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The impact of the DPU
on urban planning practice

By Babar Mumtaz



Focus On

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During the period 1965 to 1971, the DPU changed its focus, shifting and finally changing its vocation and location from Tropical Architecture at the Architecture Association School of Architecture to the Development Planning Unit at University College London. As Professor Wakely has noted¹:

“By the time that the Department joined UCL in 1971 (becoming the DPU), its urban focus was firmly established. Its teaching and research on housing and urban development was underpinned by Otto Koenigsberger’s concepts of ‘urban pioneers’ and the ‘absorption of newcomers’ that were in stark contrast to the prevailing doom-laden concern over the rapid growth of cities in the developing countries and drastic and destructive approaches to slum clearance and the ordered ‘City Beautiful’.

Even more significant was the concept of Action Planning, which seriously contested the static and time-bound city master plans that were erroneously seen as essential for orderly urban development. Underlying these approaches to urban growth and management was the DPU message that urbanisation is good for development; good for industrial production; good for trade and commerce; and good for agricultural productivity, all under the prevailing rubric of ‘economic growth and import substitution’. Whilst national policies and international agencies were striving to promote decentralisation and ‘balanced’ regional development the DPU was advocating centralisation

and the development of big cities as the key instruments of national economic growth, social opportunity and the transformation of cosmopolitan culture.”

When I was asked to write a short piece focussing on the impact of the DPU on Urban Planning Practice, I readily agreed, having in mind something similar to Pat Wakely’s *Focus On* piece on Housing at the DPU². I had a few caveats: that I would focus on planning practice and not theory or pedagogy, and that I would cover only urban (physical/spatial) planning and not economic, social, gender and other aspects – many of which the DPU has pioneered and been very closely involved with over the years. Therefore, the focus of this piece is on my (personal) view of the impact that the DPU has had on urban planning practice.

The starting point for urban planning was, of course, the pioneering work of Otto Koenigsberger, especially as a housing expert deployed by the United Nations in newly independent countries such as Pakistan where his earlier hands-on experience in Mysore and, more generally, in India provided an enviable advantage. Well aware that housing was not merely houses, and that any ‘solution’ had to incorporate access to and availability of land, inevitably led him to the formulation of urban plans. He saw the flow of rural-urban migrants not as a problem, but rather as fundamental to the success of cities. These views and experience crystallised in his *Absorption of New-Comers* paper³, which he presented as his professorial inaugural lecture to UCL in 1972.

The urban planning fundamentals coalesced into ‘Action Planning’⁴ – a concept that was elaborated upon

by Michael Safier⁵ at various lectures to audiences of urban planners and to schools of urban planning in the UK. These formed the cornerstone of urban planning teaching at the DPU in its initial years and were reflected in various papers⁶ – culminating in the Festschrift Edition of *Habitat international*, Vol.7, No.5/6 (1983)⁷.

Action Planning – which introduced ‘time’ as a crucial element in the planning process, both at the plan-production and at the plan implementation stages, stressing the need for rapid, responsive flexibility over the more rigid written-in-stone statutory master-plan document, hitherto practised. An exciting and revolutionary technique that was symbolic of the Action Planning approach was the use of ‘Windscreen Surveys’ – that anticipated Transit Walks and Rapid Urban Appraisals, perhaps by decades.

While the Action Planning of that time had a direct and influential impact on urban planning, what we now know and perhaps see used as ‘Action Planning’ has little in common with it, and is only indirectly derived from work at the DPU. Few, if any, make the connection and even academic texts and urban plans fail to acknowledge the DPU connection. To an extent, this summarises the general experience of the DPU and the sometimes disappointingly marginal impact that it has apparently had on planning practice.

As Michael Mattingly, who was probably the most concerned with urban planning practice at the DPU⁸ told me: “Forget all the business about action planning. No one could be clear what it was about, and to me, after working in the (United) States with capital programmes that ordered projects and tied them to physical planning policies, I could never see what was new about it.”⁹

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| Year | Intervention | Content | Planning | Training | Research | Staff | Outcome |
|-----------|--|--|----------|--|----------|--|--|
| 1972-74 | Planned Urban Growth Absorption of Newcomers | Based on experience in Developing Cities, proposed a different approach, methodology | | | ✓ | Otto Koenigsberger Michael Safier et al | Influenced teaching and thinking |
| 1974- | (Diploma and) MSc Courses | Understanding of Cities and Approaches and Techniques to Planning for them | | ✓ | ✓ | Louis Wassenhoven, Ronaldo Ramirez, Nigel Harris and many more | Informed Teaching at DPU |
| 1964- | Action Planning | Expansion, Consolidation of Otto Koenigsberger's work | | | ✓ | Otto Koenigsberger, Michael Safier | Influenced teaching and thinking |
| 1976-77 | Juba | Urban and housing development Plan | ✓ | ✓ | | Babar Mumtaz, Desmond McNeill, Jaya Appalaraju | Some components and recommendations were incorporated into later urban plans |
| 1979-81 | Amman | Urban Region Development Plan | | Training local counterparts | | Bob Satin, Ronaldo Ramirez, Michael Mattingly, Babar Mumtaz | Plan implemented staff went on to do plans in other urban regions |
| 1984-91 | Nairobi | Urban Development Plan | | Diploma Field Project | | Babar Mumtaz, Pat Wakely, Caren Levy | Discontinued Informed, Influenced NCC |
| 1984 | Kano | Administration of Urban Plans | | Training for state and national govt staff | | Michael Mattingly | Improved administration and management of urban plans |
| 1972-74 | Lusaka | The absorption of New-Comers | | | ✓ | Michael Safier plus field research staff | Informed Teaching at DPU |
| 1993- | Various | Urban Design | | BUDD Field Projects | | Babar Mumtaz, Michael Safier, Anna Soave, Camilo Boano | Informed influenced local authorities, institutions |
| 1997 | Nepal | District Planning | | Govt Staff | | Michael Mattingly, Babar Mumtaz | Improved administration and management of District plans |
| 1998-2001 | Indonesia, Nepal, India | Planning Practice in Urban Areas | | | ✓ | Michael Mattingly, Julio Dávila | Informed Teaching at DPU |

The experience of the DPU to Urban Planning has been summarised in the Table above. The first column is the date of the intervention, the second is the name/title by which that intervention was known. The third column summarises the content/intent of the intervention. This is further categorised in the next 3 columns to identify the primary thrust of the activity – between doing (Urban) Planning, Training, and Research. The 7th column indicates the main members of staff who were engaged in that activity; and column 8 summarises the outcome of the activity.

