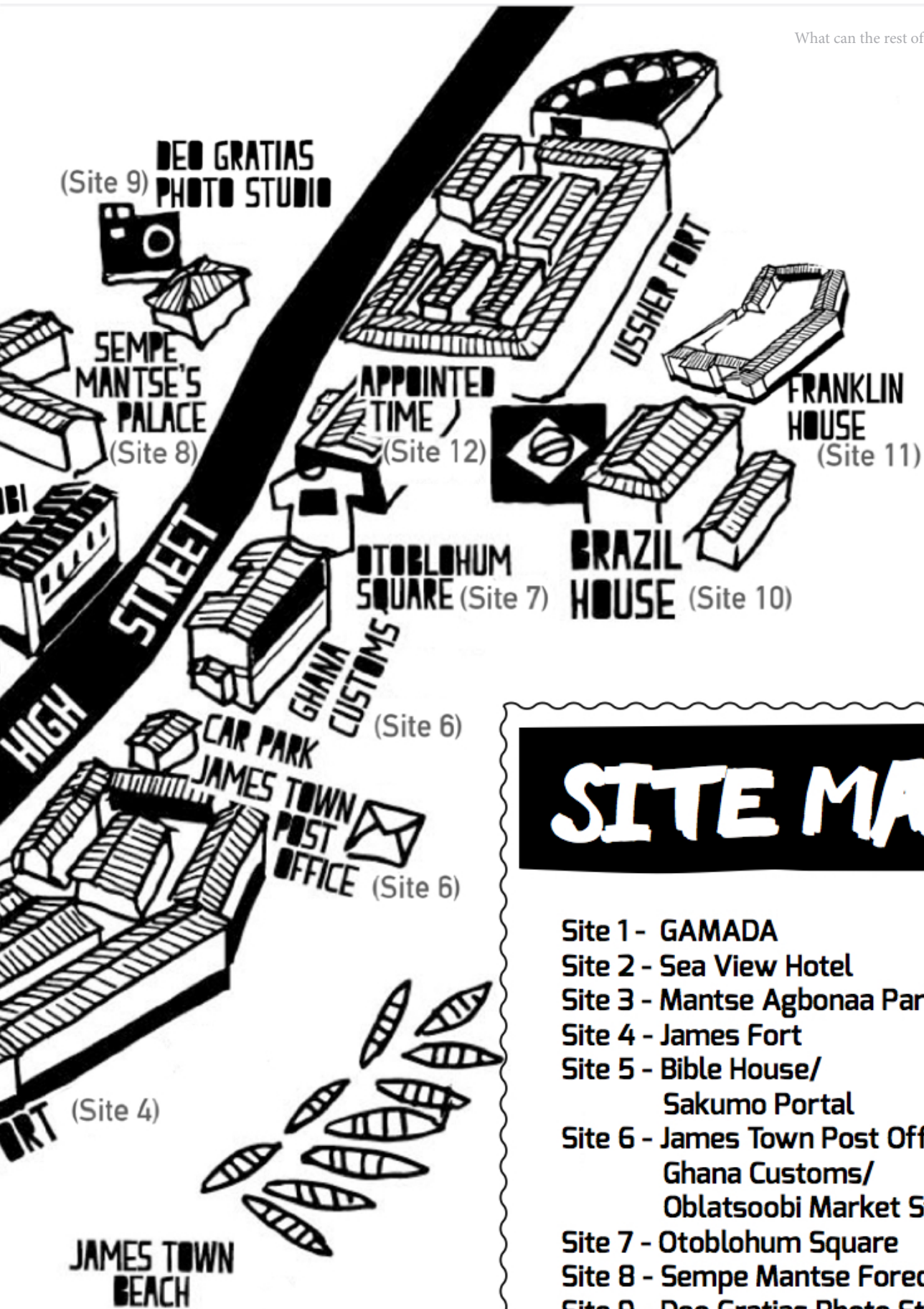
JAMES TOWN
BEACH

SITE MAP

Site 1 - GAMADA
Site 2 - Sea View Hotel
Site 3 - Mantse Agbonaa Park
Site 4 - James Fort
Site 5 - Bible House/
         Sakumo Portal
Site 6 - James Town Post Office/
         Ghana Customs/
         Oblatsoobi Market Stage
Site 7 - Otoblohum Square
Site 8 - Sempe Mantse Forecourt
Site 9 - Deo Gratias Photo Studio
Site 10 - Brazil Lane/ Brazile House
Site 11 - Franklin House
Site 12 - Appointed Time
Site 13 - Akanmaje Park & Palace

tight series of interconnectedness. [4] In other parts of Accra, economic affluence and Western-influenced housing styles promoted single family dwellings. Here, strong links to tradition and limited resources have kept these family and community life close.

By extension, residents actively create their own public spaces, in part because most formal parks are out of reach, both geographically and financially. During the colonial period, the government imposed strict, segregating standards that aimed to control and order land uses. British town planning used green spaces as buffers to separate the Europeans and the Africans for public health concerns (particulary after the 1920s bubonic plague epidemic). Throughout Accra, the modern practice of green spaces and parks in Accra is built on this, focusing on aesthetic rather than function. Today, instead of encouraging social cohesion, Accra's most beautiful parks create social exclusion Parks like Kwame Nkrumah Park, located 100 meters down the road, target tourists with its strict ticketed access. Accra's largest green space, the 12-acre Efua Sutherland Children's Park located in the government ministries area, is often closed to the public save for private celebrations and events.

