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**'Net Zero' and the State:
What can we learn from China's experience?**

By Le-Yin Zhang



Focus On

‘Net Zero’ and the State: What can we learn from China’s experience?

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We may well be entering a new era. Since 2019, a new phrase, ‘net zero’, has entered popular lexicon. It stems from the Paris Agreement (PA), which aims to limit global warming to well below 2°C (preferably 1.5°C) above pre-industrial levels by 2100. The PA requires that, to safeguard this goal, the parties must reach a global peaking of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions as soon as possible and undertake rapid reductions thereafter to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources, and removals by sinks of GHGs in the second half of this century (UNFCCC, 2015). This set off a flurry of pledges in 2020 and 2021 by PA parties to achieve ‘net zero’ by and around 2050. Moreover, at the recent COP26 in Glasgow, new pledges have been made on ending deforestation, cutting methane, reducing coal, and upscaling climate finance in the next ten years.

By sheer coincidence, since late 2019, vast tracts of the planet have become affected by a devastating pandemic, Covid-19, that has claimed more than five million lives so far. While this caused merely a momentary halt in the upward trend of global emissions in 2020, the social impact may be long-lasting. The handling of the pandemic by nation states, encompassing lockdowns, furlough schemes, mass vaccination programmes and the like, prompted serious rethinking about the role of the state, with the potential to reverse the controversial ‘retreat of the state’ since the 1990s. The UK’s Climate Change Committee (CCC, 2021) observed that ‘Covid-19 casts a long shadow, but there are three broad lessons from the pandemic:

first, we have seen the critical importance of effective planning for high-impact eventualities; second, we have experienced the ability of government to act with pace and scale when it is required; and third, we have learned that people are willing to support change when they have the information before them.’ (p.7). This suggests that a philosophical shift may be afoot. The inaction and transactional leadership that prevailed in the past looks increasingly out of place in these new circumstances.

However, making bold commitments is only the first step in an epic journey. We must not underestimate the extent of the challenge that we face. Achieving mid-century ‘net zero’ means an acceleration of the decarbonisation rate in the next three decades, by a factor of five times, compared with what was achieved in the past decade (PwC, 2020) (see the infographic below). It is also necessary to recognise that, on a more fundamental level, the sluggish climate action in the past resulted from an intellectual bias, namely, a strong preference for voluntary and market approaches over state-led actions. In the studies of climate governance, the state has become a ‘no go’ area. Indeed, attention has been focused on individual actions at one extreme and international politics at the other. Few seem to be interested

in what the state could or should do within their borders for the climate.

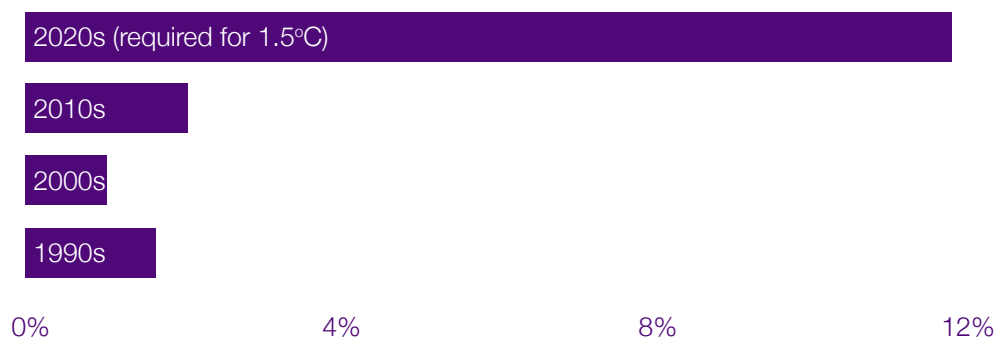
In this wider context, China’s experience with its jieneng jianpai (‘energy conservation and emissions reduction’) programme in the last 15 years offers some helpful lessons. It shows that, when it comes to decarbonisation, the state matters. It also reveals that fast decarbonisation requires a new kind of state. While for a long time we have debated the relative merits and demerits of the developmental and the neoliberal state, a carbon governmental state is now needed. If the experience of China is anything to go by, this new kind of state will only grow in the context of ‘net zero’.

China’s decarbonisation experience

While there has been growing interest in China’s climate action, the common view is often skewed. Newspapers in the West tend to focus on China as a contributor to the climate crisis, rather than a frontrunner in reducing carbon emissions and how it has done it. My recent book, titled ‘Conducting and Financing Low-carbon Transitions in China’ (Zhang, 2021), attempts to correct this. I was initially drawn by three aspects of the ‘China phenomenon’.

Decarbonisation rate is measured by change in tCO₂ per \$m of GDP per annum. Source of data: PwC (2020).

Average global decarbonisation rate per year (%)



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1. On the positive side, China has made a great deal of progress in decarbonisation. First, since the mid-2010s, China has increasingly been regarded as a leader on climate actions by diverse institutions including UNEP, PwC and Germanwatch. Second, China is the second fastest decarbonising economy among the G20 countries from 2000 to 2019, according to PwC's Low Carbon Economy Index (LCEI) league table. China decarbonized by 2.9% per annum over 2000-2019, compared with a rate of 1.5% per annum for the world as a whole and 3.7% for the top performer, the UK (PwC, 2020). Third, from 2011 onwards, China's fossil fuel related emissions and per capita emissions have plateaued, while its economy continues to expand. For instance, between 2012 and 2019, while China's GDP grew by 7% per annum, its energy consumption grew by only 2.8% per annum (State Council, 2020). In other words, a de-coupling of economic growth and emissions growth has taken place. Fourth, China has been effective in fulfilling its climate objectives and continues to raise its climate ambitions. Its carbon intensity fell by 48.1% from 2005 to 2019 (State Council, 2020), exceeding its Cancun Pledge by a year. Moreover, China has steadily increased its climate ambition and has committed to 'net zero' before 2060. Fifth, China is by far the most active investor into low-carbon technologies in the world. Between 2010 and 2019, China invested a cumulative total of USD 819 bn in renewable capacities, accounting for 30% of the global total (State Council, 2020). According to the IRENA (2021), by the end of 2020, China accounted for 32% of all renewable capacities in the world, more than those of the EU and USA combined. Sixth and finally, China has emerged as a major manufacturer and exporter of climate mitigation products and equipment. At the end of 2019, for example, China produced 79% of photovoltaic (PV) panels and 41% of wind turbines worldwide (State Council, 2020).
2. On the negative side, China's decarbonisation performance has some notable shortcomings. First, as the largest emitter, it currently accounts for around 28% of global emissions, significantly more than its fair share on a per capita basis. Having said that, China's share of global responsibility for emissions since 1850 has been only 13% as of 2020, compared with 23% for the USA and 19% for EU-28 (Eco-equity and SEI, 2021). Second, measured by CO₂ emissions per unit of GDP, China has one of the most carbon-intensive economies among the G20 countries. Third, China's decarbonization so far has been mainly driven by improved energy efficiency, manifested in declining energy intensity, rather than by large-scale decarbonization of the energy system. Despite its massive renewable investment, its carbon intensity energy index has hardly changed since 2000 according to the IEA. Fourth, whether China can sustain its recent success is uncertain. In the most recent LCEI league table by PwC (2020), China ranks 10th among the G20 in reducing its carbon intensity in 2018-19. China's carbon intensity fell by only one percent in 2020 (the lowest since 2011), according to official sources. Fifth and finally, China's nationally determined contributions (NDCs) are still 'highly insufficient' for holding warming to below 2°C according to the Climate Action Tracker (CAT) (2021). Leading researchers in China acknowledge that achieving the 1.5 °C goal would require China to reduce its energy-related emissions by 8% to 10% per annum between 2030 and 2050. In other words, China would need to more than double its decarbonisation effort to help achieve the Paris Goals (Zhang, 2021).
3. In addition, there is a third aspect to the China phenomenon. This concerns how researchers have perceived and interpreted China's decarbonisation performance. In a nutshell, pre-existing academic studies failed to anticipate, acknowledge, and account for China's success. Most studies choose to focus on the failures rather than the successes. What I found troubling is that such a negative tendency seems to be engrained in our intellectual tradition. There is a general fascination with what goes wrong, but not what goes right. Furthermore, when China's achievement is acknowledged, it is often simplistically attributed to authoritarianism in the country and an abundance of capital. After reviewing the existing literature under three models (public policy model, politics model and governance model), I decided that it was necessary to change the lens.

Through the lens of governmentality

The lens that I adopted was governmentality, interchangeable with ‘the art of government’ or ‘rationality of government’. This originates from the work of Michel Foucault, the French philosopher and historian. By governmentality, he refers to a particular type of technology of power that the Classical Age invented and that spread during the 18th century in western Europe. He characterises such an art as follows: it is a positive technology of power; it does not function by means of deduction, but by means of production and the maximization of production; it individualises; it is linked to the formation, investment, accumulation, and growth of knowledge. In 1978, he developed the concept of governmentality more systematically in his ‘governmentality’ lecture at the Collège De France. Here, Foucault (2007) distinguishes the ‘problematic of government in general’ from ‘the political form of government’. While the former covers the government of many different objects (e.g. children, families, states), the latter refers only to the government of the state. Thus, government refers to the ‘conduct of conducts’ in general and the management of the state in particular. The governmentality perspective represents a way of thinking about the nature of the practice of government for specific ends in terms of who can govern, what governing is, and what or who is to be governed. It acknowledges the intertwinement of the different kinds of arts of government, including juridical power, administrative power and what Foucault calls ‘government power’.