The table's sole direct urban planning activity (as opposed to training or research) was the ODA-funded Juba Urban and Housing Development Plan. One of the few instances of aid-funded urban planning, this was as part of a 'peace dividend' after the end of the First Sudanese Civil war 1955-72. Southern Sudan's newly declared 'capital' Juba was still largely a garrison town, and badly in need of housing for the many refugees who had settled there. There was an obvious need for the provision and upgrading of urban facilities. The DPU sent a team of 6, made up of staff, recent graduates and an invited consultant. They spent 6 weeks working with local staff (none of whom had any professional training in housing or urban planning). The DPU not only applied their planning skills but also used the process to train and upgrade the skills of local staff in what later became the hallmark of virtually all of DPU's work. The resulting plan was accepted and implemented in an incremental process over several years after the departure of the DPU team¹⁰. In the following years, later planners and plan-making referred to and made use of the 'DPU Plan'. More importantly, the local staff who worked with the DPU, went on to lead urban planning efforts in Southern Sudan. This was confirmed by a later DPU-led project for UNDP to appraise the capacity of Juba and other towns in Southern Sudan to absorb migrant refugees, following the signing of the 'Comprehensive Peace Agreement' in 2005 that led to the foundation of the nation state of South Sudan¹¹. All recommendations and components of the DPU 1972 plan for Juba were in place or in process

Most of the DPU's work is either training – at the DPU through its regular educational and training programmes, or abroad through 'tailor-made' capacity-building of local staff or research – usually field-based and long-term and aimed at validating and informing the academic programme.

and the principles of incremental, participatory Action Planning had also been extended to the local planning and infrastructure development/ investment authorities in the towns of Yambio, Yei, Kapoeta, Rumbek, Malakal and Wau. Interestingly, several of the DPU 'graduates' also went on to become international planning practitioners and still acknowledge their debt to the Juba experience.

Most of the DPU's work is either training – at the DPU through its regular educational and training programmes, or abroad through 'tailor-made' capacity-building of local staff or research – usually field-based and long-term and aimed at validating and informing the academic programme. The DPU's training was most often in support of on-going or recent planning consultancies (by others). For example, American planners undertook The Amman Urban Regional Plan under a USAID-funded programme. They found that they were not able to be as effective as they had hoped, since the Jordanian counterpart staff were not able to validate or verify their findings and proposals and lacked the ability to comprehend and anticipate the knowledge and data demands of the US planners. Interestingly, the US Congress had to pass a special exemption to allow the DPU to work on the USAID project since there was no equivalent US institution at that time. The DPU team provided the necessary interface through both local hands-on learning as well as through their participation in DPU's London courses. This helped

enable more effective and efficient operations – ultimately leading to a successful plan. Interestingly, at least 4 or 5 of the counterpart staff went on to become Heads of Planning for the Southern Regional Development Plan, Amman Planning Department, or other urban and transportation planning consultancy firms.

As far as I can recollect and ascertain, this table represents the sum total of actual urban planning-related activities undertaken by the DPU on DPU contracts, assignments and activities. It does not, of course, include individual assignments undertaken by staff as members of consultancy or research teams such as in Lahore and in Baghdad¹² or before they joined the DPU¹³.

The perhaps surprising conclusion from the table is that DPU has never really undertaken actual urban planning work with the exception of the 'Juba project', outlined above. Most of it has been in training and research. In any other academic institution, that is probably to be expected, but the DPU always argued the case for combining academic and professional practice and made special provisions for staff to be able to do this. Moreover, in other aspects of urban planning, such as gender, transport, housing and social development, the DPU has been considerably more active than in urban spatial and physical planning.

There are various arguments that can be put forward as to why that should be, amongst them, in no particular order:

1

The DPU taught urban planning, but not a specific method or technique

From the very beginning and in all aspects of its work, especially ‘teaching’, the DPU was clear that its role was to interest and educate more than it was to instruct. The ‘what? and why?’ was more important than the ‘how?’. By increasing an understanding of urban development, participants on the DPU’s various courses were introduced to an analytical view of tools and techniques so that they could better discern what would and would not be more efficacious in a particular context and have a better capability to develop and to utilise skills and deploy resources for the attainment of stated goals and objectives. The pedagogical process was never one of prescribing what tools and techniques to use. Therefore, rather than having a set of identifiable tools and techniques that could be attributed to the DPU and used to identify and measure the impact of the DPU on urban planning, the intention was to equip its alumni to have an approach and understanding that could guide their actions.

2

The DPU focussed on urban development rather than on urban planning

The DPU saw urban land-use planning as one of the many ingredients necessary for urban development and not as a discrete objective in itself. Urban planning was a tool that, inter alia, could be used to bring about urban development which, in its turn, was seen as a necessary condition without which countries could not develop. Nigel Harris was at the forefront of the *Cities as Engines of Development* argument. To an extent, this argument largely ignored space, and therefore spatial planning, as an inherent factor in economic development. In the same way, for the DPU, spatial planning was merely one amongst many of the aspects that had to be addressed, and which were seen as a greater priority for understanding

and intervention. The DPU largely led the gender debate, especially when it came to cities, slums and urban development. Similarly, it was and is amongst the leading exponents and advocates for environmental awareness and action in cities and urban development. Seen this way, it is clear that urban planning was but one of the many fronts that the DPU was engaged in exploring and expanding, and it becomes clearer why urban planning seems to be a minor concern and not the prime focus of the DPU.

3

Urban planning is more of a team rather than individual undertaking

This meant that it was virtually impossible for the DPU as an institution to undertake urban planning assignments without seriously impacting on their teaching commitments. Such assignments could have been undertaken by hiring-in staff/consultants, as was done for the Bandung project, but that would have lessened the impact, and as a result, the DPU very rarely undertook or sought urban planning assignments – the exceptions being Juba, recounted above, and sub-projects of housing advisory projects and programmes.

4

Relatively few of the DPU staff have been professionally trained urban planners

With the transition of the DPU from architecture to urban planning, many of its staff (few of whom were urban planners) also transited to urban generally and to urban planning in particular. Thereafter, a number of the staff joining the DPU came from a range of disciplines, mostly social sciences. Relatively few of them were professionally trained urban planners and fewer still had hands-on urban planning experience. As another illustration, whereas all but 2 or 3 of the ‘original’ staff were chartered or registered architects, only 4 or 5

were members of the Royal Institute of Town Planners. Moreover, the urban planners focussed on particular aspects of urban planning (such as transport planning, social and gender planning) and very few indeed made urban planning their specialisation. This is not to demean or belittle their insights into urban planning but rather to suggest that urban planning was not necessarily their preferred area of specialisation or focus.

