Seeing the city: alternative methods for creative urban planning

22nd October 2013
Caroline Wanjiku Kihato, PhD
Jo Vearey, PhD

SharingSpace Project is financed by the European Union Marie Curie International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (FP7-PEOPLE-2012-IRSES)
Today

By the end of this session...

• To articulate the planning challenges associated with migration and urbanisation in southern Africa.

• To be aware of alternative methods for creative urban planning.

• To outline strategies that will enhance urban planning in ways that more effectively meet the needs of people living in urban slums.
Exercise 1

• What do you think slums are?

• What are your views about slums and how city authorities should respond?
What is urbanisation?

- Growth in the proportion of a population living in urban areas.

1. Rural to urban migration.
2. Natural population growth of existing urban population.
3. Reclassification of rural areas into urban ones (changing definitions).
Urbanisation in Africa: The context

- African urbanisation resulting in high demand for land
- By 2050, 50% of Africans will live in cities
- By 2015 Lagos will grow by 58 people every hour, Kinshasa 39, Nairobi 15
- Urbanisation is occurring without economic growth
- Informality is the predominant characteristic of urban growth
An urban world

Over half of the world’s population is now urban
Urban Agglomerations in 2009 (proportion urban of the world: 50.1%)

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division: World Urbanization Prospects, the 2009 Revision. New York 2010
Urban Agglomerations in 2025 (proportion urban of the world: 56.6%)

Urban population by major geographical area (in per cent of total population)

Global slum population remains steady at approx. 1/3 of all urban residents.
FIGURE 1.1.4: DISTRIBUTION OF SLUM AND NON SLUM HOUSEHOLDS

Note: The data in figure 1.1.4 are based on the UN-HABITAT definitions of slums (a contiguous settlement where the inhabitants are characterized as having inadequate housing and basic services; a slum is often not recognized and addressed by public authorities as an integral part of the city) and slum households (a household that lacks one or more of the five elements: access to improved water; access to improved sanitation; security of tenure; durability of housing; and sufficient living area).
Film clip
Ways of seeing the city

• What did you understand from the background presented?

• How does this compare to what you have understood from the film clip?

• Has the information presented challenged your thinking about slums?
Participatory photo projects

• Working with residents of diverse “hidden” urban spaces
  – Informal settlements (slums)
  – Hostels
  – Inner city (sex workers)

• Lived experiences

• Voice
Ownership

• Who "owns" the image?

• Where do the images "go"?
• What kind of strategies would you develop in order to improve the lives of people living in slums?

- Research/ways of understanding?
- Responses?
Researching urban contexts

*Participatory photo projects*

- Responsibilities of researchers: contributing to social change
- Broad approach to the urban context: lived experiences
- Beyond more established quantitative and qualitative research approaches: mixed methods, multi-methods
- Accessing “marginalised communities”: what is a community?, access, safety, legality, ‘voice’
- Residents as experts; researchers as participants: power
- Partnerships and collaboration: university, photography school, community and advocacy groups, government
- Exploring (re)presentation
- Challenging social research: what do we really know?