The relevance of the governmentality perspective is that it directs our attention to China’s art of carbon government, that is, the strategies, policy, and

programmes with which the various authorities have attempted to shape, direct, and modify key subject groups’ ways of conducting themselves around carbon emissions. My book demonstrates that, what has enabled China to achieve its decoupling in the past ten years is the growing entrenchment of a carbon governmentality that penetrates multiple levels of the administrative hierarchy and diverse fields of the economy and society. The carbon governmentality consists of two broad vectors: political rationalities; and governmental techniques and technologies (GTTs). It is characterised by a focus on affecting the actions of a wide range of individual and collective subjects, with a ‘subject’ defined as an actor in possession of their own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge; yet being subject to control by someone else and dependence at the same time. In this regard, the Chinese regime of carbon government targets eight groups, including sub-national governments, major energy-using units (including power plants), manufacturers and suppliers of energy consuming appliances and equipment, power grid companies, renewable energy developers, financial institutions, households, and individuals. However, crucially, the greatest emphasis is placed on subnational governments and their officials, major energy users, and financial institutions. It is also manifested in discursive change, embodied first in the Scientific Outlook of Development (from the mid-2000s), and then in the adoption (in 2007) and institutionalisation (in 2012) of ‘ecological civilisation’.

A wide range of GTTs have been deployed to conduct the carbon usage of the target groups. By no means exhaustive, my book identifies a set of ten GTTs, ranging from legislation, bureaucratic restructuring, re-prioritisation of performance criteria for

subnational governments and officials, to reformed public finance, and market mechanisms such as auctioning vehicle licenses, emissions trading, and green finance. Yet, by far the most effective and impactful has been the Energy Conservation and Emissions Reduction Target Responsibility System (ECERTRS) applied to subnational governments and major energy users since 2007. It encompasses five-yearly and annual plans setting decarbonisation targets, annualised and regulated monitoring, assessment, evaluation, and finally, reward and sanction. On the other hand, China has introduced the most comprehensive programme for greening its financial system in the world. An indication of this is that, according to the Climate Bonds Initiative, by end-2020, China accounted for 36% of the climate-aligned bonds worldwide (CBI, 2021). My research shows, however, that by far the most important financing instrument for low carbon transitions has been green credit, followed by the green bond. Their development has been built upon an elaborate green finance governmentality consisting of policy learning, administrative support, regular reporting and statistics procedures, financial incentives, and capacity building.

My study reveals contrasting features in the arts of carbon government between those represented by the ‘advanced liberal government’ (ALG) in the West (Oels, 2005) and those in China. While ALG targets individuals and social groups, guards against ‘excessive’ state bureaucracy, governs by using markets as organising principles and presupposes individual entrepreneurs; China’s carbon government targets many groups, but most importantly subnational governments and officials, as well as major energy users. It uses legislation, planning, markets, and even ethics, and presupposes calculating officials, producers, and consumers. In other words, the latter creates a much wider field of visibility and uses a far wider range of GTTs. Perhaps most crucially, China’s carbon governmentality not only treats decarbonisation as an opportunity for development, but places subnational governments and their officials at the forefront of this process.

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Lessons from China

Readers of my book will draw their own conclusions about what the lessons from China are. For the field of development, four stand out. First, it demonstrates that while fast decarbonisation is possible, it is also extremely challenging. One of the greatest challenges is to maintain investment flows while economic growth slows down under the pressure of decarbonisation. All three cities (Shanghai, Qingdao, and Hangzhou) where I did field work have experienced significantly reduced economic growth in the past decade, as the whole country has done. In fact, this dynamic underlies the recent slow-down in China's decarbonisation. Second, there is significant scope for market-based mechanisms in decarbonisation. Yet, the latter take time to develop and may result in undesirable effects. Based on its 'Socialist Market Economy' rationality, which puts market and planning on equal footings, China has experimented with many market-based mechanisms for decarbonisation. These range from emissions trading, energy pricing reform, feed-in-tariffs, to auction- and lottery-based vehicle license allocations. For example, under a system of vehicle license auction, the average price of a private car licence in Shanghai increased from RMB27,040 (USD 3,270) in Oct. 2002 to RMB90,687 (USD 13,435) in 2017, whereas the success rate fell from 68.65% to 4.46% (Zhang, 2021). This has made electric vehicles, that come with free licenses, popular. But it has also disproportionately affected lower-income groups.

Third, the development of a multi-level and multi-faceted carbon governmentality will be key to successful decarbonisation. The Chinese experience shows that effective carbon government is based on a mastery of the processes and social relations involved in emissions; and a strategic approach towards to the attainment of policy ends. This requires widespread knowledge development about the sources of emissions and the scope and options for mitigation, the mobilisation and transformation of a range of social subject groups through diverse and coordinated

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GTTs, and continuous policy learning from all possible sources. Effective carbon government requires painstaking efforts of governance.

Fourth and finally, a five-year policy framework is good for planning decarbonisation, but is too loose for checking action and progress. The PA requires the parties to update their NDCs and for a global stocktaking to be undertaken every five years. This makes China's experience relevant for the implementation of the PA, as China has implemented its jieneng jianpai programme through its five-year plan (FYP) framework for the past 15 years. However, my research finds that China initially struggled to achieve its planning targets in the 11th FYP (2005-2010). The situation improved only when it introduced quarterly on-line energy reporting, annual progress checks, and the ECERTRS in 2007.

The case of China also renders several other theoretical insights. These concern how climate change may affect economic development; why political leadership matters; how international politics intertwine with domestic politics; and how our understanding is always coloured by individual experience, knowledge, and values. But perhaps above all the most important insight is that the state matters; and that achieving the right balance between the market and the state is crucial for successful decarbonisation.

Looking forward

If the nation states live up to their 'net zero' pledges, we are on the cusp of a great wave of climate action. There should be no doubt that the course of world development in the next three decades will be dominated by tensions between the need to develop and the imperative to curb GHG emissions to achieve 'net zero'. We are facing a challenge of unprecedented speed and scale. Only history can tell whether we are up to the challenge ahead.

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DPU Covid Research Grants

DPU staff were awarded six grants as part of an internal funding call that addressed the Covid-19 pandemic and its impacts on cities in the South and North. We feature four of these projects in this edition of DPU News.

In collaboration with Camden Local Authority and Kay Pallaris from Mapping Futures, Liza Griffin's project **examined the ways in which park users in London derived wellbeing from greenspaces** during the pandemic. These spaces have been one of the few environments where people in Britain have been able to exercise, seek solace and maintain limited social contact - emphasising just how vital parks and greenspaces are for public health. The work focused upon the lived experiences of disadvantaged and minority groups who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Although the project was conducted in the so-called 'Global North', it was conceived with the vision and principles of the DPU at its heart – namely a concern for social justice and inclusion. One of the study's key findings was

the importance of parks' 'Friends Groups' and other community organisations in mediating people's experience with greenspaces. The research also underlined the fact that greenspaces are more than simply 'green'. As well as being valued for their naturalness, they also perform a social function. Greenspaces serve as a location for social care, identity-making and belonging. During periods of lockdown, urban park spaces and other green areas became crucial community 'places' that play an important role in supporting individuals and groups with diverse needs. Another finding suggests that people used a range of greenspaces to meet their wellbeing needs during the pandemic, and this underscores the importance of supporting a mixed portfolio of accessible parks with different facilities. But it was not only formal parks that played a significant role in facilitating wellbeing during the pandemic. In addition, people made use of cemeteries, waste ground and sometimes created their own pockets of greenspace in previously unused or overlooked corners of the city. These spaces became valuable places to seek refuge, to re/connect safely or to enjoy the sensory stimulation of being outdoors. This research established the significance of formal, accessible urban greenspaces; but also of affording opportunities for greenspaces to be curated, created, or appropriated by communities to meet their own specific needs, in their own ways.