In Summary, to quote Michael Mattingly¹⁴,

“An additional comment on the DPU’s teaching of urban planning: it critically examined practice. I applied this (and probably Caren did the same in a course on planning methods) to accepted elements of planning practice, e.g. community participation, master land use plans, implementation tools such as zoning and development control, the standards used for allocating land to particular uses and particular locations, assumptions about the ownership of plans, land use and transport modelling, air and noise pollution considerations, redevelopment, the aesthetics of urban design. Patrick McAuslan also provided strong teaching inputs on urban land management and regulation. A basic concern in all of this was estimating who gains and who loses, which could probably be said of nearly all DPU teaching. I did the same with elements which were becoming fashionable, such as controlling land use with performance standards, capital programming, acting with knowledge of market dynamics, environmental traffic management, the transfer of development rights. It was characteristic of our teaching of urban planning that we did not tell students what they should do; rather we critically examined with them current planning practice with the message that, if they learned to do this well for themselves, they could understand better what might and might not work in the situations they would encounter in their particular working contexts.”

Notes

1. Wakely, P. Levy, C. and Yap, C. "Sixty Years of Urban Development – A Short History of the DPU", 2014.
2. Wakely, P., "Focus on Housing at the DPU", DPUNews, September 2019 and DPU Working Paper No.201, 'DPU Housing: Development Planning Unit Record in Housing 1971-2021'.
3. Koenigsberger, O., "The Absorption of New-Comers".
4. Koenigsberger, O. 1964 "Action Planning", AA Journal, May 1964, London, UK.
5. Safier, M. 1972 "Action Planning" RTPI Overseas Summer School conference.
6. Mumtaz, B. 1983 "Reaction Planning" in Safier, Aldhous, Mumtaz, (eds) Otto Koenigsberger Festschrift edition of Habitat International, Vol.7, No.5/6, Pergamon Press, Oxford, UK.
7. Safier, M., 1983, "The Passage to Positive Planning" in Aldhous, W., et al (eds) *ibid.*
8. See the following as examples of Michael Mattingly's papers on the subject:
 - 1989 *Implementing Planning with Teaching: Using Training to Make It Happen*, Third World Planning Review, Nov, Liverpool University Press, pp 417-428;
 - 1988 *From Town Planning to Development Planning: A Transition through Training*, Habitat International, Vol.12, Pergamon, Oxford, pp 97-108;
 - 1988 *Self Help Training for Planning Urban Development: an Innovation in On the Job Learning in Nigeria*, Public Administration and Development, Vol.8.
9. Mattingly, M., *Personal Communication*.
10. The ODA supported two experienced professionals, an urban planner and an engineer, both linked to the DPU, over a two-year period to assist this on-going work.
11. See: Wakely, P., Carter, T., Clifford, K. 2005 'Southern Sudan Urban Appraisal Study', UNDP, New York, USA.
12. Babar Mumtaz led the Urban and Housing teams on the World Bank-financed Lahore Urban Development and Traffic Study, 1977-79. Sheilah Meikle was the Social Planner for the Urban Development Plan for Baghdad.
13. Sheilah Meikle and Geoffrey Payne, Desmond McNeill and John Turner were prominent members of the Ismailia planning teams, led by the consultant firm, Culpin Planning.
14. Mattingly, M., *Personal Communication*, 2019.

Head On

Adriana Allen elected President of Habitat International Coalition (HIC)

Prof **Adriana Allen** was elected as President of Habitat International Coalition (HIC) in December 2019. Habitat International Coalition (HIC) is a global network that works for social justice, gender equality and environmental sustainability, and in defence, promotion and realisation of human rights related to housing and land in both, rural and urban areas. Adriana believes that the strategic challenges ahead of HIC are: to link the Coalitions' advocacy framings with other calls for justice; to articulate the dimensions and ways in which life is becoming increasingly commodified in the way we work; to acknowledge the full diversity of experiences encompassed in the social production of habitat; to find a common meaning and cause across faith and race; and to reflect on HIC pedagogies and ways of seeking change. Adriana has full support and endorsement from the DPU in her role as the second female President in the history of HIC.

UCL Inclusion Awards to Kamna and Nick

Kamna Patel and **Nick Anim** each won *UCL Inclusion Awards 2020*, meaning that DPU-affiliated staff were awarded two of four awards this year. Kamna was nominated by Faculty Dean Christoph Lindner and Director of Operations Sian Lunt for the *Sir Stephen Wall Award for Inspiring Role Model* and was subsequently selected from a short-list of four for her outstanding contribution to addressing institutional barriers to achieving equality. Nick was selected by UCL's central Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team for the *Challenge Consultancy Award for Race Equality* for his inspiring work tackling race inequality at UCL and beyond.

The Third Annual KNOW Workshop

What are we learning about urban equality? Between 19th and 23rd January 2020, the KNOW team convened in Bengaluru, India, at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, to strengthen partnerships, share ideas, and co-create pathways for the projects two years ahead. During the week, a rich set of panels brought the diverse geographies of KNOW partners into dialogue with researchers from a range of Indian cities. KNOW Investigators played a core role in presenting 24 papers across six themed panels, unpacking urban equality in a rapidly urbanising world. Across the six KNOW panels, researchers explored grounded definitions of prosperity, resilience, and poverty; knowledge co-production and translation; the history of UK development aid; transformative urban pedagogies; and reflected on the deeply situated nature of ethics in practice. Among the in-depth conference papers presented, there was a clear emphasis on intersectionality that drew out gendered, raced, classed, or religious experiences of urban equality. Find out more about the workshop and read reflections from KNOW Research Fellow, **Stephanie Butcher** on the [Urban-KNOW Blog](#).

Asia Pacific Urban Forum 7

In October 2019, **Barbara Lipietz** co-organised a session at the Asia Pacific Urban Forum 7 (APUF-7) with members of Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) working with the KNOW programme. APFU-7 coincided with the launch of the Future of Asian and Pacific Cities Report, outlining the four major challenges facing the region – namely natural resources management, climate change, disaster risk, and rising inequalities. The KNOW-ACHR session, entitled *Poor communities shaping pathways to urban equality*, focused on urban inequalities. Presentations explored the drivers of inequalities in various cities and showcased the work of grassroots initiatives which have addressed these challenges. The session offered two overarching messages: firstly that tackling urban inequality requires the capacity to develop situated – or localised – diagnoses of urban inequalities in each city; and, secondly, that the enormous amount of work already undertaken by grassroots organisations has produced solutions to the problems of urban inequality, often with very little support from those urban actors that have the power to bring about more structural change. Barbara and **Stephanie Butcher** (KNOW, WP4) also participated in several

KNOW team at the Third Annual Workshop in Bengaluru, India. Photo Credit, David Heymann, 2019



UCL Inclusion Awards ceremony Photo credit: DPU, 2020



ACHR grassroots leaders with UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif call for inclusive planning at the APUF-7
Photo credit: Stephanie Butcher, 2019

workshops organised by ACHR and other grassroots movements, including APUF's Grassroots Assembly and a workshop on collective housing.