So residents work with what they do have: their communal spaces, and the streets and sidewalks that are open and free to them. Space functions depend on the day, the time, and the demands of the community and residents. At the same time, there is no single or clearly demarcated public gathering space, but rather many and so the idea of public space itself becomes a decentralized reality. Every day, along High Street (the main thoroughfare) and its side streets,

multiple public places erupt, shift and change as the day wears on, moving with the community flow. The public space becomes the convenient spot on the sidewalk under the large tree and its expansive shade, the spot where men gather to play pick-up checkers games or the local chop bar with its television set tuned to the afternoon football match, where people gather round to watch and cheer. It is in the middle of the street where residents gather on a lazy evening, which serves as common ground and neutral territory when an argument or conversation erupts. The result is that here is one of the few communities in Accra where life splays out onto the streets so organically and openly, where outdoor, community street life is so pervasive, more so than in the private context of indoor quarters.

The location of these informal spaces is an innovation and also a challenge. Their locations on streets and sidewalks mean a plethora of competing uses can interfere with social activity. Mourners can appropriate side streets as funeral spaces, for example, but cars still need to get through, especially at essential link roads. Youth can take over car parks and open building spaces as their impromptu football fields, but only when they are free from cars, such as at the evenings or weekends.

Celebrating – and elevating – Jamestown culture

Despite its cultural vibrancy and openness, ask anyone from Accra about Jamestown, and you'll get a host of negative associations. It is a truly a tough neighborhood, with low numbers of secondary school completion, high rates of teen pregnancy, and a wealth of troubling activities for young people to involve themselves in.

Unsurprisingly, it also produces some of the country's best boxers from its more than 20 boxing schools, including world-renowned champs like Azumah Nelson.

There has been limited government support to change the community's reputation. At first glance, the depth of city authorities' investment in Jamestown seems as superficial as the layers of colorful paint applied to dilapidated heritage buildings' facades each year. Without the necessary structural repairs

and renovations, there is little to ensure their potential. Despite the proximity to Ussher and James Forts both World Heritage Sites and some of the best local examples of colonial architecture, and present practices of indigenous traditions, no one group or organization convincingly managed to capture or captivate an audience to truly appreciate Jamestown outside of tourism companies' short stints.

Similarly, throughout the city of Accra, infrastructure, commerce and business

Deo Gratis Photography Studio, the first photography studio in Ghana, opened up its mass collection of photography from the 1930s and beyond to share with the public during Chale Wote Street Art Festival.

Image Source: Victoria Okoye

Jamestown will be the culture and art hub for the whole country where we set this new art economic agenda.

government attract priority government interest, while efforts and interventions targeted at vibrant public and community spaces, along with cultural preservation and arts, fall to the wayside. Over the years, some initiatives have attempted to leverage Jamestown's art, culture, and heritage traditions, but few things have stuck. Part of the still unrealized aim of UNESCO's support to the Accra Metropolitan Assembly city government and Jamestown was to preserve the World Heritage sites while at the same time allocating space for small business and tourism. This project stalled, and in the meantime, the two forts sit in disrepair.

A shift happened a few years ago with the introduction of the Chale Wote Street Art Festival, created by a small network of arts and cultural programming organizations.[5] Started in 2011, Chale Wote is the first-ever street-based art festival in Ghana, taking its name from the local slang for "Friend, let's go". By hosting the festival in Jamestown, the organizers make a deliberate attempt to generate widespread interest in the community, and they use art as a transformative tool to improve it. But their efforts also provide a new lens through which to appreciate how public spaces in the city can work, and perhaps should work, in line with community character and behavior.

When the festival comes to High Street each year, activities align with how the community already uses its space. Exhibitions, performances, murals and extreme sports take place along High Street and its environs, with action at the street, on the sidewalk, in buildings and along walls. In the 2012 edition, French street art company Generik Vapeur organized a throng of international and local drummers adorned in blue face paint and snappy suits, who beat empty oil drums in unison as they proceeded down High Street. In 2015, Ghanaian artist crazinisT artisT and Italian anthropologist and artist Natascia Silverio re-interpreted Michaelangelo's famous sculpture Pietà through a site-specific human performance at Bible House.

At the same time, the festival, through artistic commotion, creates the magnet needed for bringing the community and social activity into these shared spaces, and celebrates it. As the Generik Vapeur team proceeded down High Street in 2012, they attracted a gang of followers who joined in their procession. In 2015, crowds formed and stared at the AfriCan exhibition in wonderment. Yet even more ambitiously, this year's 2015 edition tested the extent of that openness and fluidity of public-private space by having additional exhibitions and activities take place in the homes of residents. This furthers the notion of full access, not just for festival-goers coming from outside of Jamestown, but to ensure accessibility for those inside Jamestown as well.

Putting on the festival each year requires navigating and drawing support from the complex network of city, traditional and community authorities. It also means engaging the community itself for support, which can bring its own challenges. For the past two years, the festival organizers have succeeded in obtaining street permit approval from the

Accra Metropolitan Assembly to pedestrianize a large portion of High Street, enabling activities to safely take place and pour onto the street, and to remain more connected. Although temporary, this formal approval legitimizes these informal public spaces and the spatial dynamic that is at the heart of Jamestown's social organization. Beyond that, the city government has done little to support the festival, says Mantse Aryeequaye, co-founder of Accradotalt, one of the festival's organisers. That includes fulfilling its own promises provide police security – a particular concern given that the festival attracts an estimated 5000 people each year.