The **ReFRAMED project** was led by Rita Lambert along with co-investigators Ignacia Ossul-Vermehren and Alex Macfarlane from the DPU. Their team also included Arq. Carlos Escalante Estrada from Peruvian NGO CENCA and Ahmad Rifai from Indonesian NGO Kota Kita. Their project advances research on situated ethics in two culturally different contexts (Peru and Indonesia) and seeks to enhance communities' capacities to capture their untold stories. The aim is to develop an ethical and practical framework for working remotely on collective narrative construction and visual outputs produced by urban dwellers in low-income neighbourhoods. The pandemic has hastened experimentation with remote visual methodologies, often without critical consideration of how these methodologies might exacerbate extractive approaches. Questions around how we support communities to devise strategies for self-representation, how we enact co-production remotely, and how we can conduct ethical research are central to their project. It was launched in May 2021 through a series of dialogues with experts and practitioners based in London, Lagos, Johannesburg, Toronto, Lima, Surakarta and Yogyakarta. The first dialogue on 'Visual ethics for video narratives' explored principles for an ethical framework in visual research and practice. Pertinent questions included: who has power in the



People enjoying a South London Park during the pandemic. Photo credit: Kay Pallaris.

filming process and how can it be subverted through feminist film-making practices? How can we avoid reproducing harmful stereotypes in visual representation? And how can we represent unrepresentable suffering while being sensitive to concerns over the exploitation of pain? The second dialogue they held on 'Participation in visual methodologies and narrative construction' considered narratives as collective and inclusive representations. It involved collective discussion on the potential and limitations for inclusivity of participatory video in the context of the global South, how visual narrative skills are acquired, and how inhabitants can take ownership beyond the initial engagement. This dialogue included reflections from social movements and media. In parallel to these dialogues, inhabitants from Lima and Solo have been collectively reflecting on the kind of untold stories that need to come to light in order to challenge injustice. They have also undertaken training workshops on narrative construction and ethical filmmaking with the aim of producing two short films on collective action in the face of Covid-19 which will be released early in 2022.

Giorgio Talocci and Amina-Bahja Ekman from the DPU, along with Jama Musse Jama from RCF led a project on the **biogeopolitics of infrastructural development and Covid-19 in Berbera**, Somaliland. The coastal city of Berbera is an increasingly prominent node for both understanding and shaping the geopolitical and socio-cultural future of Somaliland. Current development of the Berbera Corridor, a highway that connects Addis Ababa in Ethiopia to the Berbera port, is significantly impacting the socio-spatial fabric of the city. Tangible and intangible forms of heritage are both under threat. Conducted in partnership with Redsea Cultural Foundation (RCF), the research adopts a biogeopolitical perspective concerned with heritage, governance, and urban health. Their research questions how and why socio-spatial exclusions emerge, and whether these have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 outbreak. A team of twelve local researchers contributed to the research co-design and conducted around 150 interviews with residents and local stakeholders. Oral histories on heritage revealed a complex and contested landscape of landmark spaces in the city. Interviews on governance uncovered the micro- and macro-politics at multiple urban scales. The urban health dimension of their work explored the complex and often gendered struggles that people face in the post-pandemic city. All their research data is being stored in a geo-localized database that will ultimately become an open access spatial atlas of Berbera that will serve as a basis for further research projects on this important topic.

Paroj Banerjee's project titled **'Interrogating 'unsafety': an action-research on Covid-19 governance and exacerbation of everyday insecurities of houseless populations in Indian cities'** was further supported by a UCL Global Engagement Fund. Her work investigated the impact of pandemic governance on the urban houseless in the Indian cities of Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata. Analysis of government orders, news articles, in-depth interviews with houseless groups and key stakeholders revealed that the pandemic exacerbated pre-existing structural inequalities for a considerable number of urban inhabitants. Her work on biopolitical governance showed that exclusionary perceptions held by elites about the urban poor were reinforced through pandemic messaging on public health and sanitization discourses. Narratives of 'outsiderness', dirt and 'unhygienic bodies' often disrupted well-meaning efforts by the state and civil society to provide relief. As the 'home' is widely understood to be a safe location to shield from the virus, those inhabiting the streets were frequently viewed as potential contaminators. Most houseless people interviewed in her project contended that it was not Covid-19 that disrupted their lives, but the lockdown itself. And she showed how lockdown measures in India weighed particularly heavily on the urban poor resulting in many facing greater hunger, a loss of livelihood and the erasure of the social networks which had previously supported them. Banerjee concludes that policy and public health responses to pandemics are too often designed around ideas of 'the home' as a physical structure that is safe from the harms of the 'outside'. These responses in India privilege an idea of home that is class based, upper caste, patriarchal, ableist and generally blind to intersectional identities and the plights of the those living without houses.

Head On

A virtual workshop called **'OVERDUE: Just Sanitation and gendered taboos'** brought together partners in Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, DRC, Madagascar, Ivory Coast, Senegal, France, Denmark and the UK to reflect on the advances of the OVERDUE 'tackling the Sanitation taboo across urban Africa' action-research project for one week in September 2021. Two sessions on gendered sanitation taboos, drawing on the [voicing just sanitation campaign](#), enabled us to broaden the perspective on women's sanitation experiences and investments. They highlighted the importance of women's invisible domestic work, the pervasive constraints imposed by lacking or unsuitable public facilities, as well as their aspirations as workers and stakeholders of urban sanitation systems. This encouraged us to investigate further

women's employment in the sector, gender-friendly sanitation technologies such as the ones developed by [CCI in Tanzania](#), and collective actions challenging sanitation injustices. Follow-up material was presented in a live webinar in November 2021 titled 'Sanitation in urban Africa: toilets, seats of gendered inequalities?'. The recording is [accessible here](#).

On 2nd November, several leading KNOW investigators and partners presented at the **COP26 panel discussion 'Urban informality and inequality: A global call for climate justice'**. Hosted by Cities Alliance, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), and KNOW funding partner, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the event presented cross-sector perspectives on the challenges of addressing climate change equitably in cities. The discussion aimed to help shape critical policy and research priorities towards climate justice and to raise awareness about the cumulative risks created by conditions of urban informality. The event is available to watch online at [here](#).

Liza Griffin and George Reville (Open University) have launched a joint initiative called **'Creative Practice and the Anthropocene'** funded by a UCL Engagement Grant, and by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Open Space Research Centre at the Open University. Their initiative encompasses conversations, creative outputs, engagements, and writings designed to critically explore the many ways that arts-based thinking and publicly engaged practice might intervene productively in the current environmental crisis. Underlying the ethos of their project is an appreciation that the imaginative ways of thinking, communicating, and working central to creative practice are also required to better engage publics and manage the entangled and far-reaching environmental problems that we face today. They have released a [video](#) that captures a conversation between four artists on how creative practices might be fostered, developed, and deployed to address some of the greatest challenges of the Anthropocene. The video considers the importance of holding a space for engagement and the

Tackling gendered sanitation taboos across Urban Africa

We should better understand what sanitation injustices look like

TIME & SPACE...
Toilets are one of the private spaces available to women, not just used for bodily functions.

Without care, taboos can be oppressive to women

Responsibilities and actions around sanitation are very individualised - this hinders collective action

If public toilets are dirty, people will go elsewhere!

Sanitation work can be valued by women but they are often barred from paid jobs

Unclean toilets are a health hazard

Use of public toilets is a 'heavy experience' for women

What do women do to manage the challenges they face?

What social networks do women call on to make change possible?

We need a stronger link with the idea of public service to involve decision makers

We need a deeper understanding of marginalised & criminalised practices

How do we make use of what we know on gender issues?

Context is important - what is a blind spot in one country may not be in another...

Resources & facilities to manage menstruation are key challenges for women & girls

Why is it mainly women handling faecal waste for free?

Engineers often forget about women's needs when designing sanitation systems

How do we fully understand & respond to things we haven't experienced?

It's crucial to get more involvement of women in design & planning...

Some construction technologies can be more accessible to women

Thinking through taboos sheds new light on what good practices look like

What are children's needs and experiences?

There needs to be recognition of the role women play in sanitation.

Just sanitation is a HEALTH ISSUE

Package & promote sanitation work so it is attractive all along the sanitation chain

Having access to a private toilet is a status symbol / an issue of pride.

OVERDUE
Tackling the sanitation taboo across Urban Africa

artwork by www.adajusie.com

many possible ways in which mutual transformations might come about. It reflects on the flexible and fluid subject positions that practitioners and researchers must take on to raise awareness and address challenging questions and, crucially, it explores the different registers through which arts-based work can invite a response and help to 'make a new we'.

Haim Yacobi, Programme Leader of the MSc Health in Urban Development, launched a new Seminar Series supported by the **Urban Studies Foundation**. The series develops a conceptual analysis of an emerging urban regime 'The Neo-Apartheid City' by analysing the role of infrastructure in facilitating political control through socio-spatial division. The current pandemic has elucidated the urgency of critically re-theorizing how urban regimes of separation intensify and deepen inequalities in urban settings. These regimes of separation are based not only on racial and ethnic discrimination, but are also driven by consumer logic, privatisation and deregulation. He argues that to understand how Covid-19 affects urban lives, we need to locate, articulate and challenge the pre-existing conditions of inequality (visibly manifested in urban infrastructure), which shape contemporary political regimes in the city. The seminar series will discuss and critically analyse an emerging urban regime identified as the 'neo-apartheid city'. The series focus will be on how infrastructures transform into particularly salient sites for interrogating urban life and health from an embodied perspective of identity and stigma. It will also address how infrastructures function as symbols of modernity that are exclusively reserved for elite groups. The first workshop explored the ontological 'dependency on infrastructure' that makes human bodies and urban systems vulnerable. It included a [keynote presentation](#) by Andy Clarno.