The DPU, COVID-19, Black Lives Matter and global solidarity

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected the way DPU activities have functioned. Meanwhile, appalling recent acts in the US have brought to the fore racial inequalities evident in our societies. In the face of these events, the DPU has engaged in reinforcing the need for collective solidarity, care & responsibility, and actively addressing the problems of inequalities faced in the world as well as in our institutional practices. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the DPU had to re-think the pedagogic strategies for teaching and assessing post-graduate courses online with students unexpectedly dispersed across a number of time-zones. Likewise, the overseas fieldwork components of our MSc programmes had to be re-arranged to foster an online dialogue between students and overseas partners, mediated by the DPU. We also quickly sought ways to ensure we are able to keep in touch with students regarding both their academic work and wellbeing in order to provide appropriate support in uncertain times.

DPU staff have been actively involved in creating spaces for discussion and in

pursuit of concrete answers to challenges faced by national and local governments and low-income communities and NGOs in the face of the pandemic. This includes engagements with Cities Alliance LAV initiatives in Latin America and South Africa, Habitat International Coalition (HIC) and the Global Platform for the right to the City (GPR2C). Moreover, DPU has redirected research projects, where appropriate, to actively support responses to COVID-19. For example, the KNOW project has created a webpage specifically to share experiences associated with COVID-19, while the COINVITE project undertook a global mapping of organisations and collectives developing community-based initiatives to address the crisis. Beyond the immediate response to COVID-19, DPU has launched a blog and webinar series, entitled *Post COVID-19 Urban Futures*, which seeks to provide an open platform for reflections on the pandemic and its long-term implications on urban development. Meanwhile, DPU's alumni have also collectively created a space for learning online called *Think Fast: A Collective Urban Response to COVID-19*.

DPU believes that the present crisis, despite the enormous challenges, offers opportunities to re-think and challenge the structural factors that lie behind inequalities and injustices.

Prior to the most recent surge of support for the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, DPU staff were actively engaged in putting together a new curriculum with the Bartlett with the objective of revealing and addressing racism embedded in the ways cities are produced. DPU believes that the present crisis, despite the enormous challenges, offers opportunities to re-think and challenge the structural factors that lie behind such inequalities and injustices. Read more about the [DPU, COVID-19 and global solidarity](#).

In memory: Prof Thandika Mkandawire

On 27 March, Prof Thandika Mkandawire died at the age of 80. A Swedish national of Malawian origin, he was a renowned economist who made a substantial contribution to African development in theory and in practice. He was widely respected both for his intellectual rigour and for his humanity. For 10 years from 1986 he was Executive Secretary of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) and from 1998-2009, he directed the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). He was a journalist before becoming an academic, teaching at numerous institutions, including the Universities of Zimbabwe and Stockholm, the latter of which appointed him Olof Palme Professor of Peace in the Institute of Future Studies. He was the first Chair of African Development at the London School of Economics (LSE) and held honorary degrees from the Universities of Helsinki, Ghana and York. In different ways, Thandika touched many at DPU through his work and the warmth of his personality and his presence is missed.

Research

Spatial Inequality in Times of Urban Transition: Complex Land Markets in Somaliland and Uganda

This research, funded to a total of £998,000 by the UK's East Africa Research Fund, is led by a consortium consisting of the DPU and IPE Tripline in London, and the Institute of Housing Studies at Erasmus University, Rotterdam. Working in Uganda and Somaliland, research partners include the Urban Action Lab at Makerere University in Kampala, and the Institute for Research, Heritage Preservation and Development in Hargeisa. DPU's **Colin Marx**, Prof **Michael Walls** and **Cassidy Johnson** are part of the team seeking to **build an understanding of how complex land markets influence spatial justice within the current urban transition in East Africa**. Working across six work packages and involving a range of quantitative, qualitative and spatial methodologies, the research was initially intended to conclude early in 2020, but a no-cost extension was offered as a result of the pandemic, with the project now concluding in December 2020 with a final workshop to be run in Rotterdam, building on a series already held in London, Hargeisa, Berbera (both Somaliland) and Kampala and Arua (Uganda). Research outcomes focus strongly on the ways in which highly complex land markets are characterised by pluralistic legal tenure systems and multi-layered relationships between formal and informal institutions and actors.



Photo credit: Rita Lambert, 2020

Grounded Energy Modelling for Equitable Urban Planning Development in the Global South (GEMDev)

A £1.4m (FEC) research grant from the GCRF fund - *(Re)thinking the off-grid city 2019*, was awarded to the project *Grounded Energy Modelling for equitable urban planning development in the global South (GEMDev)*. The project will be led by UCL Energy Institute Prof Paul Ruyssevelt and will include DPU's **Rita Lambert** as co-investigator and lead of one of the work packages. The project, a partnership between UCL (London), CDRF-CEPT (Ahmedabad), PUCP (Lima), FCPV, CENCA, and CIDAP, aims to contribute to inclusive decision making towards dignified housing and habitat by developing tools that can inform better energy planning. Communities that are 'off the grid' from affordable, reliable and safe forms of energy services experience negative impacts on health and economic opportunities. Focusing on the

nexus between energy, comfort and housing, the project takes the case of Lima and Ahmedabad to better understand the access and use of energy in the day-to-day lives of inhabitants and how these practices change over time through different policies and processes related to low-income housing, such as consolidation, eviction, upgrading and relocation. As data-driven approaches to energy planning, such as Urban Building Energy Models (UBEMs), are highly attractive to energy planners in the global South, the complexity of informal settlements is wholly absent from these models at present. The most vulnerable communities are either entirely overlooked or planned solutions fail to address their needs. The research project will analyse the governance and planning processes that have underpinned access to housing in Lima and Ahmedabad over time. It will understand the everyday practices of inhabitants with regards to energy access and consumption, the economic, social, environmental and political impacts, and the consequences for the production of risk at the household and neighbourhood levels. It will use participatory research methods to co-create datasets with marginalised communities to ensure that they are represented in UBEMs of the future.

GEMDev aims to contribute to inclusive decision making towards dignified housing and habitat by developing tools that can inform better energy planning.

OVERDUE – Tackling the sanitation taboo across Urban Africa

DPU has recently been awarded funding by the GCRF to conduct an ambitious action-research project that aims to interrogate the sanitation taboo across Urban Africa, as a site where everyday crises exacerbate and are exacerbated by health crisis like COVID19, and where gender inequality continues to be reproduced across colonial legacies and post-colonial conditions. In explaining the core argument and purpose of the project, PI Prof **Adriana Allen** explains that

“we argue that sanitation ‘deficits’ and ‘solutions’ need to be de-colonised for the right to sanitation to be realised across African cities. Adopting a post-colonial perspective, we aim to provide fresh insights into how contrasting colonial legacies are imbricated in contemporary urban systems to produce deeply unequal sanitation trajectories, particularly for women and girls. The sanitary metabolism of African cities is made of pipes, energy, matter and social relations, which can produce illness or health, poverty or prosperity, suffering or well-being, stigma or respect for the different women, men, girls and boys engaged in the everyday experience and management of sanitation. A sanitary revolution across urban Africa requires a new perspective on the gaps and synergies between grid and off-grid efforts and the spectrum of practices and interventions in between.”