Negotiating the terms and involvement of residents has also not been free. It's taken a few years, but the community's initial suspicion of Chale Wote has evolved into interest, support and real engagement. "At first, they didn't know what Chale Wote was about," says Jamestown resident and community organizer Samoah Hanson. "Even the second time, they didn't get it. But the third time, the fourth time, they participated. This time [in 2015] there were massive people coming [to participate]." "Currently there is a lot of support from the community," says Aryeequaye. "[The community] wants to be part of Chale Wote, but they also come with their costs," he says, explaining that in the past, community support and participation required payment to community members to "show up." He adds: "They don't see it as something that [festival organizers] can get together and make happen in our own way...it's also because we haven't gotten to the point where we are doing art for community development and art for art's sake. So when [the community residents] show up, they expect some monetary compensation."

Samoah speaks to the residents' perspective, saying: "They don't like volunteering; they need money," he explains, linking it to the widespread seasonal unemployment for those engaged in the community's deeply rooted fishing industry. "[Residents] have challenges educating their children. Some of them would like their children to be fishermen because they too are fishermen. But it's seasonal work – commercial fishing starts in July or August to November or December. From January, when the dry season starts, there aren't fish, and many cannot get money to feed their children." So understandably, for many residents the festival is still perceived as a work opportunity to earn money, rather than a volunteerism or a collective effort to expand and enrich community spaces.

A children's traditional procession integrated Jamestown youth into the performances and installation on display at the Chale Wote Festival. Girls such as Dora , pictures here, were adorned in paint and local wear to represent the festival's connections with tradition.

Source: Victoria Okoye
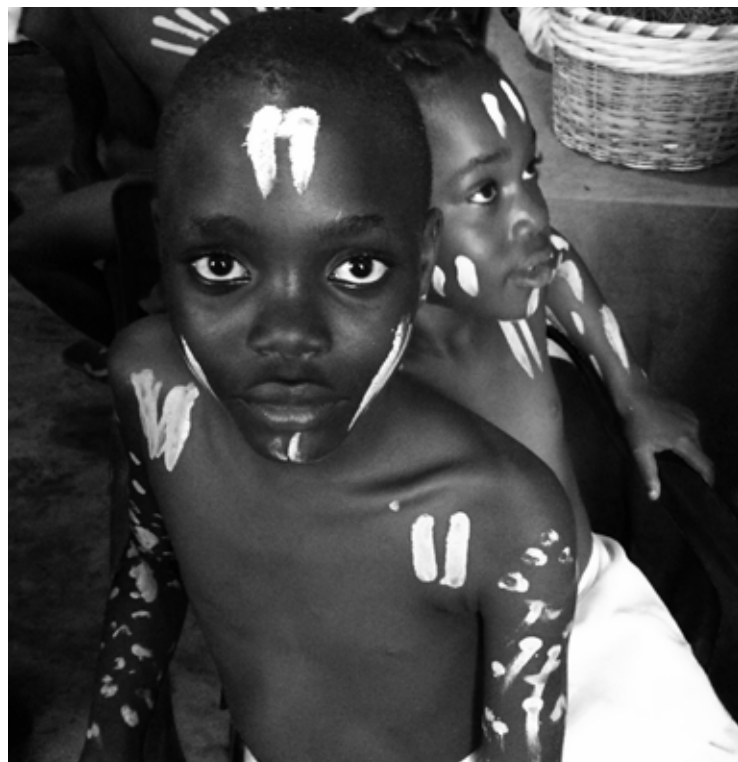
Building a new cultural economy

Residents demand not only aesthetic improvements, but also improved quality of life. Achieving that requires celebrating their culture, but also empowering them with new economic opportunities. Already, for street vendors who come out to sell their local foods and water during the festival, Chale Wote does bring monetary gains. "The festival brings a market to Jamestown," Hanson describes.

Accradotalt wants to ensure that art impacts change and impacts the way that community residents see themselves, their environment, and their place in their environment. An important success is the spinoff of a successful local tours initiative, Accra Walking Tours, which provides three tours of Jamestown. With Aryeequaye and Hanson at the lead along with a handful of other Jamestown residents, the tours provide information-packed, one-hour expeditions with the opportunity to explore the Jamestown fishing harbor and beach, as well as historic settlement locations, including homes, buildings, forts and stool houses (i.e the dwellings of traditional authorities).

"We started the tours in 2013, and now there are quite a number of people who are doing tours on their own," says Aryeequaye. "You're seeing lots more tourists coming to Jamestown. They're curious about this place and coming and doing the tours. What we need to do more of is to engage [Jamestown] people in the community so that they too know some of this history."

So far, the festival and the tours have created an influx of tourists without challenging the area's local character or culture. In fact, Chale Wote's festival organizers look to use art and culture to explore new ways involve locals in the evolution of their own community.