On 27th October, Jordana Romalho presented a lecture: 'Engendering disaster risk management and resilience-building: The significance of the everyday in evaluations of the exceptional' as part of the **Global Habitat Seminar Series** run by the Instituto de la Vivienda, Universidad de Chile. Jordana also contributed to a lunchtime panel discussion exploring 'Gender and Climate change: why are women at more risk from global heating?' on Tuesday 7th December, as part of the launch of the UCL Generation One campaign as well as COP26.

Giorgio Talocci led two consultancies for the **International Committee of the Red Cross** under the supervision of ICRC's Water and Habitat Advisor for the NAME Region and DPU alumnus Igor Malgrati. The first consultancy led to a paper for ICRC authored by Giorgio Talocci and reviewed by Cassidy Johnson called '(Re)Assessing Scarcities: Toward a holistic, participatory and longitudinal approach to the understanding of environmental issues in armed conflict scenarios'. The paper frames the understanding of environmental issues in armed conflict scenarios under the lens of scarcity; ultimately incorporating the understanding of socio-economic and governance-related dynamics into the procedures of environmental and social impact assessment. The paper suggests that the use of data collection methods that use remote sensing and citizen science could address some of the limitations of environmental and social impact assessment procedures. This would help to create cross-scalar and longitudinal databases on conditions of scarcity, and thus enhance a holistic and participatory approach to environmental research in armed conflict scenarios.

Talocci's second consultancy stemmed from an event called 'Water Scarcity: A Challenge to Sustainable Development in the Arab Region', a high-level meeting within the 13th Session of the **Arab Ministerial Water Council** held on the 17th November 2021 in Cairo. ICRC is convening the panel 'Management of Scarce Water Resources during Protracted Armed Conflict', for which DPU has produced a grounding paper authored by Giorgio Talocci. The paper highlights the region's particular challenges around water dependency, demographic growth and rapid urbanisation, weaponization of water infrastructure, inefficiency of water use and contested transboundary water resources. The paper critically reviews recommendations on water governance, community engagement, production and dissemination of knowledge on water resources and international law.

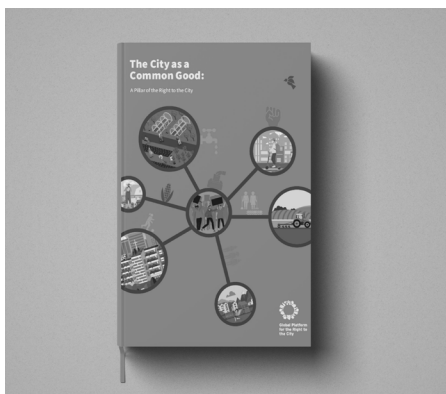
Julio D. Dávila delivered a number of **online international lectures** including: 'Is there life in the city after the pandemic? Lessons learned and some reflections on innovation' at the Fundação Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo (FESP) in Brazil; 'Some reflections on policy decisions, mobility and urban well-being' at the Colombian Mobility Network; 'Reflections on urban sustainability and resilience' at the annual meeting of the Colombian Chamber of Construction (Magdalena branch) in Colombia; 'Does urbanization make emergence of zoonosis more likely: Evidence, myths and gaps' at the Urban Thinkers Campus, Technical University Delft in The Netherlands; 'Economic integration of bikes in cities', webinar organized by the Barranquilla Chamber of Commerce, Colombia; 'Urban mobility for a new normality. Transport alternatives after Covid-19' at the ProPacífico in Cali, Colombia; and 'Cities: Regional responses to entrepreneurs and citizens in the new context' to the Medellín Chamber of Commerce in Colombia.

Research

Catalina Ortiz was part of the Reference Group appointed by the Global Platform for the Right to the City to prepare a paper titled: **'The City as a Common Good: A Pillar of the Right to the City'** which was launched during COP26. The notion of the commons helps us to profoundly rethink the dominant urban development model in order to redress the ongoing climate emergency.

Daniel Oviedo and Azadeh Mashayekhi have been awarded funding from the **UCL Social Sciences Plus scheme** to develop multidisciplinary research exploring e-scooters in London. The project called 'Are e-scooters contributing

Book cover of 'The City as a Common Good: A Pillar of the Right to the City'.



Landing page of the [Activating environmental justice through translocal learning alliances website](#).

to transport-related social exclusion? Mapping supply practices in London's micro mobility pilot' involves a collaboration between the DPU, the UCL Centre for Behaviour Change and the Department of Civil, Environmental, and Geomatic Engineering. Their research aims to leverage the concept of transport-related social exclusion as an entry point for a dialogue with market, state, and civil society actors about their practices and how these practices lead to intended or unintended social impacts. It will map social and spatial inequalities associated with the provision of urban transport and service disruptions brought about by the adoption of e-scooters as part of Transport for London's trial in London. It identifies their potential to sustainably address transport-related social exclusion while securing necessary partnerships to co-produce knowledge and foster innovation. The project will be run between November 2021 and July 2022.

In recognition of the past 15 years of research undertaken through various MSc Environment and Sustainable Development Learning Alliances, colleagues are delighted to have launched a new website called **'Activating environmental justice through translocal learning alliances'**. The website acts as a repository for the body of knowledge built incrementally over the years, through partnerships established within the practice module of the DPU MSc in Environment and Sustainable Development in four cities: Freetown, Lima, Accra and Mumbai. The website contains reports, videos, policy briefs and blogs, offering the possibility of reading across cities to gain valuable insights into the causes and manifestations of environmental injustices, and strategies to address them. The website was directed by Rita Lambert, coded by Vivek Deshpande, and supported by Kerry Bobbins. It can be accessed through www.esdlearningalliance.net.



E-scooter trials in London: inclusive or exclusionary? Photo Credit: Daniel Oviedo

Haim Yacobi received the **Urban Studies Foundation Seminar Series Award**. The award, received in collaboration with Mori Ram (Newcastle University) and Charlotte Lemanski (University of Cambridge) will fund the project and seminars series: 'Infrastructure, Inequality and the Neo-Apartheid City'. The project will focus on apartheid as a systemic, institutionalised process of division that drives apart communities and is framed by variegated modes of governance that generate unequal integration into the polity. The primary focus will be on three parameters of analysis: Urban Health and the infrastructure of apartheid; Citizenship, capital and infrastructure in the apartheid city; and Mobility and movement beyond apartheid.

Liza Griffin and Gemma Moore (Bartlett) have received a Rapid Response Policy Advisory Scheme grant (UCL Public Policy and EPSRC) with match funding from Camden and Islington Councils entitled '**Co-creating a Healthy Parks Framework**'. Their project builds upon needs identified in the UK Funded Future Parks Accelerator 'Parks for Health' project run by Camden and Islington to co-create an evaluation framework that will consider the impact of parks on health and reduce health inequalities. The overarching focus of the project is to co-develop a visual assessment tool that can help park managers design and appraise their park spaces with improved health objectives in mind. The local authorities are keen that latest evidence and different forms of knowledge are brought into the development of the framework to support its successful application in practice. The team have held a number of virtual workshops with policymakers and stakeholders to develop and test their framework, which is based on a review of existing park health appraisal frameworks and indicator models produced by researcher Ruth Hynes.

Haim Yacobi received a grant alongside Ed Fottrell (Epidemiology & Global Health) and Misheck Julian Nkhata, (Institute of Advanced Studies) for the '**Overcoming Syndemic Urbanism: Health, Vulnerability and Communities' Resilience**' project. The project aims to conceptually develop the notion of Syndemic Urbanism as both theoretical and methodological

lenses through which urban health and interventions should be understood. Syndemic urbanism focuses on how urban-spatial elements influence the accumulation of several health conditions and how these are experienced in an urban context. The research is planned as a pilot in Faridpur, a major city located in the Faridpur District, Bangladesh, with local partners investigating how urban-spatial elements affect syndemic urbanism, and how they might be used as a vehicle for informing interventions leading to urban health justice. This project will also refer to the ways in which communities' (local) knowledge, participation and leadership can contribute to the improvement of urban health.

The **UCL-Osaka Walking Cities Lab** co-led by DPU's Dr Daniel Oviedo and Michihiro Kita from the Division of Global Architecture at Osaka University was awarded further funding by the UCL-Osaka Strategic Partner Funds from the UCL Global Engagement Office. DPU's Julio D. Davila and PhD student Mariajosé Nieto-Combariza will also take part. The project will help consolidate the WCL as a transdisciplinary platform to document, challenge and expand current understandings in research and practice about walking in African cities. The project seeks to build on the research of the WCL, and both existing and potential partnerships, to provoke research and practice-based reflections through a series of four blended workshops hosted by the Lab, two webinars, and a co-production retreat for the co-creation of an edited book proposal and exploration of future funding opportunities. The aim of this collaboration is to advance a nuanced and localised examination of the nature, challenges, and opportunities of everyday walking environments and practices in historically vulnerable and disadvantaged territories and to establish a community of research and practice around this topic led by the UCL-Osaka WCL. In the context of rapid and often unplanned urbanisation, with deficits in infrastructure, increasing motorisation and insufficient public transport, urban mobility factors into people's inclusion or exclusion in terms of access to vital services and infrastructure, and consequently, their overall well-being.