OVERDUE's visual identity plays with parts of sanitary pipes and stencil letters, often used in walls of African cities.

Focusing on three fast growing cities – Freetown (Sierra Leone), Mwanza (Tanzania) and Beira (Mozambique) - OVERDUE examines sanitation taboos across contrasting colonial legacies and aims to expand dialogue and experiences regionally to emphasise also Francophone urban Africa. The project is led by Adriana in collaboration with DPU colleagues **Pascale Hofmann, Colin Marx** and **Julian Walker** are joined by longstanding partners Genre en Action, Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI), ARDHI University and COWI, in the three case study countries.

Participants of the T-SUM Participatory Workshop
Photo credit, T-SUM, 2020



T-SUM Participatory Workshops

The DPU co-led GCRF project *Transitions to Sustainable Urban Mobility* (T-SUM), for which **Daniel Oviedo** and **Caren Levy** are co-investigators, held two participatory workshops in December 2019 and March 2020. The workshops were held in Freetown in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), the Freetown City Council and the Ministry of Transport and involved about 50 participants, including citizens, civil society groups, professional bodies, local and national government, and international funders. The first workshop focused on the co-production of a vision for future urban mobility in Freetown and the second workshop focused on the co-design of a practical implementation plan to address major challenges and barriers to

sustainable urban mobility. As a result of the T-SUM workshops, a policy brief summarising a future vision for the city was distributed to key urban mobility stakeholders. A steering committee composed of stakeholders in main participant institutions was constituted to operationalise outputs into policy and practice.

Connections

Asima Shaikh (UDP 1993-94) is Executive Member for Inclusive Economy & Jobs and a Labour Councillor for Finsbury Park Ward in the London Borough of Islington. For the past four years, she has been the Cabinet member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs and is currently developing the Council's Inclusive Economy policy and strategy, taking a Community Wealth Building approach. She is also a member of the Labour Party's Community Wealth Building Unit.

Heather Pinnock (BUDD 1998-99) was appointed in April 2019 as General Manager of Jamaica's Urban Development Corporation (UDC), confirming a role she had been acting in since the earlier resignation of the former head. She has held a number of senior public sector roles, including Chief Technical Director at the Ministry of Water and Housing, Senior Project Manager at the National Housing Trust and Consultant and Senior Project Manager with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's Housing Development Corporation. Prior to that, she worked with UNDP in Jamaica, the Kingston Restoration Company and the Universities of the West Indies and of Technology, Jamaica.

Narendra Singru (DAP 2000-01) became Country Director of the Afghanistan Resident Mission for the Asian Development Bank in late 2019 and is managing a US\$3 billion infrastructure programme as well as now helping the Afghan government with their Covid-19 response.

Pavlos Troulis (DAP 2006-07 and PhD 2010-16) has recently moved to Kampala to take up the role of Uganda Country Director for Swisscontact having spent the past three years as Managing Director of the Ethiopian Agribusiness Accelerator Platform of the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) in Addis Ababa. In Ethiopia, Pavlos had also held a role facilitating investment in the agribusiness sector with Dalberg on a USAID-funded project. In his new role with Swisscontact, he will be leading on youth job

creation through skills development across agribusiness, hospitality and construction as well as overseeing SME promotion and integration across a number of value chains.

Jose Petit (UED 2009-10) has been appointed General Director of Urban Planning in Lima, Peru. One of Jose's goals in that role is to update Lima's master plan and to improve the standards of living for the citizens of Lima. He is specifically keen to focus on Lima's severe traffic problems and to helping to improve conditions in slum areas.

Arielle Dove (DAP 2010-11) has been Deputy Regional Manager, Frameworks at IMC Worldwide since April 2018. She first joined IMC in 2015 after stints at the London-based Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum think tank and WaterAid and Pragya NGOs. Arielle has been shortlisted for the *British Expertise International Awards 2020* as Young Consultant of the Year, with the award itself to be announced in October.

Rodrigo Perez Matabuena (ESD 2010-2011) is the Energy Capital Projects Manager for Environment and Regeneration in Islington Council, London.

Musleh Hasan (PhD 2010-13) has been promoted to Professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology.

Jonathan Nunn (UED 2011-12) is now Strategy & Policy Officer for Sustainable Economy at Kirklees Council, West Yorkshire. He took up his current position after working for a number of Brazilian NGOs.

Awo Mahad (ESD 2016-17) works as a Policy Advisor in the UK Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government. She has contributed to ministerial advice and briefings on Brexit, in particular regarding the impact of exit from the EU on Local Authorities across England. During the transition period, her work will focus on the department's long-term strategy on how HMG can mitigate risks and capitalise on opportunities following Brexit.

Dinar Dwi Prasetyo (DAP 2016-17) has joined Prospera (Partnership Program of Indonesia – Australia for Economic Governance) as a Research Analyst on Gender and Social Inclusion. He previously worked as a researcher at The SMERU Research Institute, Jakarta.

Ricardo Plata (UED 2017-18) has been appointed Secretary for Economic Development in the new municipal government of Barranquilla, in northern Colombia. He started that role in January and is expected to be in government for four years. This builds on his DPU dissertation topic on metropolitan governance and industrial development.

John Anzola (UDP 2018-19) has been appointed Under-Secretary for Citizen Security in the Colombian city of Cúcuta, which sits on the border with Venezuela and has been badly affected by the exodus of millions of people out of that country fleeing poverty and in some cases persecution.

Adam Savelli (DAP 2018-19) has been appointed as a Climate-Smart Agriculture Investment Analyst and Visiting Researcher at the Hanoi-based International Centre for Tropical Agriculture's Climate Policy Hub. He will be working across ten Asian countries, providing investment guidance materials and top-line reports on the climate-related impacts on small-scale agriculture across the region. He will also work on issues of forced migration and displacement.

Diana Vernon (DAP 2018-19) joined The Kaizen Company in January as Senior Programme Management Coordinator. The Kaizen Company is a USAID implementer based in Washington DC as an incubator for innovative, scalable approaches designed to address emerging market challenges and opportunities.

Marwa Marwa (ESD 2018-19) is working as a researcher at the Centre for World Studies at Universitas Gadjah Mada Yogyakarta. She is researching knowledge co-production through digital upgrading in community-based tourism in Yogyakarta and is also contributing to a collaborative project on capacity building for small medium entrepreneurs in Kebumen, Central Java.