"Through Chale Wote, we're building infrastructure that supports local art," says Aryeequaye. "We intend to turn Jamestown into an art factory, and it will be such that it creates employment for people in the community in a way that sustains their existence within that space." Aryeequaye is speaking within the context of revitalized interests in Jamestown, and threats of gentrification and attempts to purchase lands, including the prime real estate and interests in the Jamestown harbour for high-end real estate developments. If such attempts are successful, Aryeequaye says, "this would change the space and also the manner in which these people relate to their space. These [developments] would come up and Jamestown people wouldn't be able to access them." The impact, he says, would be "displacing people who don't have economic means to find a place to live outside of where they are living now." Unfortunately, it wouldn't be a new phenomenon in Accra, where stool lands in prime locations, entrusted to traditional authorities, have been sold to development companies in the past for tidy profits.

The organizers have big plans for the community and the festival, with visions of transforming the neighborhood into a production center for art, fashion, music, local culture and the history. A key aspect: the community would be the ultimate owners and agents who benefit. "It's going to be community owned - if you want to produce fabric, you working with people within the community; the plants are in the community, and it is run by the community - that way, we

are producing something that everyone can live off of."

"Jamestown will be the culture and art hub for the whole country where we set this new art economic agenda," Arqueequaye says, "and Chale Wote will be the exhibition grounds for what we produce." Aryeequaye's sentiments refer mainly to Jamestown, but Accradotalt's intentions and actions provide a lesson and a new vision for the entirety of Accra, as a well as a model to begin to achieve it.

Absorbing the Migrant: Modern Realities of IDP experiences in Lagos"

Cheta Nwanze

Cheta Nwanze is one of the founders of Enough is Enough, a coalition of individuals and organisations focused on good governance and public accountability in Nigeria. He is currently the head of research at SBM Intelligence, Nigeria and a regular contributor to the online magazine Africasacountry.com and the newspaper review at Nigeria's Smooth FM.

According to a projection by the Lagos State Government, 600,000 people arrive in Lagos annually and take the decision to make West Africa's largest city and fastest growing urban economy their primary place of residence. This is the much spoken of effect and perhaps the greatest virtue of the city – its magnetism and ability to somehow absorb the diverse interests and aspirations of those seeking opportunity or refuge, irrespective of ethnicity, creed or social standing. But this storyline is glaringly superficial, relating little of the variegated types of residence: transient workers, internally displaced persons, short stay traders, etc. Nor does it capture the migrants' differentiated experiences in attending to their needs and livelihood priorities, and the resulting effects of their activities on pre-existing spaces and the social fabric. At a closer look, it is evident that a complex series of situations and parameters are in fact at play.

For one, the city's gravitational pull isn't simply a happy accident. A regional ECOWAS-led policy on the free movement of people and goods, its thick concentration of companies, industries and markets, the presence of a large consumer base, as well as the degrees of deregulation and loopholes in its services and commercial environment are all part of the framework of conditions that allow for and encourage entry. Economic opportunity, as implied, remains a dominant reason that makes Lagos the preferred choice for more internal and regional migrants. Yet other contributing push factors, such as insurgency, unfavourable climates or post-crisis economic hardship in donor countries and states also have significant bearing. While the migration rates, and keeping track of the inflow of people into Lagos is significant, at the moment, documentation methods are poor.

However, they could be better if an eye is kept on the motor parks, especially the major parks at Mile 2, Ojota, Jibowu and Iyana-Ipaja, as these are the main entry points into the city.

Once in the city, welcome is neither simple nor automatic. Human dynamics and a host of other sociological factors come into play as the city tries to accommodate, assimilate and finally integrate these new migrants, mainly fellow West Africans, who have different languages, beliefs, religions, cultures and way of life into the society. Integrating migrating populations into new areas is usually difficult as both the migrants and the original residents have to take in and tolerate certain amounts of the other party's vagaries, indulgences, language, and lifestyle, just to mention a few. This is less stressful when the migrating population is not much but usually difficult to sail through when the migrating population is of substantial numbers compared to the recipient population.

This was the case with some migrant situations in 2012 in Lagos, just when Boko Haram's bloody and dastardly attack on major towns and cities in the North was beginning to get more frequent. Mohammed Bunu, who migrated with his family from Borno State in the wake of the Boko Haram insurgency in 2012 and now resides in the Sabo area of Ikorodu, on the outskirts of Lagos. He got a good deal: his wife's brother was already in Lagos, and accommodated them in the first few months. This in-law also helped with getting him casual jobs while he found his feet. Another factor that made it easier for Bunu was that unlike a lot of other people from his part of the country, he moved to Ikorodu at a time when there were not that many "immigrants" so as to cause problems. The little friction in merging

into the mainstream life of his new hosts enabled Bunu to weave himself into the society easily because his seemed to be a migration move made for economic reasons.

His easy blending into the local society helped him restart his trade of embroidery making in makeshift tents in the nearby cattle market in Ikorodu and fetch the little he could get to support his two wives and nine children. Mohammed however got a boost when he was enlisted by the local community development association to attend a state government sponsored Skills Acquisition Programme organised by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) where he got entrepreneurial training and a start-up capital grant at the end of the programme in 2013. With that he has been able to establish himself in his embroidery trade in a standard shop and support his family.

In Lagos, Community Development Associations (CDAs) are run by the local communities (chiefly landlords and residents in a given neighbourhood) with support from Alausa, home to the administrative seat of the Lagos State government. In Mohammed Bunu's case, he was doing a job that not many in the area were employed in and people in the area felt a need to help him because he had apprentices who were local.