This is often the worst case for those in low-income urban communities. The aim is to establish the WCL as a hub to advance understandings through innovative methods, the co-production of knowledge and the nurture of partnerships. The WCL has also partnered with UN-Environment and NGO Walk21 for the development of activities under this new funding stream.

Together with several grassroots organisations from Bolivia, El Salvador and Peru, on 7th November, Adriana Allen joined the **COP26 Coalition People's Summit** to discuss why Climate Justice is a Habitat Right. She argued that climate justice requires reshaping climate action and financing from technical efforts to cut emissions into an approach that holds habitat-related human rights and socio-environmental equality at its core. The real 'leapfrogging', she argued, is to be based on the multiple experiences already championing transversal and rights-based approaches to climate justice on the ground and at scale.

Liza Griffin and George Revill (Open University) are working on a funded project called '**Creative Practice and Community Resilience**' that critically examines how creative engagement and practice can play a role in helping communities at risk of flooding to achieve community resilience.

Connections

Jun Yeup Kim (PhD, 2004) has been appointed Dean at the **College of International and Graduate School of Pan-Pacific International Studies**, Kyung Hee University, South Korea.

Rohit Lahoti (UDP, 2019) based in Mumbai, India has co-founded a voluntary initiative called **Centre for Inclusive Habitat** (cihab.in) which aims to facilitate an inclusive and participatory approach for low-income housing. He also works as a consultant for the Urban Development Department of the State; and is a researcher with a keen interest in land tenure security and property rights.

Hands On

Catalina Ortiz and Caren Levy were invited to the **roundtable Cities and Climate Justice** on 22nd July organised by the British Academy in collaboration with the National Academies and UKRI. The inputs of the round table helped inform the briefings and COP26 negotiations.

Alessio Kolioulis is working as a mentor for the finalists of the **Creative Cities Challenge, a Global Initiative programme** of collaborations between the cities of Berlin, London, New York and Paris to leverage collective innovation and fast recoveries from Covid-19. More info [here](#).



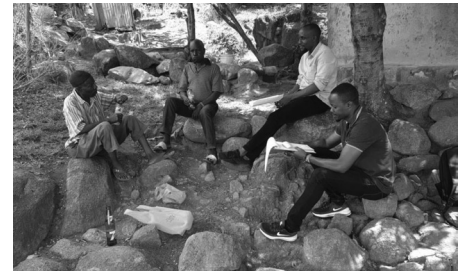
DPU Alumni Networking Platform

Studying at the DPU makes us all part of a diverse, geographically dispersed, yet close-knit family. The **DPU Alumni Networking Platform** was launched to reconnect all those that have passed through the DPU over the years. Using the link www.dpualumni.com, alumni can join the ever-expanding network of development practitioners to collectively shape a better future, advance your career trajectory in interesting ways, and find long lost DPU friends around the globe. Using filters on the world map, subscribers are able to search for people by year of graduation, by programme of study and by city. They can then connect with others through their preferred social media account. The platform was funded by the DPU, directed by Rita Lambert, coded by Nathanael Sheehan and graphic designed by Ottavia Pasta.

OVERDUE 'tackling the sanitation taboo across urban Africa' teams in Freetown, Beira and Mwanza are historicising sanitation through archival work and oral history interviews. This is giving visibility to resident's memories and experience with sanitation investments and transformations, and especially rehabilitating the role of women as sanitation providers and change makers.

After four years of deep collaboration, the **DPU MSc ESD/SLURC learning alliance** came to a close. The alliance was established by Adriana Allen and Rita Lambert in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), directed by Braima Koroma and Joseph Macarthy; and the Federation of Rural and Urban Poor (FEDURP), headed by Yirah Conteh. The closing was marked by a live celebratory event in October, held with key stakeholders in Freetown, and joined online by staff, facilitators, interns as well as ESD alumni across cohorts from different parts of the globe. What are we celebrating? First, the legacy of actionable knowledge produced over the years, by exploring how it has been used in Freetown by local communities, grassroots organisations and NGOs, planners and government decision makers at local and national scales. We know that this legacy lives not only through the many outputs produced – reports, policy briefs, videos and blogs – but also through the multiple outcomes that have shaped in fundamental ways the way we understand the world and do things, not just in Freetown but across many other contexts. Second, our learning journey together, how it changed us and how it advanced more than just ways of dealing with cities – socially and environmentally – across other parts of the world. The celebration was

Patrimonio Vivo.
Photo Credit: Moravia Cultural Centre



Richard Prosper (ARU) and Festo Dominic Makoba (CCI) interviewing memory holders in Mwanza, Tanzania. Photo Credit: Adriana Allen

broadcast by African Young Voices TV and reported by The Calabash Newspaper in Sierra Leone. The 2020-2021 ESD Masters students report has now been published and is available [here](#).

Our last report captures the research conducted during the final year of the learning alliance led by Rita Lambert and Pascale Hofmann. Structured around four thematic areas: Ecological Infrastructure, Food Security, Land and Housing, and Urban Infrastructure and Services, the research drew from a diverse range of progressive global initiatives to offer fresh insights for pathways towards environmental justice in Freetown. To learn more about the outcomes and outputs of our Learning Alliance with SLURC since 2017 visit: www.esdlearningalliance.net

Catalina Ortiz and Laia Garcia presented their project 'Living Heritage' to open the **'Imperfect by Design: A Bartlett Celebration of Engagement'** event held online in November 2021. The event included the presentation of the Moravia Cultural Centre showcasing the joint outputs and lessons of the learning alliance. Liza Griffin's new initiative Creative Practice and the Anthropocene also featured at the event.

Daniel Oviedo joins **ForuMM's** Steering Committee. The ForuMM network is a



platform set up by Innovate UK and the Connected Places Catapult to steer conversations about micromobility in the United Kingdom. ForuMM's core focus areas include safety, integration (with other transport systems), sustainability, productivity, and accessibility. In October 2021, Daniel Oviedo from the DPU was selected to join ForuMM's Steering Committee as an academic and knowledge production advisor.

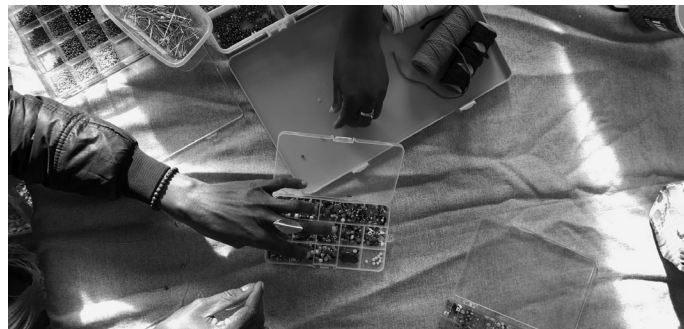
Among the committee's functions are the definition of the strategic vision of the network, co-producing and assisting with the delivery of the network's yearly activity plan, and actively participating in policy engagement at local and national levels. Oviedo's research on transport-related social inclusion and the recent project on e-scooters and social inclusion in London will contribute to ForuMM's mission and activities. Oviedo will be leading the development of a position paper about micromobility and social inclusion to be published in the first quarter of 2022.

Ignacia Ossul-Vermehren is supporting an NGO working with refugees and asylum seekers in Samos, Greece for the next three months. Samos is one of five 'hotspot islands' and the first to open a controversial new EU-funded refugee reception facility. She is managing a **Women's Safe Space** located next to the camp, which provides psycho-social support and development of skills. Women in the camp are largely from Syria, Afghanistan, DRC and Somalia.

As part of the KNOW programme work component on translocal pedagogies, members of the **Habitat International Coalition** (HIC) Adriana Allen and Julia Wesely have been working on the collective development and implementation of cross-regional co-learning spaces for the defence of human rights related to habitat. The team brings together activist organisations across Africa, Latin America and the MENA region to give traction and build social to feminist approaches to habitat, land rights and multi-level advocacy. This brings to the fore the strategic role that emancipatory pedagogies play in activating social change. More information [here](#).

Liza Griffin, Gemma Moore and Oliver Jones, Head of Greenspaces from

Female asylum seekers and refugees use the women's safe space daily, engaging in a range of activities and workshops.
Photo Credit: Ignacia Ossul-Vermehren



Camden Council, gave a seminar talk at **UCL's Up Close and Policy Series**. Their seminar explored how researchers can engage with local authorities to co-develop impactful policies for cities. They examined the benefits of policy co-development, pathways to engagement and gave insights into the inner working of local authorities.

