The Informalization of Formal Housing Projects in the Global South:
Policy Failure or Counterhegemonic City-making?

By

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ABSTRACT

Faced with the rampant expansion of informal settlements in cities, many national governments across the global South have instituted formal social housing programs. In turn, however, many State-led housing projects, aimed at curtailing informal settlements, themselves informalize. How and why does this happen? My dissertation interrogates this recurrent phenomenon in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa: the physical, economic, and institutional encroachment of informal practices onto formal, large-scale housing projects. The scarce literature on the topic positions the phenomenon as either a policy failure or bottom-up adaptations to unsuitable policy decisions. Drawing on the intersection between State building theory, Southern Urbanism, and Design Politics, I suggest that it is instead a series of interconnected counterhegemonic city-making efforts that attempt to undo the norms and forms imposed by the national State to guarantee the political and social stability of Southern urban peripheries. As such, informalization operates over a complex matrix of pre-existing regulations and standards, engages in practices of territorial anchoring and economic development, and asserts de facto management status without legal-administrative capacity to address the social demands and conflicts of urban growth.

I base my arguments on the in-depth study of three paradigmatic cases in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Cape Town (South Africa), and Cartagena (Colombia) to introduce the *informalization of the formal* as a process of counterhegemonic practices transversal --but not exogenous-- to the more formal managerial logic that entail: *anchoring* people and organizations to their territory, *individualizing* land to self-manage urban space, *incrementing* houses to serve the extended families' needs, *unlocking* the local economy, and *stabilizing* tensions and social conflicts of urban management. The study cases show that informalization enhances livelihoods and provides political stability in the short term. Still, as space and infrastructure become more contested, significant new tensions emerge within the community and between the community and governments. In turn, the State has not yet found planning visions or pragmatic alternative solutions, contributing to ongoing neglect of these territories. The findings also bring out the possibilities of a techno-political re-imagination of the planning and design disciplines.

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Laura Wainer is an architect, graduated from the University of Buenos Aires and holds a Master's in international development at The New School sponsored by the Fulbright Commission. Her work analyzes the intersection between housing policy, design, and urban governance. Apart from her practice with governments, NGOS, and multilateral organizations, she curates and produces projects focused on building bridges between academia, activism, and professional practice, such as the Housing+ Biennial (2018) hosted by the CAU at the MIT and the '60 Days - 11 Maps - 1 City' project hosted by The New School, the African Centre for Cities, and Slum Dwellers International.

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PREFACE

"Tengo mi casa, pero he perdido mi libertad" (I have my house, but I lost my freedom")
Resident of Ciudad del Bicentenario Housing Project in Cartagena, Colombia

The main concern of this dissertation centers around how the question of poverty is closely linked to city-making, and in what ways this link shapes the peripheries of global South cities as territories of poverty management. I am particularly interested in how poverty is governed as a spatialized problem, as well as how the poor resist, mobilize, articulate, and negotiate government programs.

As its point of departure, my dissertation interrogates a recurrent phenomenon in many housing projects in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa: the physical, economic and institutional informal encroachment growing within State-subsidized housing projects aimed at curtailing and preventing the expansion of informal settlements in inner cities. Within a worldwide housing financialization phenomenon, the standardized design of the houses and public spaces often fails to consider environmental sustainability, risk protection, and climate adaptation strategies, yielding new forms of vulnerability (Simone and Pieterse, 2018). Paradoxically, the implementation of these housing projects is reproducing the housing deficit rather than solving it. Housing research has typically concluded that the industrial-like neighborhoods located on the outskirts of cities are a major policy failure, and that informalization is a symptom of their decay. However, they do not seek to understand, in more nuanced ways, exactly why and how low-income residents have pushed back against such misguided policies and what roles different actors (governments, NGOs, professionals, community leaders) play in these processes. Rather than merely a critique of current practice, however, I examine the coping mechanisms of low-income households to retrofit their informal livelihoods into the more austere conditions of formal mega-projects and the role of actors that shape the city in the peripheries: NGOS, local politicians, municipalities, and foundations. Through studying why these city-making agents choose to change the physical conditions, the norms, and the uses of their houses and neighborhoods, I aim to understand how communities and governments navigate the transformation of the built and social environments and its consequences on urban governance.