Unfortunately, Mohammed Bunu's case differs from many other individuals and groups of Northerners that migrated to other parts of

Lagos due to the insurgency in the North-East in the period shortly after Mohammed's integration. These groups of migrants, who settled in the Mile 12 and Ijora areas of Lagos, did not necessarily have as smooth a transition as their numbers made their arrival into the communities obvious. The visibility of newcomers generated palpable fear and tension in the residents of the communities who became wary of the new guests particularly those from the North. Only an increased presence of police and military personnel in the communities offered apparent relief to the residents, as the fear of infiltration by some insurgents in the guise of internally displaced persons still hung in the air.

Was there ever a need for the tension and suspicion in this case? Yes. The police eventually identified and arrested some persons of Northern extraction in possession of deadly weapons and firearms amongst the migrants in Ijora who were alleged to have links with Boko Haram insurgents. The security alertness of the residents and the security agents finally paid off.

The situations depicted above stem from the many social mechanisms put in place by government, private citizens, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and collaborative efforts of concerned parties. These mechanisms come in the form of well constituted community development associations (CDAs) empowered by state laws to help propagate governance at the community level while also acting as a fourth level of government to liaise with the

government, citizens and corporate bodies with a view to forming and sustaining bonds between all elements and constituents of the society.

The effectiveness of the communities development associations and NGOs proved vital in the cases described above as the Know-Your-Neighbour initiatives and the various developmental and capacity building projects of NGOs helped in the successful integration of the migrants and internally displaced persons in both scenarios.

Bunu's story is an example of a more recent and increasingly prevalent type of migration situation in Lagos, but Lagos is certainly not new to migration as settler dynamics and communities form a great part of the history and the making of the Lagos we know today. From the repatriation of black slaves from the Americas and Europe, which brought along Brazilian and Sierra Leonean heritage to the Lafiaji/Campos Arena areas of Lagos Island, to the post World War I resettlement of the war veterans in Obalende; from the resettlement of predominantly Hausa population in the old Ebute Metta, to the present day Idi Araba in the late 1950s, Lagos has long been a migrant's haven. It was the capital city of Nigeria for 87 years – crossing the colonial and independence eras – and remains the most densely concentrated space for its markets and industries, and as a result attracted most of Nigeria's talent. In the 1970s, the vast majority of the government's resources poured into developing Lagos under nation-building programs in the post-civil war period, nevertheless to the detriment of other parts of the country. This only served to accelerate the influx of people from other parts of the country. As a result, in 1975, some low density parts of the

Western region, Epe, Agege, Ikorodu, Abule Egba, were excised into Lagos, and people settled more and more in those places. What made it less obvious was that the native population was always smaller, relative to the population arriving from other parts of the country.

Almost half of the developing world's population now lives in cities and Lagos is one of those cities. Rapid urbanization is expected to increase every aspect of Lagos. Lagos's increasing population is advantageous to the state economy-wise as she explores the impact of migration in its different forms on host societies and culture. Lagos has involved a wider diversity of ethnic and cultural groups, making it easier for peoples of similar backgrounds or originating communities to find and organise themselves. So, accommodating newcomers has not been much of a problem. Another reason that allows for displaced persons and migrant integration is that Lagos is an ethnically and religiously diverse metropolis with a more developed cosmopolitan situation and sense than any other part of the country. Although the undertones and expressions of tribalism are evident and pervasive, politicians cannot afford to pit ethnic and religious groups against one another – a problem that has long bedevilled Nigeria.

But the city's ability to sustain this trend in the face of urban challenges and modern realities is becoming questionable. The heavy migration integration successes described above all succeeded because of the availability of social infrastructure to support the process. In earlier decades, and especially under the government of Governor Lateef Jakande (1979-1983), Lagos was better able to meet the needs of inflowing population, and as a result keep resentments

in check. This is no longer the case as social infrastructure and amenities are overstretched in the city of Lagos. In previous regimes, Lagos, as federal capital got the lion's share of resources. This has not been the case in the current democratic experiment, and as a result the city has struggled. The state government is struggling to meet the social infrastructure needs of over 16 million people in the state.

For instance, land which is a major factor in the resettlement of migrating populations is very scarce in Lagos as the city of Lagos has the highest population density in the country, with an average population of 4,908/km2 and some areas as high as 20,000/km2. Also, going by the Lagos State Development Plan 2012-2025, which was issued in September 2013 by the Ministry of Economic planning and Budget, Lagos's economy is beset with high unemployment, under-employment, and unacceptable levels of poverty. Massive investment is required to create a vibrant economy to meet the needs of all, including the growing demands as the city's population continues to swell due to settlement patterns and birth rates. How will the city cope with these current and future challenges? What is the current status of infrastructural support and what investments and programs should be put in place to restrict marginalisation, support equitable service provision, and ensure those who choose to relocate or already live in Lagos are able to attend to their livelihood pursuits and attain the best possible quality of life?

A good starting place is to consider Lagos from the perspective of its infrastructure. Infrastructure is vital for economic growth and a reasonable quality of life, but much of the infrastructure is inadequate to meet the needs

of Lagos now and limits growth potential. It was badly neglected in the 1980s and 1990s, and as such, investment is required to address both a substantial deficit in all areas as well as meet future needs. Today, the existing policy-based and programmatic framework through which the government is working to deliver on infrastructural upgrades and development, in partnership with private sector actors, is its Infrastructure Development Pillar. A core element of the Lagos State Development Plan, it is in turn divided into four sectors: power, transportation, water and telecommunications.