PhD programme

Warm congratulations to all DPU's new doctors:

Maryam Lawal successfully completed her PhD, which was awarded in February. She explored the role mobile money plays in enhancing human capabilities, thus theorising a link between ICTs and human development. Her work investigates how, with the advent of mobile money, many people living in rural Bauchi State and using cash economies can use their mobile phones to access non-traditional means of banking.

Nikhilesh Sinha was awarded a PhD after successfully defending his thesis entitled *A Tale of Two Cities: Rental Housing Sub-Markets in Informal Settlements of New and Old Hyderabad* and examining the rules shaping transactions between landlords and tenants in informal settlements in Hyderabad, India. The thesis makes significant theoretical and empirical contributions to the field of housing studies and to our understanding of the nature of rental housing markets in informal settlements.

Ricardo Marten successfully defended his thesis entitled *Destituent Places, Exceptional Measures: The Codification of Spatial Violence. A study of post-2004 spatial violence in the Juárez Region, Mexico*. He analysed the layers of spatial violence in Juárez, and the resulting social, political and territorial fractures.

During her successful PhD viva examination, **Giovana Monteiro** argued that the theory of participatory mapping tends to overlook the functioning of mapping as experience. Her thesis explores the agency and effects of mapping, examining the degree to

which mapping can qualify as a critical spatial practice. The significance of her study is that it improves the theoretical and empirical grasp of how maps and mapping function. It shows that they can channel the mapmakers' representations in space, catalysing the recognition of their objective and subjective circumstances.

In his thesis, **Tom Aston** argued that, in the context of Bolivia, cash transfers have not ultimately strengthened rights-based citizen-state relations. As background, he explained the key political economy drivers for the introduction of universal cash transfer programmes in countries which rely on natural resources. In particular, he focused on how their introduction and expansion may strengthen or weaken citizen-state relations in such contexts. Despite evidence of resource nationalist ideas and rights-based language, he found the role of civil society to be weak. Moreover, he concluded that, where programmes have been strongly influenced by charismatic (populist) strategies and where mechanisms for citizen-state interface are weak, programmes are more likely to be perceived as patronage than rights.

In March, **Maria Evangelina Filippi** successfully defended her thesis, *Understanding disaster risk management as an everyday concept and practice in municipal government policy, planning and management. Learning from the experience of Santa Fe, Argentina, with urban flood risk*. Her research critically explored the extent to which 'resilience' offers a relevant conceptual framework informing planning processes and outcomes in urban centres in the global South and, specifically, to identify key areas of intervention given limited resources.

Hands on

Photo credit:
DPU, 2019

Below:
Summer-lab
Photo credit:
DPU, 2019



DeCID Research Project wins GCRF funding

Co-designing social infrastructure with children affected by displacement (DeCID) is a GCRF-funded research project led by DPU's **Andrea Rigon** in partnership with Catalytic Action, a UK charity and design studio that works to empower communities through strategic and innovative spatial interventions. **The project aims to develop a new approach for the participatory co-design of infrastructure to empower refugee and host communities in areas affected by mass displacement, with a particular focus on social infrastructure for children.** It will bring together the findings of researchers, international and local practitioners and leading thinkers in the field – including Prof Howayda Al-Harity of the American University of Beirut – to bridge a number of professional and disciplinary gaps. The project will take a trans-disciplinary and intersectional approach to connect the technical side of designing and building social infrastructure with a diversity of residents across gender, class, age, religion, nationality, disability, and legal status. DeCID's main activities include an analysis session with UCL academics and researchers and two workshops. The workshops bring together international experts and local practitioners to merge reflections from research, local practice and affected communities. DeCID's outputs include thematic briefs, short videos and a practical toolkit to support those involved in the co-design of social infrastructure for children in areas of mass displacement. The aim is for DeCID's participatory approach to become the new standard for practice among practitioners, professionals and policy makers in the field. Follow the next steps: [@decid_toolkit](http://www.decid.co.uk)



Framing Living Heritage as tool to prevent Spatial Violence, Myanmar

Catalina Ortiz and **Giovanna Astolfo** hosted the Kickstart Workshop of a new project, *Framing Living Heritage as tool to prevent Spatial Violence*, funded by the British Academy. The DPU welcomed partners from Asia Myanmar Research Institute, Inya Institute and Women for the World for the workshop funded by the British Academy and led by Catalina Ortiz with Giovanna Astolfo and **Camillo Boano**.

Mapping Synergies and Trade-offs between sanitation and the SDGs

Pascale Hofmann has been part of an interdisciplinary team of researchers and practitioners from across UCL to conduct a systematic

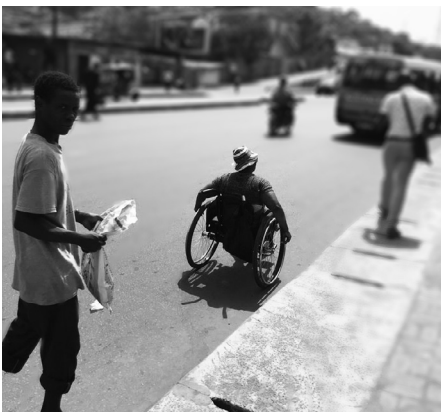
review of linkages between sanitation and each SDG target. Using published evidence, the review sought to show how actions to achieve each goal affect each other within and between sectors. The project methodology draws from the approach formerly developed within UCL to map linkages between energy and the SDGs, highlighting significant synergies. This evidence-based study demonstrates the urgent need for accelerated investment in sanitation and promotes cross-sectoral collaborations that can maximise complementarities between sanitation and other goals while planning around possible trade-offs. Both the methodology and its results seek further application in particular settings to help pave the way for targeted investment, as well as to encourage further evidence-gathering and the UCL team is in the process of publishing findings and exploring how to take the research further. For more information visit bit.ly/39twTOj.

DPU SummerLab

A pamphlet showcasing learnings from DPU SummerLabs from 2018 and 2019 was published in December 2019. Edited by **Giorgio Talocci** and **Camillo Boano**, the pamphlet comprises a retrospective on the 2018 series and a summary of the 2019 series, including works and reflections from a multiplicity of contexts – Amman, Bar Elias, Athens, Chengdu, Hargeysa, London. It features a series of interviews with local partners discussing challenges, agency and afterlives of the workshops, short reflective essays by the workshops' participants, photo-essays on each city's contested urbanisms. Bridging the 2018 and 2019 sections, the team was delighted to include a special insert reflecting their collaboration with the School of Architecture + Community Design of the University of South Florida. [Read more.](#)