The **Tren Maya project** in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula is one of the largest infrastructure projects in Latin America, encompassing 1,500 km of railroads to connect 19 towns and cities across five states. More than a rail project, it is conceived as a regional development planning project that aims to reverse the dominant, ecologically destructive and unequal development patterns in the region. This flagship project of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) is at the same time controversial owing to insufficient consultation processes with indigenous peoples and fears that it may cause significant environmental impacts, exacerbating the plundering of natural resources. The Urban Economic Development programme began engaging with this project in 2021 through its Overseas Practice Engagement (OPE). In its first year, 34 students, together with DPU's Naji Makarem, Alessio Koliulis and Étienne von Bertrab, in collaboration with Violeta Nuñez Rodríguez and her research team from UAM University carried out relevant research focused on three distinct locations. Learn more about the first steps of UED's involvement in [this blog post](#). The research and the project itself were discussed in a [UCL Alumni webinar](#) titled 'Tren Maya: High Hopes and Contested Development' hosted on 22 October, that generated valuable reflections and expanded interest amongst DPU and UCL alumni in Mexico.

Catalina Ortiz presented the project **Living Heritage Atlas** in the UCL

Institute of Advanced Studies Online Festival 'Alternative Epistemologies' on 4th May 2021. This presentation was part of the Critical Heritage Studies symposium showcasing creative and participatory approaches to heritage research. The presentation discussed how the pandemic has called for alternative methods of teaching and research, but can such methods also produce alternative epistemologies?

The experimental collaborative project **Sensing the city: Exploring the role of sensorial methods in activating just regenerations in London** was initiated by Barbara Lipietz, with community organisations [Pempeople](#) and [The Ubele Initiative](#). It explored the role of creative expression in amplifying the voice of young adults in community-led approaches to planning in London. Adjusted to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, the project facilitated online discussions between young people from Brixton and Peckham and explored 'owned' media – spoken word, mobile film-making, photography – as modes of shared expression, and means of speaking truth to power, on their own terms. Conversations and creative outputs, facilitated by poet [Kat François](#) and multi-media artist [Daniel Oduntan](#), spoke of belonging and loss, the ambiguities of and unequal abilities to cope with regeneration, displacement and community erasure. Race, age and labelling intersected with shared experiences of regeneration, along with experiences of multi-dimensional trauma. The project surfaced frustration of enduring voicelessness – or rather, of repeatedly being 'unheard' - co-existing with a desire for co-creating safe and caring neighbourhoods, where 'people like us' can thrive. The project led to the production of a short film/visual letter, which was launched at the Southwark South Design District, part of the London Design Week Festival.

Staff news

Christopher Yap has left his role at the DPU on the KNOW programme to take up a position as a Research Fellow at the Centre for Food Policy, City University. His research will focus on the policy and governance dimensions of food systems transformation as part of a large research programme titled, FixOurFood (fixourfood.org).

Annette Preddie has left the DPU after seven years of service in the roles of Unit Administrator and Programme Assistant. She secured a job as Teaching Administrator in UCL's Division of Surgery and Interventional Science.

Barbara Lipietz was appointed Vice Dean International for The Bartlett, starting from October 2021. She was also invited to participate in the Global Advisory Council of the newly mooted Colombo Urban Lab.

Colin Marx and Margarethe Theseira were promoted to Professor. Rita Lambert and Naji Makarem were promoted to Associate Professor.

Diana Daste, José Fernandes and their baby boy, Matias Daste Fernandes. Photo Credit: Diana Daste



Celebrating Promotions at the UCL Provost's Annual Reception. From left to right: Colin Marx (Professor), Rita Lambert (Associate Professor), Michael Wall (Head of Department), Margarethe Theseira (Professor - Teaching). Missing from this picture Naji Makarem (Associate Professor).



Alumni news

Julian Reingold (● **ESD**, 2018) published a piece The invisible hand of carbon markets at Le Monde Diplomatique. In looking ahead to the Glasgow Conference, Argentina raised the idea of a debt swap mechanism in exchange for the provision of ecosystem goods. Julian argues that the challenge is to find a compensation mechanism between the developed and the developing world that does not end up as prey to financial speculation.

In August, Veronica Saud Casanova (● **PhD**, August 2021) defended her thesis, 'Contested Niche-Innovations in Transport: Experiences from the Inter-Communal Bicycle Sharing System in Santiaho, Chile 2011 – 2017'.

In August, Mariana Huepe (● **PhD**, August 2021) successfully defended her thesis 'Subjectivation in rural development: The case of women in Central Chiloé (Chile), 2008-2015'. Mariana's thesis focused on a range of government programmes relevant during the salmon industry crisis and in the immediate aftermath. It concluded that although the efforts to create responsible, rational economic individuals shaped the relationship of the Chilean state with the rural poor, parallel state interventions and discourses did not necessarily point towards the same ideal. Building on these contradictions and their culture and knowledge, poor rural women in Central Chiloé found

ways to deviate from neoliberal ideals and express subtle yet relevant critiques to the development approach of the Chilean state in rural territories.

In April, Kambaiz Rafi (● **PhD**, April 2021) successfully defended his thesis that the manufacturing sector has not grown structurally significant in Kabul's 'conflict-affected market economy' during 2002-2018.

Loan DIEP (● **ESD**, 2014) successfully defended her PhD 'Green Infrastructure at the Edge: Nature-Based Stream Restoration in Context of Urban Informality in São Paulo' from UCL's Centre for Urban Sustainability and Resilience (USAR) in November 2021.

David Cortez (● **ESD**, 2017) has opened a consultancy firm with a group of friends. They focus on environmental and urban regulatory compliance for the construction and development of different types of industries or businesses. They focus on advising small, medium and large companies so that their construction or economic projects in the Baja California region comply with environmental and urban regulations. Their goal is to contribute to social wellbeing and sustainability through publicising regulations through doing business with different clients, and to contribute as consultants towards legally compliant and environmentally aware projects.

Diana Daste (● **SDP**, 2010) and José Fernandes (● **UED**, 2011) had a baby boy, Matias Daste Fernandes, born 9th September 2021 in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Ritwika Deb (● **SDP**, 2021) is starting a new job at the UNDP Bureau for Management Services. BMS is the

central operations bureau in UNDP Headquarters, New York, and is responsible for providing advisory and support services to UNDP and UN agencies. Ritwika will be working as an Engagement Analyst supporting the delivery of 'People for 2030', a transformative programme of change which aims to dramatically improve the capacity and culture to deliver better development results in UNDP. Ritwika will also be marrying her long-term partner Abhay Sinha in Kolkata in December 2021.

Aurelie Knecht (● BUDD, 2019) recently moved to Mexico, after completing her dissertation around mobility and feminism in Mexico City. She is currently working for IDOM, an engineering and architectural consultancy firm, where she works as a consultant in the City and Territory department. Among others, she is involved in a variety of projects from trinational Master Plans, to TOD strategies and international urban cooperation programmes. For the upcoming years, she hopes to discover other areas of urban practice and to concretise her passion for transport planning.

Carlotta Trippa (● BUDD, 2019) has co-founded [projektado](#), a transdisciplinary and international design collective addressing contemporary design from a critical perspective. She is now based in Bologna, Italy where she works as an architect/urban designer on public, participatory and sustainable mobility urban projects. She also recently ran for municipal elections with the municipalist political movement Civic Coalition and has been elected the Head of the Environmental and Urban Committee within one of Bologna's six Neighbourhood Councils.

Lorenzo Balugani and Chiara Ferioli (● BUDD, 2020) are co-founders of [Colletivo Verso](#), a transdisciplinary group of architects and professionals working in the field of bottom up and participatory processes, temporary and tactical urbanism, and social design in general. Recently they have been involved in participatory processes with children and adolescents making great use of video games and digital platforms for mediating the co-production of urban spaces.

Samia Khan (● BUDD, 2016) has been involved in large-scale urban design projects in the future mega-cities of Saudi Arabia, and other small-scale projects in the USA and Europe. She also worked at Shelter Centre, a humanitarian NGO where she helped to draft a technical concept proposal on Post-conflict Engineering in consultation with UNHCR, IOM, and Arup International. Currently she works at Public Health Pathways, a charity focused on advancing education in public health, enabling all generations to design and build healthier societies.

Akil Scafe Smith (● BUDD, 2016) is the co-founder of [Resolve](#), an interdisciplinary design collective that combines architecture, engineering, technology and art to address social challenges. In recent years, Resolve Collective has delivered numerous projects, workshops, publications, and talks in the UK and across Europe, all of which look toward realising just and equitable visions of change in our built environment. Recently, they have been awarded with the Support Structures for Support Structures fellowship programme initiated by Serpentine Galleries, to support artists working at the intersection of art, spatial politics, and community practice.

Joana Debaj and Riccardo Conti (● BUDD, 2013) Co-founders of [CatalyticAction](#), have been designing and building several communal public spaces and playgrounds for children. CatalyticAction is a charity that works to empower vulnerable children and their communities through participatory spatial interventions. Recently, they have been collaborating with UN-Habitat Lebanon and Unicef Lebanon (alongside others) to upgrade some public spaces in Beirut. Additionally, they have been leading a DPU Fellowship Dissertation Program with the project 'Co-designing built interventions with children affected by displacement (DeCID)'.