The status quo on each these is as follows:

• **Transportation** is predominantly road based and this accounts for up to 93% of total passengers and goods traffic. The available road infrastructure is greatly over-stretched. Despite the abundance of large water bodies, ports are congested and water transportation is still under-utilized. Rail infrastructure is virtually dormant.

• **The power sector** faces chronic shortage and erratic supply. Estimates indicate that the current demand for power stands at 2,000KW. The supply is much lower at 870MW, leaving a power supply gap of 1,130MW. Current estimates indicate that LASG will need a minimum of 15,000MW of generating capacity to position Lagos City as Africa's Mega City of Choice and place Lagos City amongst the most promising cities in the emerging economies.

• **In the Water Sector,** the installed water capacity is 33% of total water demand of the State with State water demand at 540 million gallons per day. Service coverage is only 44%.

Unorganized private water vendors and private water supply accounts for the deficit demand of 330 million gallons per day. The sector is characterized by ageing water plants and facilities.

• **The Telecoms industry** is characterised by poor service quality. For Lagos State to have a reliable and accessible telecommunication services by 2025, it will need an investment of N1.7 trillion. N600 billion will need to be spent on Research and Development while the balance is spent on Telecommunications Infrastructure.

In addition, the infrastructure in other sectors, such as for housing, schools and hospitals, deserve a special note. Regarding schools, for example, shortages of resources adversely affect the teaching and learning environment and hence the quality of education. Enrolment in schools is high and increasing due to in-migration of families with school-aged children. Where housing is concerned, some estimates suggest the 75% of Lagos' population live in substandard housing areas. Given that the overall population of the State is approximately 20 million, this means that 15 million inhabitants experience poor conditions. Lagos will also need to develop its Drainage Master Plan and secure appropriate investment to build new drains, ensure existing ones are well maintained; and continue to engage local communities in measures to keep drainage channels clear. Lagos urgently needs a full complement of Regional, District and Neighbourhood Master Plans to guide the next phases of development and establish some priorities for neighbourhood planning. All of this barely leaves a marginal chance of assimilating large migrant populations except strong intervention plans are carried out which include development of additional

IDP buffer shelter zones complete with facilities and social infrastructure that would help the rehabilitation and assimilation of the migrants. Social governance mechanisms and apparatus already in place like the CDA/CDCs (Community Development Committees) should be empowered to assist the assimilation of smaller migrating populations into the mainstream society. These associations as well as their development partners have a lot to offer in the monitoring and supervision of the integration process, particularly in the reduction or elimination of stigmatisation and segregation which most IDPs face in their host communities.

The government should also intensify efforts on the cultural awakening of the citizens it has been doing through the organisation of cultural heritage festivals it has been hosting and supporting like the Black Heritage Festival, carnivals, concerts, etc. Apart from the tourism inclinations of these events, they also help residents of the city with the familiarisation and appraisal of other tribes and cultures in the country and the world at large. This would go a long way in the integration of migrants of other ethnic or cultural extraction. Ultimately, Lagos should not be considered in isolation of the country and its developmental issues at large. As an overall strategy, it will be important for Nigeria to put legislation in place to ensure that other cities can open up, not just Lagos.

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Mexico City
Geraint Rowland

Lagos informal settlements as learning centers for innovation, resilience, and inclusion: community-led solutions to citywide challenges

Megan Chapman & Andrew Maki,
Co-Directors, Justice & Empowerment Initiatives – Nigeria

A Lagos of extremes - exclusive estates v. inclusive settlements

At both ends of the socio-economic spectrum of Lagos society, people live in largely privatized enclaves. On one end, upscale estates allow for the protection of a certain quality of life – security, roads, relative quiet, a splash of greenery, all built atop a collective-and-subdivided title deed. This is set against the background of household-level privatization of basic needs (electricity, water, sanitation) with private generators, boreholes, and septic systems. This is the Lagos version of the libertarian dream: different lives coexist under the supervision of a private estate management company with a certain degree of wealth as the common denominator.

On the other end, informal settlements rely largely on collective but nevertheless private mechanisms to provide for the basics of life that are not provided by public authorities – collectivized[1] security (called "vigilante", but functioning like a neighborhood watch), collectivized access to public water, public or shared toilets, collectivized access to public electricity, collectivized maintenance of access ways such as roads (where they exist) or footbridges. Lagos offers this as an "open source" dream: different lives coexist under the supervision of local leadership structures – landlord associations, community development associations (CDAs), and at-times diverse traditional leadership structures representing coexisting ethnic constituencies within a settlement – with a certain degree of poverty as the common denominator.

So much in common and yet so much at odds; this is one of the mysteries of Lagos. While estate life tends to be better documented and projected to the outside world through literature and Nollywood, the collective mechanisms that make informal settlements work are less understood though much more broadly felt. That over 60% of Lagosians live in informal settlements testifies to the effectiveness of these mechanisms at providing real solutions to basic human needs at a price the average city dweller can afford. These undocumented secrets are the keys to the "open city."

Collectivizing basic/ essential services

No Lagosian can take electricity, water, and sanitation for granted. But, how can households living on N20,000 (~$100) per month, paying N2,000 (~$10) per month to rent a room in an informal settlement, manage to have the basic services of urban life?