Below: *Mobility in Freetown*
Photo credit: T-SUM, 2020

Bottom: *The T-SUM Team*
Photo credit: T-SUM, 2020

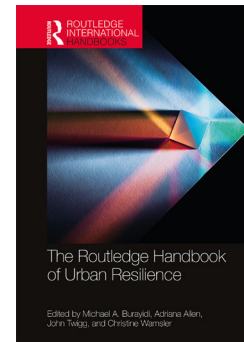


DPU's Critical Urbanism Studio; a student-led project

The work of a group of students from the MSc BUDD Critical Urbanism Studio, tutored by **Giovanna Astolfo**, is now online. This student-led project looks at the highly contested relocation of a community living in the flood-prone, informal settlement of Bajo Belen, located in the Peruvian Amazon. The Studio is connected with the ongoing research *Ciudades Auto-Sostenibles Amazónicas* (CASA) and unfolds in conversation with researchers and students at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP), Lima, [Read more.](#)

T-SUM project inaugurates *Shared Mobility Experience Exercise*

In March 2020, the T-SUM (*Transitions to Sustainable Urban Mobility*) team launched the first edition of the *Shared Mobility Experience Exercise* in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The activity, led by DPU's **Daniel Oviedo** and the team at SLURC, involved 22 people from local and central government, academia, professional bodies and civil society, as well as international donors. Participants used a variety of transport modes from minibuses to motorcycle-taxis, leading to a collective reflection on the main challenges for daily mobility for different individuals and social groups, and the role different forms of transport have in enabling access to the city. This activity will be repeated in future years, seeking to create awareness, participation and justice in future transport decision-making in the city.



The Routledge Handbook of Urban Resilience

Prof **Adriana Allen** co-edited the *Routledge Handbook of Urban Resilience* along with Michael A. Burayidi, John Twigg, Christine Wamsler. This volume provides a critical discussion and overview of current thinking on resilience, the different approaches, tools and methodologies for understanding the subject in urban contexts and brings together related reflections and initiatives. The book also provides important direction to practitioners and civic leaders who are engaged in supporting cities and regions to position themselves for resilience in the face of climate change, unpredictable socio-environmental shocks and incremental risk accumulation. In the words of Allan Lavell: **“Predominantly promoted out of a consideration of the reality and complexity, contradictions and crises of modern urban growth and the now dominant presence of urban centres as places to live and work, circulate and consume, enjoy and suffer, be served and serviced, or be marginalized or excluded, it is both appropriate and necessary that time and critical reflection be dedicated to the idea of resilience in urban contexts. This book does this admirably and unabashedly and its wide-ranging coverage of definition and understanding, context and application, and the questions as to what, why, when, who and where.”**

The book is intended for scholars and graduate students in urban studies, environmental and sustainability studies, geography, planning, architecture, urban design, political science and sociology, for whom it will provide an invaluable and up-to-date guide to current approaches across these disciplines, converging in the study of urban resilience.

Staff news

Katerina Syriou was appointed Unit Administrator and **Aoife Nevin** became Programme Administrator

Jordana Ramalho joined as Lecturer in Development Planning for Diversity on the Urban Development Planning (UDP) programme

Raktim Ray joined the Development Administration and Planning (DAP) programme as a full-time Teaching Fellow

Giovanna Astolfo was appointed Lecturer in Building and Urban Design in Development (BUDD)

El Anoud Majali was appointed for maternity cover as BUDD GTA while **Azadeh Mashayekhi** takes maternity leave

Afia Afenah became a Teaching Fellow on the Social Development Practice (SDP) programme

Lydia Gibson was appointed a Teaching Fellow in the Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) programme

Christopher Yap was appointed a Research Fellow on the KNOW programme and also became a father to baby girl, Robin

Liza Griffin gave birth to Teddy

With regret, we bade farewell to **Robinson Rojas** who resigned as Teaching Fellow on the DAP and UED programmes after several years at DPU

Congratulations to our DPU colleagues on their considerable achievements.

From 1st October:

Cassidy Johnson becomes a Professor

Robert Biel becomes a Professor

Zeremariam Fre becomes a Principal Teaching Fellow

Pascale Hofmann becomes an Associate Professor



Photo Credit: Marmara Urban Forum, 2019

Networks and meetings

Prof **Le-Yin Zhang** was invited to speak at the Marmara Urban Forum (MARUF), *Cities Developing Solutions*, which took place in Istanbul from 1st to 3rd October. The event was the first of a biennial international urban forum, organised by Marmara Municipalities Union, Turkey. Le-Yin spoke in a session on *Key elements for local development in urban space*, and the title of her presentation was: *Local Development Strategies in the Context of Climate Change, SDGs and NUA*. Her presentation advocated the adoption of a proactive strategy towards low-carbon transition in local development. She also discussed the potential role of green finance in supporting this endeavour. An interesting theme in discussion that followed her presentation was the widespread nature of concern about protecting culture.

Prof **Camillo Boano** gave a keynote titled *From Urbanism of Exception to a Global Topology of Violence* at the 2nd Urbanism at Borders Global Conference, Malaga, Spain in October,

then a November paper on *Forms of (collective) life: towards an ontoethics of the urban (project)* for a panel chaired by Prof Jane Rendell at the ARHA 2019 Conference in Dundee. He also presented a paper *The rubric of inhabitation and emerging practice of housing the displaced* at the Soas Centre for Migration and Diaspora Studies Seminar Series in November and in December at the Centre for International Development Seminar Series at Northumbria University.

Rita Lambert presented a paper entitled *Revealing the networks behind 'informal' urbanization: An ethnography of cartographic practices* at the Mapping (In)Justice Symposium – Digital Theory + Praxis for Critical Scholarship, that took place in November in New York. The conference convened a group of more than 60 critical scholars over three days to explore structural inequities in or through spatial media, especially as they relate to race, gender, class, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, and religion. Later that

month, Rita presented the paper *Land traffickers and the fertile spaces of legality in Lima* at a UCL conference, *At the frontiers of the urban: thinking concepts and practices globally*. Also in November, DPU's Dialogues in Development series included a session focused on Rita's PhD on *Opening the black box of peripheral urbanisation: planning, informality and the transversal logic in the production of urban land in Lima*. Finally in December, she presented the paper *Grounding urban energy tools in the lived experiences of the urban poor - a case for incorporating participatory methods in urban building energy models* at the International conference on Building Energy Demand Reduction in Global South in New Delhi, India.

In February 2020, Prof **Adriana Allen**, **Barbara Lipietz** and Prof **Yves Cabannes** participated in World Urban Forum 10 (WUF10) in Abu Dhabi. Between sessions, they enjoyed an animated debate on the the Right to the City as represented in previous WUFs. Their discussion will be published online as a DPU blog. Yves

was involved in a number of events connected with the integration of food into urban planning and the role of participatory budgets in responding to climate adaptation and mitigation. Barbara Lipietz attended the launch of the UNDRR's *Words into Action Guide on Land Use and Urban Planning*, a publication she co-authored with DPU colleagues. WUF10 also hosted the launch of the latest publication by the Urban ARK project entitled *Breaking Cycles of Risk Accumulation in African Cities*. Finally, Adriana Allen was involved in a number of events in her capacity as the newly elected president of Habitat International Coalition (HIC), which included a meeting of the Global Platform for the Right to the City with HIC members and allies from all over the world. A full list of events and sessions can be found [here](#).