Jessica Alvarez (● BUDD, 2019) is based in Lima, Peru and has worked as an urban planning advisor on the Metropolitan Development Plan of Lima for 2040. In this position, she reinforced the idea of widening the platform to visiblise and discuss appropriate sustainable solutions for the local

context that benefit both people and nature. She has been involved, together with fellow DPU students, in the development of a series of webinars concerning Natural-based Solutions interventions in Latin America, which focused on the synergy between the state and grassroots organisations.

Belén Marie Desmason Estrada and Luciana Gallardo Jara (● BUDD, 2014) have recently been awarded second at the International Biennale of Architecture of Lima (BiaLima), with the project 'Knowledge in Action: For Food Security. The case of Jose Carlos Mariategui'. The prize was received in the category of Architecture for Development CAP-RL 2021.

Sebastien Roland (● UDP, 2019), after moving from Tunisia earlier in 2021, has been working with ACTED where he recently became a finance officer based in Iraq, and moving between Mosul and Erbil. The job consists of managing the financial control tools for various humanitarian projects in the country. The projects themselves vary, but they mainly focus on cash-for-work rehabilitation programmes and camp coordination targeting both IDPs and refugees in Northern Iraq.

Lyza Rossi (● UDP, 2019) gained valuable experience in international research institutions (ODI, Global Risks and Resilience programme, London) and multilateral agencies (UN-Habitat, Cities and Climate Change team, Nairobi). Lyza currently works at the European Commission (Brussels), where she supports DG INTPA's international cooperation and development work in the areas of climate change adaptation and mitigation, DRR, climate and disaster risk finance and insurance. Thanks to her background in urban development planning, she contributes to the coordination and collaboration between the Climate Change and Urban Development teams.



Photo Credit: Lyza Rossi

Networks and meetings

Julio D. Dávila has accepted an invitation to be a member of the advisory board of the Colombian Government's **BiodiverCities 2030** initiative, managed by the highly respected Humboldt Institute in Bogota. Following Colombia's recent accession to the OECD group of countries, Julio was invited by the Colombian Government to participate in an international expert consultation on an OECD urban policy review for the country.

Catalina Ortiz was invited by the **South African Cities Network** to present how embracing a co-production paradigm has the potential to result in an integrated and inclusive planning system in an event commemorating World Planning Day on 8th November. The event's aim was to discuss with planning practitioners how to strengthen the Co-production Paradigm in Planning.

In September 2021, Adriana Allen was a panellist at the **HDCA Global Dialogue 2021** to celebrate the launch of Alexandre Apsan Frediani's latest book 'Cities for Human Development: A Capability Approach to City-Making'. The event explored the contributions of the capability approach to urban development policy and planning, and identified potential areas for further research and applications.

In May 2021, Barbara Lipietz and Just Space coordinator Richard Lee presented reflections on community-university coproduction in the development of a 'Post-Pandemic Recovery Plan for London' at the **Co-Polis Seminar/Webinar Series**. The series is organised as part of a Franco-Brazilian research project on the social co-production of the solidary city.

Julio D. Dávila contributed to an international effort to reflect on the urban effects of the Covid-19

Interviews on gendered sanitation taboos in Abidjan, by the GEPALEF team for the OVERDUE project. Photo Credit: GEPALEF



pandemic brought together in the publication '**Which future for the Cities after Covid-19. An International Survey**', published by the Fondazione Enrico Mattei, Italy.

On 1st September 2021, Daniel Oviedo (DPU) and Clemence Cavoli (Civil Engineering) hosted a session at the **2021 Royal Geographical Society Annual Meeting**: 'Understanding Transitions to Sustainable Urban Mobility in Global South Cities'. Their session focused on new and emerging interdisciplinary research about the acceleration of sustainable and inclusive transport and land use development in cities in the Global South. The session included speakers from Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe, and explored how the formulation and implementation of policies, practices and partnerships can support an accelerated implementation of sustainable mobility as an urgent concern. The panel reflected on how emerging challenges can lead to a new area of research on planning, governance and regulation that requires developing new conceptual and methodological approaches, as well as yielding new empirical evidence.

In November 2021, Adriana Allen participated as discussant in a workshop organised by the **Co-Habitat network initiative** involving a cross-learning exchange about innovative initiatives in Vietnam, Thailand, Namibia, Bangladesh and Brazil. In her closing remarks, she highlighted that these experiences are rewriting the history of the cities where they are inscribed. They are extraordinary stories by ordinary people who are

erasing silences and are challenging stigma and marginalisation. They reveal that women and men involved in community-led housing are citizens with agency and capacity despite the challenges they face, and without the entitlements and rights they deserve.

Julio D. Dávila chaired an international conference to share the results of SALURBAL, a five-year research project funded by the **Wellcome Trust** (UK) involving several research centres and local governments in three Latin American countries. The event was entitled 'Urban transformations, community participation and health: Lessons from Brazil, Chile and Colombia'.

DPU hosted a webinar titled '**Sanitation in urban Africa: toilets, seats of gendered inequalities?**' on Friday 12th November 2021, bringing together GEPALEF (Ivory Coast), OGDS (Senegal), SIMIRALENTA (Madagascar), CFCSEM/GA (DRC), and l'Étre Égale (France) to discuss gendered opportunities, constraints, taboos, and experiences regarding sanitation in African cities. Four short films were produced based on interviews and observations in Saint Louis, Abidjan, Antananarivo, and Bukavu, and collectively discussed.

The OVERDUE team contributed to four sessions at the **Sanitation Worker's Forum** on 29th-30th November 2021 on (1) fair and dignified conditions for sanitation workers, (2) on women in the formal sanitation sector, (3) women's invisible sanitation work, and (4) gender friendly sanitation technologies.



‘RACE’ and SPACE

a new curriculum

‘Race’ and Space is a new curriculum that responds to a need for greater understanding of ‘race’ and where and how it affects the built environment, and a demand for practical sources of support for teachers and learners.
Source: The Bartlett

In May, Barbara Lipietz, Jordana Ramalho and Daniel Oviedo presented the findings of their collaborative, multimedia pilot research with the Ubele Initiative, **Navigating Space under Lockdown, at a public launch event**. They further presented key findings from the research at the Bartlett’s Inclusive Space monthly seminar series in October. The pilot, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, explored the experiences of young black and racially minoritized adults in England under Covid-related lockdown. It is expected that the research will be expanded nationally.

Daniel Oviedo participated as co-instructor in an interdisciplinary short course financed by the **Volvo Research Foundation** and organised by Columbia University and the World Resources Institute. This course is designed to help get over such barriers. It gives an introduction to new ways of using GPS enabled mobile phones to generate needed data, as well as how to find and use open, standardised

transit data for improved research. Drawing from African cases of creative digital data use in the service of cutting-edge transport research, participants will learn about the tools used to create, visualize and analyse digital data and how this use of data within collaborations and advocacy efforts can help drive improvements in transport planning and service. This course will also introduce transport researchers to African technology experts working in the field, and help trigger networks and new collaborations. Participants will gain first-hand knowledge drawn from case studies on how to build interdisciplinary collaborations to generate and use mobile phone generated data and, finally, will get a chance to apply this learning by sharing their research questions to the class for dialogue on how these new forms of data and tools might help answer them.

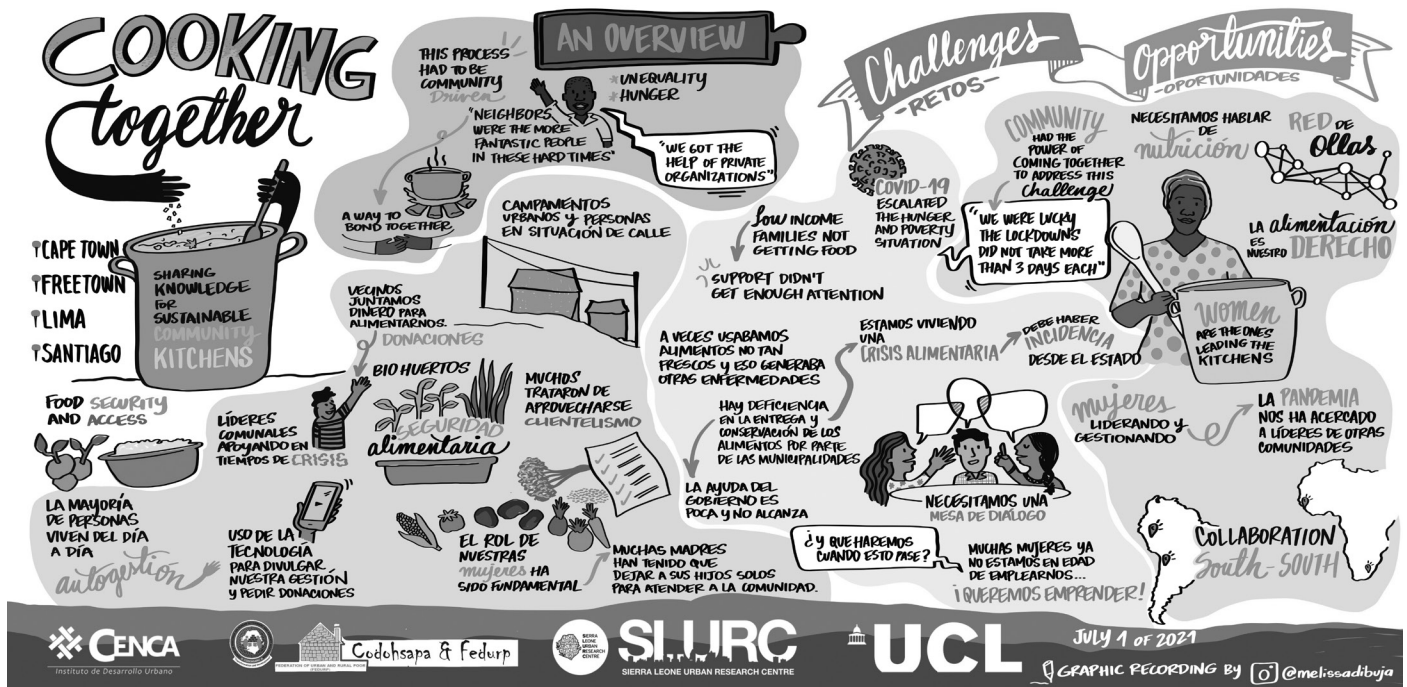
In September 2021, Adriana Allen was invited by the **Catalunya Parliament** to give evidence on a law proposed by