In well functioning informal settlements, the answer lies in collectivized access. Collectivized access cuts out the "overheads" – the costs relating to the infrastructure of service delivery, billing, and payment collection – that increase basic service costs beyond the affordability point for poor households.

Water

Getting water into informal settlements neither relies on the most expensive, fully privatized, and most reliable option – the private borehole and private pump – nor does it rely on the physical infrastructure of a public utility reaching every household. Instead, informal settlements generally rely on a few access points that lessen the costs of bringing water into the settlement.

Megan Chapman is co-director/co-founder of Justice & Empowerment Initiatives (JEI) – Nigeria. Working with a variety of international and domestic human rights and development organizations, Megan has helped mobilise communities and build community-based paralegal programs in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Uganda. She has also led and supported strategic human rights litigation in Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Burundi.

Andrew Maki is a U.S. trained lawyer and is the co-director/ co-founder of Justice & Empowerment Initiatives (JEI) – Nigeria. He was the co-Editor-in-Chief of the Human Rights Brief and worked with the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, the American Bar Association – Rule of Law Initiative, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, among others.

In some communities that are close enough to the "grid," this is a single plastic pipe running from the water main. In communities close to the Lagoon or on islands off CMS or Apapa, this is by way of wooden boats loaded with water tanks filled from boreholes to the bottom of the Lagoon in Makoko. In both cases, the water reaches informal settlements through a single entry point and fills fixed water vendor tanks from which individual residents buy water by the bucket. Not as convenient as water piped into the home, but accessible and affordable

Electricity

Getting electricity into many informal settlements uses a similar mechanism, but can run the undue risks of overloading or electrical sparks in unsafe connections. Recently, one community off Costain in Ebute-Metta has partnered with Eko Electricity Distribution Company Plc (EKEDP) to innovate a win-win solution to formal delivery problems by collectivizing electricity payments through community-level bulk metering.

Due to settlement density and lack of infrastructure, EKEDP's predecessor had difficulties metering and billing individual households in the settlement. The community overcame this hurdle by organizing a community association that took up the challenge of household-level billing and collection in exchange for EKEDP installing designated transformers with a bulk meter, but at lower

residential rates rather than the usual higher bulk metering rates that apply in estates. This "win-win" solution – implemented through a negotiated memorandum of understanding between the distribution company and the community association – has facilitated safe electricity provision to all residents at more affordable rates, while simplifying and reducing collection costs for EKEDP.

Security

Informal settlements also have to deal with crime and insecurity but cannot afford walls and gates and private security; nor do they always have the political capital to demand proactive patrolling from the Nigerian Police Force. In response to a spate of rapes and other violent crimes occurring in some informal settlements around Otto in Ebute-Metta – an area where the police often failed to respond, especially at night – the community came together to form a "vigilante" force that patrolled the community during the night. This night patrol is responsible for arresting suspects, turning them over to the police, and following up with the appropriate authorities to ensure diligent investigation and prosecution. To make this possible, the community supported the salaries and uniforms for the vigilantes through monthly household levy of just N200 (~$1). These vigilantes were drawn from youths in the community and indeed were sometimes reformed "bad boys" who could use their own local knowledge to help to

curb crime in the community, epitomizing the Yoruba proverb, "It is the thief who can trace the footsteps of another thief on the rock." In fact, the model has worked so well that its successes are being replicated in neighboring communities.

Sanitation

Sanitation is serious problem in Lagos where public sewage systems appear fictional and the private "soak-away" (septic system) – where it can be afforded – is the norm. In informal settlements, the terrain – which is often swampy or sandy – and lack of road infrastructure make this option practically impossible.

Consequently, many households in informal settlements do not have access to a private or even a shared toilet.

Where public toilets exist, they are often run as a business with a per-use charge that can at times be cost prohibitive for the poor.

To solve this accessibility/affordability problem and simultaneously protect community health, one informal settlement located on an island off Apapa has communalized rather than privatizing the public toilet.

Households make a one-time contribution to construct and subsequent, as-needed, contributions to maintain a public toilet that is free and thus encouraged for residents to use.

Use-based levies for non-essential community development projects

Many Lagosians cannot imagine living in a home without road access. In Lagos informal settlements, however, roads – like certain other community development efforts – are actually a luxury, needed only for those whose businesses require or benefit from access by motor vehicles. Additionally, some residents in informal settlements live and conduct their business in the settlement, for instance selling provisions or cooking food for sale. This group may not need to leave on a daily basis. Thus, when Government fails to provide or maintain roads, the cost of doing so may not be easily imposed on all residents. A use-based model is more fit for purpose, allowing the costs of such community development to be imposed on users, including non-residents.

In an informal settlement off Costain in Ebute-Metta, the one motorable road in the community was originally built by the local government, but maintenance has been a problem ever since. The road was built with a high-walled cement gutter on each side, poorly adapted to the water flow in the community. The gutter actually traps water on the road, which is severely eroded and chronically flooded, often nearly impassable for pedestrians. Consequently, the community has to do regular road maintenance throughout every rainy season. To finance such maintenance, the community has established an informal tollbooth that operates on an as-needed basis. Every

Community rally in a predominantly Egun informal settlement in Lagos.

Image: JEI 2015

vehicle –mainly okada and keke marwa – plying the road pays a daily rate until the community can afford to bring a few tippers full of crushed cement block to fill and repair the road.