The global urban gathering was also the occasion for the now-traditional WUF DPU alumni/reunion dinner. This was a great success with more than 20 participants - ex staff members and students.

Below:
WUF 10 reunion.
Photo Credit:
Prof Adriana Allen



Barbara Lipietz and Prof **Adriana Allen** made the most of their time in Abu Dhabi, also participating in the second UNEP-UN-Habitat Global Environment Outlook for Cities writing workshop, as co-lead authors of the upcoming report to be published towards the end of the year.

Photo Credit: GPR2C



Below:
The pretend invasion with the land traffickers' cabins that they say have 'mushroomed in the dead of night' (Photo credit: Rita Lambert, 2019)



Daniel Oviedo and the T-SUM team presented their methodology for collecting informal transport data in Free-town as well as some of their public transport accessibility and affordability models at the subcommittee of developing countries of the Annual Meeting of the Transportation Research Board in January 2020. The annual meeting was organised by the World Bank and CAF with the event taking place in a roundtable format and producing a number of potential new collaborations with multilateral agencies and colleagues from other universities.

Catalina Ortiz participated at the RC21 conference entitled *In and Beyond the City: emerging ontologies persistent challenges and hopeful futures*, held in New Delhi between 19th and 21st September 2019. Catalina presented a paper on *Transmedia Storytelling for Urban Learning in a panel on Methodologies and Comparative Theorisations for New Forms of Urbanity*, where she discussed lessons from the research project COiNVITE. In November, Catalina

presented a paper entitled *Cardinal Insubordination* at a roundtable on South Eastern Frontiers of the Urban at UCL Urban Lab's At the Frontiers of the Urban conference. In addition, she presented a paper entitled *Storytelling as Sentipensante* in a panel on Collaboration and Participation Experiences which discussed different strategies for co-design and co-production of knowledge. In January 2020, she was the keynote speaker for the workshop Development Alternatives Within Contested Territories in Latin America, organised by the White Rose Universities Consortium and the Contested Cities research group in Sheffield.

DPU's **Giovanna Astolfo** presented research at the international workshop on Asylum and migration. The research aims to explore the diversity of responses to migration across eight European urban spaces and the different strategies put in place by migrants to navigate and learn the city. From the metropolitan area of Lisbon to the port city of Gdansk, and from the post-industrial city of Oberhausen to the island of Sardinia, the research wishes to reframe integration away from current dominant paradigms, and instead conceptualize it as a relational, embedded practice. Read more: [International workshop on Asylum and migration](#) and [Refugees and the politics of urban space](#).

Following APUF 7, **Barbara Lipietz** and Brenda Pérez-Castro (ACHR Secretariat) participated in two conferences in November (Triolog conference, Frankfurt and At the Frontiers of the Urban Conference, UCL) where they shared reflections on process of knowledge co-production at the city-side scale within ACHR partnerships.

The KNOW research project (Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality) organised the session *Partnerships for Urban Equality*, as part of the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) Congress 2019 that took place between 11th and 15th of November in Durban. The session was chaired by Prof. Michele Acuto and **Alexandre Apsan Frediani** (WP4), with presentations from Yvonne Aki-Sawyer (Mayor of Freetown), Anelis María Marichal González (Institute of Physical Planning, Cuba), and Prof **Caren**

Levy (KNOW PI). It also included working groups led by KNOW partners Braima Koroma (SLURC) and Prof Jorge Peña Díaz (CUJAE), and shared by WP4 Research Fellows **Stephanie Butcher** and **Camila Cociña** respectively. It concluded with discussions from William Cobbett (Director of Cities Alliance) and Ana Falú (Habitat International Coalition), and a poem by Sierra Leone poet Fatmata Shour. The discussions from the Congress were published as *International Engagement Brief #1: Partnerships for Urban Equality* in March.

KNOW African City Partners from Kampala, Dar es Salaam and Freetown converged for their first regional meeting in Kampala, Uganda between 11th and 15th of November. Also in attendance were representatives from the different KNOW research teams that had thematic engagements with the various city partners. These included WP1, researching co-production; WP2, exploring extreme poverty; and WP3, visually mapping the briquette process to draw out ethical issues at the intersection of research and enterprise.

The KNOW WP2 Prosperity team has been working closely with the Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI) in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to support community research teams exploring what pathways to prosperity and prosperous lives mean to people living in three informal settlements in the city. In November, following local research and analysis, the community investigation teams co-produced a localised 'prosperity model', representing the conditions and factors that shape obstacles, opportunities and capacities for people in informal settlements to live well.

KNOW Investigators and city partners presented research at the recent UCL Urban Lab conference At the frontiers of the urban that took place in November. These included a keynote presentation by Gautam Bhan from IIHS, a presentation on the urban land nexus in African cities by Wilbard Kombe from Ardhi University, as well as a presentation by DPU's Prof **Adriana Allen** and **Julia Wesely** in a session on *Knowledge and Global Urban Studies*.

In October and December 2019, KNOW investigators worked together with the CUJAE team to advance their impact agenda (**Camila Cociña**, KNOW WP4) and to discuss transdisciplinary and problem-based education (Prof **Adriana Allen** and **Julia Wesely**, KNOW WP5) and the notion of prosperity with equality (Saffron Woodcraft, KNOW WP2).

Stephanie Butcher (KNOW WP4 Research Fellow) presented at the inaugural DSAA conference, entitled Development Studies: Research, Trajectories, and Debates. This presentation focused on *Urban Equalities and the SDGs*, showcasing lessons from KNOW partner cities.

Participating at the United Cities & Local Government (UCLG) Annual Retreat (Tangier) in February, WP4 lead investigator, **Alexandre Apsan Frediani**, presented *KNOW pathways to urban and territorial equality* as a means to addressing inequalities through local transformation strategies. The 2020 retreat focused on joint programming and the co-creation of the organisation's agenda with a focus on the local in the decade to come.

Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC) and the KNOW project published two Practitioner Briefs based on the discussions and agreements that took place during the Freetown City Learning Platform (CiLP) meeting in August and September. The first brief #1: *Principles of Engagement for the City Learning Platform* provides what they have termed 'Principles of Engagement', seeking to outline the underlying motivations for the City Learning Platform in building an inclusive and transformative Freetown, with special attention to engaging participatory and sustained engagement with informal settlement residents. The second brief #2: *Community Livelihoods Opportunities* focuses on one of the main priorities if the quality of life in informal settlements in Freetown is to be improved: community livelihoods opportunities. Available [here](#).

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Cover Photo: Action planning with
MSc UDP in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Photo credit: Diego Puente, 2017

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