a coalition of four progressive political parties, and led by a civil-society coalition that has been working together since 2015, to craft a ‘popular initiative law’ (Law 24/2015) on the Right to Housing. This law had a great impact on protecting citizens’ rights against evictions, and was complemented by a series of measures through an executive decree in 2019. While the decree was later nullified by the Spanish Constitutional Court, the new law seeks to preserve and amplify the nullified legal dispositives to ensure that housing is protected as a human right and not as a commodity.

Liza Griffin presented her rapid evidence review of social and institutional sustainability in fisheries to **Department Environment Food and Rural Affairs** officials and stakeholders to support the development of UK fisheries’ management plans post-Brexit.

KNOW research was presented at a variety of sessions of the **5th Conference of the Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS)** 18th-21st November, titled: ‘Urban Africa in the 21st Century. Current Issues and Future Prospects of Urban Governance and Planning’. Hosted by Ardhi University in collaboration with TU Dortmund, this online conference convened panels around themes including: localising planning theories, innovating planning education, participatory and multi-governance

‘Navigating Space under Lockdown’ explored the experiences of young black and racially minoritized adults in England under COVID-related lockdown.



Cooking Together. Illustration by Melissa Avila Posada.

approaches for urban resilience, challenges of climate change, and co-production. DPU contributors Emmanuel Osuteye, Adriana Allen, and Julia Wesely spoke about their research with the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre in Freetown on co-produced integrative governance of urban risk as well as urban planning education.

In September 2021, Haim Yacobi was invited as a plenary keynote speaker to the **European Network for Housing Research** to present his work: 'The Right to Health is the Right to Housing'.

A workshop entitled '**Cooking together: Sharing knowledge for sustainable community kitchens**' took place online in July with participants from Santiago, Lima, Cape Town and Freetown. The workshop was organised by a group of ESD students that worked on issues of Food Security within the ESD Overseas Practice Engagement, funded by UCL Listen and Learn grant. It was facilitated by Francisco Garcia Gonzalez, with the support of Rita Lambert and Pascale Hofmann. The discussion explored the opportunities and challenges of engaging in community kitchens in response to the Covid-19 crisis and how to make these sustainable beyond the pandemic. This workshop constituted a spin-off from the MSc ESD practice module where a group of students, looking

at the distribution of and access to food, engaged with representatives from community kitchens in different countries across the globe. Given the renewed importance of, and interest in, community kitchens brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, this interaction led to a new network of community kitchen initiatives across countries.

Catalina Ortiz and Kamna Patel were part of The Bartlett cross-faculty team who wrote '**Race and Space Curriculum**', 'What is 'race' doing in a nice field like the built environment?', that has been shortlisted by the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain (SAHGB) for the Colvin Prize 2021.

In September 2021, Adriana Allen opened the eighth session of the **Urban Social Forum**, organized by Kota Kita in Indonesia and its civil society partners. The Urban Social Forum brings together civil society members, social activists, experts, organisations, students, members of communities, and citizens to discuss and participate in a critical debate about the direction of Indonesia's urban development. Year after year, the USF grows and expands the critical conversation about what kind of city we want and need, and how cities can be more inclusive of all kinds of aspirations, communities, people, and futures.

On Tuesday, 9th November 2021, Emmanuel Osuteye spoke in a **COP26 African Union** organised panel on local approaches to minimizing the losses and damages to climate change in Africa. The panel explored how the establishment of a 'centre of excellence for climate adaptation' (a continental research centre), will help minimize these losses. The presentation is available to watch via the Africa-COP26 archive presentations [here](#).

Catalina Ortiz represented the DPU at the **IV Latin American Housing Forum** where she presented the 'Decalogue for the Comprehensive Upgrading of Neighbourhoods - Roadmap for Latin America and the Caribbean', and at the global session on Comprehensive Slum Upgrading in May 2021.

On 28th October 2021, Julio D. Davila, Daniel Oviedo, and PhD student Mariajosé Nieto-Combariza were the invited speakers on a session of Universidad del Norte's flagship European Lecture series focusing on liveable cities and well-being. The **Catedra Europa** series is an event where academics from leading international universities and research centres partnered with Universidad del Norte are invited to speak about various topics relevant to the university's current research agenda.

Julio D. Dávila was interviewed for three documentary videos: 'Population', presented by English naturalist Chris Packham for **BBC Horizon** TV documentary series (57 minutes); 'Medellin: Cable-cars, poverty and urban development', with funding from GIZ and produced by the Bartlett School of Planning (9 minutes) ([check out the video](#)); and 'How the Coronavirus pandemic is changing the way we commute', Wall Street Journal (7.5 minutes) ([check out the video](#)).

Back in July 2021, Adriana Allen chaired a discussion with the four finalists and winners of the Transformative Cities People's Choice Award—from Brazil to Ireland—at the Fearless Cities Conference in a panel called **Fearless and Transformative Cities: Housing Stories from the Ground**. Transformative Cities is an opportunity for progressive local governments, municipal coalitions, social movements, and civil society organisations to popularise and share their experiences of building solutions to our planet's systemic economic, social, political and ecological crises.

Catalina Ortiz presented the Living Heritage project in a webinar on Intangible Heritage and Disasters from the angle of cities in conflict. This event was part of the **Our World Heritage** initiative, which is a global network of heritage professionals set up to renew the original spirit and mission of the World Heritage Convention on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, by engaging citizens, civil society groups, professionals and academic organisations.

Urban October is always a busy month for DPU staff engaged in activism. Through this month, Adriana Allen gave a keynote speech to open the **Second Kisumu Housing Conference** on adequate and affordable housing for all. Organised by Grassroots Trust for Community Organization in Kenya, the gathering aimed to contribute to the progressive realisation of the right to access secure land and affordable housing for sustainable development across Eastern Africa. She also gave a keynote speech on 'Decolonizing Planning across Urban Africa' at the **Second Annual**

Urbanization and Habitable Cities conference, organised by the Centre for Housing Studies, University of Lagos (UNILG), the Africa Research Universities Alliance (ARUA) and the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Urbanization and Habitable Cities.

The **Zimbabwe Human Settlements Policy (ZNHSP)** marks an important step in advancing an inclusive and rights-based approach to human settlements development across urban and rural areas. In October, Adriana Allen participated in a lively discussion with Francis Mukora from the Community Alliance for Human Settlements in Zimbabwe (CAHSZ) and the Minister of Housing and Social Amenities of Zimbabwe at the Zimpapers TV Network. Adriana highlighted that while ZNHSP marks a significant step in advancing towards an inclusive and rights-based approach to human settlements development in Zimbabwe, its implementation will require building new capacities to act: the capacity of local governments to take forward the role and mechanisms outlined in the policy, the capacity of organised communities for the same purpose; and the capacity of both local authorities and communities to work together. You can watch the TV panel [here](#).

On 2nd September 2021, Daniel Oviedo and Julio D. Davila were the invited keynote speakers for the dialogue series of Colombia's **Urban Mobility Academic Network (RAM)**. They discussed the role of transport infrastructure in sustainable urban transformations, reflecting on their research in the Colombian context.

Catalina Ortiz was part of the roundtable on **The urban governance of Covid-19 in Latin American Cities** at the RC21 conference hosted by the University of Antwerp on 14th July 2021; as well as on the panel for **Cities after Covid** at the RGS-Institute of British Geographers conference on 30th August 2021.

The Zimbabwe Human Settlements Policy (ZNHSP) marks an important step in advancing an inclusive and rights-based approach to human settlements development across urban and rural areas.

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