In another informal settlement, this time in Ajah, the only existing road was developed by residents into a motorable road through the settlement down to the edge of the Lagos Lagoon where there was a major local sand-digging business. The road mainly exists for the purpose of this business, which attracts many big trucks every day. The large, heavily loaded trucks cause constant wear-and-tear on the road. Because of this and the regularity of the business, the per-trip/truck toll operates year-round.

A final example is a pedestrian-only access road leading into one informal settlement in Lekki Phase 1. Because of nearby construction outside the community that is not well suited to the water flow pattern in the area, the only access to the

community is chronically flooded with knee-deep water during rainy season. The community youths cooperated to buy bags of sand and build a block-long path through the pooled waters. To cover costs, youths at either end of the path collect a modest toll from pedestrians. After paying, the pedestrian takes a chip as proof of payment and returns it to the youths at the other end. This makeshift solution offers a benefit to those who can or want to pay, while the free alternative – walking through water – remains.

Multi-ethnic inclusion through parallel traditional governance structures

If wealth is the key to accessing exclusive high-end estates, then informal settlements are the opposite in terms of posing little barrier to entry and being open to anyone who shares the common bond of poverty. Yet, as indicated above, most informal settlements rely heavily upon high degrees of cooperation and internal

Irede Community Public Toilet.

Image: JEI 2015

governance to provide the basic essentials of life where no external governance system will do so. While many informal settlements were traditionally settled by a single tribe and may continue to have a dominant ethnic group, many have also opened up over the decades to urban migrants from various tribes, nationalities and religions, especially as informal settlements have been displaced and scattered to new informal settlements.

This being the reality, some of the large and diverse informal settlements illustrate how community cooperation around development and internal governance can work based on flexible and respectful coexistence of parallel traditional leadership structures.

One example of this it is the previously mentioned deal negotiated between the Ebute-Metta settlement and EKEDP, the electricity distribution company. A typical visitor to this community climbs a commercial motorcycle or okada and indicates his destination as "Ilaje," referring to the community's origins as a traditionally Ilaje people's fishing settlement. However, its

demography has diversified somewhat in the last few decades. Now, the community has Ilaje leaders who have descended from the original settlers, working alongside a set of traditional leaders who represent the large Ndigbo population in the settlement. In recognition of this, the two sets of tribes were carefully and deliberately represented in negotiations with EKEDP as well as in the community welfare association that runs the electricity arrangement. These same structures have to cooperate to counterbalance and check the power of two Yoruba Baales appointed by the White-Cap Chieftaincy family asserting itself in the area.

The community in Lekki Phase 1 has a name meaning "village in the bush" in Egun, given by its founders Egun fishermen migrating from Badagry generations ago. Much of the community still reflects the traditions of an Egun fishing settlement, however it has with time opened itself to many different ethnic backgrounds. When facing threats, the community demonstrates resilience by embracing such diversity instead of turning insular and feeding fear and panic. At a big community rally held to find solutions to

Boat Water Tanker in informal Settlement in Eti-Osa LGA.

Image: JEI 2015

a nearby dredging and sand-filling project that threatened the community's fishermen, various ethnic and religious leadership structures came out in force. Alongside the Baale and council of elders representing the majority Egun populations, time was taken to recognize the leaders of the Ndigbo and Arewa populations within the community, hear solidarity songs in the various languages, as well as prayers from the leaders of the various churches in the community as well as the community's Chief Imam.

Conclusion

Such examples of inter-ethnic/religious coexistence and partnership to find solutions to community needs and to face down threats or challenges underscores the unique way that informal settlements hold the keys to an inclusive and resilient future Lagos. Held together by poverty and the pursuit of basic needs, as well as the near constant struggle against various powerful forces, Lagos informal settlements survive and thrive by (1) finding solutions to the basic needs of human existence in a way that is affordable to the poorest of the poor, (2) endeavoring to provide important-but-less-essential community development through

use-based mechanisms, and (3) organizing tolerant and adaptive coexistence of different peoples through parallel traditional and social/ religious structures rather than the insistence on dominance by a single group.

As the government in Lagos moves toward formalization of the rampant informality that has long been the norm across the city, it is critical to remember that, in informality, are the solutions to entrenched problems the city struggles of the city – affordable housing, access to basic services, security, and genuine inclusion and participation of the urban poor and minorities. At times, however, the Lagos "megacity" dream seems premised on principles of formalization that point to the total victory of the libertarian dream of the exclusive estate. For Lagos to continue to be an inclusive and resilient city, even as it incrementally formalizes, urban planners and policymakers would do well to look at and learn from the strategies employed in informal settlements to find lasting solutions. The above are just a few examples; informal settlements have many more to share.

1   In the context of Lagos informal settlements described in this paper, we use "collectivized" to indicate processes that seek efficiency and overall cost-reduction through mutual cooperation or collective effort, with some trade-off of individual control in favor or collective benefit. It does not necessarily mean fully collectivized or communal ownership.

Open City Lagos is a conversation enacted across Lagos and with other cities, with a focus on the day-to-day experiences, grassroots initiatives and new opportunities for development and inclusion.

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"There is more to this city. In the end it is the process of negotiation and the people themselves who apply meaning to the city."

Lukas Feireiss, Berlin-based Curator, Writer and Artist

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