The urban periphery in the global South is the central location of my analysis. As the preferential site for spatialized poverty management, the urban peripheries are the receptors of displacement and where the State exercises social control in its most violent forms. These are also the spaces for maximizing the returns of urbanization and environmental depredation. To explore the urban peripheries does not suggest an exclusively geo-locational matter. Instead, I approach to it as a techno-political construct that operates through norms, symbolism, and practice and establishes different parameters of administration, regulation, order, and legislation rules for city-making embedded in housing programs (mapping, land surveys, population census, urban grids). The urban periphery is also the place where families mainly deploy alternative modes of city-production with self-building practices. As Teresa Caldeira (2017) points out, focusing on peripheral urbanization means both de-centering urban theory and offering a bold characterization of the production of space prevalent in cities of the global South. Studying the

urban phenomenon from the peripheries aims to relocate the production of knowledge out of the centers and reposition urban theory where the city is an unconcluded project of growth, urbanization, politics, marginalization, isolation, and survival. To simultaneously focus on housing as a spatialized, managerial technology of poverty aims to make visible the spatial practices of power that usually become normalized and thus perpetuate the shaping of inequalities and spatialized injustices. From this lens, housing projects are not only architectural objects in the urban landscape; they also represent literal and ideological governance (Vale, 2019).

This dissertation investigates the intersection between different actors of housing production but does not focus on a policy critique, neither on a narrative about "counter-governmentality" and resistance from "below" (Appadurai, 2002). Instead, I explore what Ananya Roy (2010) calls the "folding together" of poverty alleviation actions. These are policies, programs, projects that involve intragovernmental relationships (national-provincial-local) as well as relationships between governments and other city-makers such as developers, NGOs, and community leaders. In focusing on spatialized poverty alleviation, I aim to understand two retrofitting realities. The first refers to the origins and dynamics of informalization practices, places, and economies that both lead to social solidarity and bring excessive transaction costs, discretionary decision making, and environmental effects on low-income populations (Simone and Pieterse, 2018). The second is the shape of complex networks operating in geographies where poverty alleviation policies produce space: the hyperghetto, the Third World periphery, the slum, and the low-income social housing projects (Wacquant, 2015).

I propose a three-case study dissertation, which links together socio-spatial investigations of the informalization of formal housing as a central, but previously understudied, aspect of the practice of contemporary urbanism. The three cases present very different urban scenarios: a recent large-scale, low density housing megaproject located on the outskirts of Cartagena, Colombia; a fifty-year-old modernist high-density neighborhood sited on the former industrial of Buenos Aires metro, Argentina; and a former Apartheid township with multiple housing interventions on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa. The different scenarios I analyze in this dissertation demonstrate that the informalization of the formal is both remarkably pervasive and notably diverse. It is a crosscutting reality traversing diverse geographies, settlement types, and socioeconomic contexts, even though often missed by official statistics, upgrading policies and the overall narrative of international development led by UN HABITAT. The informalization of the formal is also notably diverse not only due to contextual factors, but also because the dimensions leading the process are multiple: physical, economic, and institutional. Through these three cases, I analyze why--instead of benefiting from the expected outcomes of formalization, such as increased wealth, legal security, access to credit, and unlocked capital-- people choose to change the physical conditions, the norms and the uses of their houses and neighborhoods. They do this even though this may threaten their property tenure and their physical safety and may induce conflict with the State and other neighbors. I also explore the active role other city-makers have in the process, and to what extent they are or not co-producers of this city-making culture. In other words, is this an example of improvement and adaptation "from below" or does informalization reveals a multidirectional "folding together" of poverty alleviation in the day-to-day management of *popular* territories?

The definition of *popular* is critical in developing my research and particularly significant in the context of economic neoliberalization, labor impoverishment, and unemployment, which

displaced the working class from the realm of salaried work and the factory. The idea of the "popular" classes has been widely developed in Latin America, particularly in Argentina, to give political and theoretical meaning to the socio-spatial dynamics of power in late capitalism. However, it is rarely used in Anglo-Saxon literature and almost inexistent in urban studies. In the attempt to decentralize urban theory and understand the productive and cultural logics of spatial-social production in the peripheries of the global South, I propose importing the term "popular" from the Latin American literature to theoretically frame the complex realities of subaltern groups in late democratic capitalism. In contrast to the concept of "working class" or "low-income groups" defined by relations of work and wealth, the "popular sectors" is a more heterogeneous identity. As a labor force, the popular classes are subjects of exploitation, domination and self-exploitation. However, the term suggests that the subaltern condition exceeds the labor relations and expresses in political and cultural relations with the elites, such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Despite their fragmentation and heterogeneity, aspects of the popular world -a subaltern one- are represented in daily life, in work, ideologies, and their forms of organization and struggle (Adamosvsky, 2012; Di Meglio 2012). The exclusion from power and subordination are necessary conditions but not sufficient to delimit the boundaries that distinguish the popular sectors in the society. The "popular" is defined by the concrete social reality of these groups (unemployment, lack of education, discrimination, cultural marginalization), by their relationship with the State (variant according to the dominant ideology), by their productive structure, and by their modes of spatial production (Caldeira, 2017; Vio & Cabrera, 2014). The latter two, which are transversal but not exogenous to capitalist development, are particularly important in the analysis of my study cases.

Following these definitions, the economy and the territory constitute the *popular* social reality. The *popular* economy is characterized as "the empirical economy of the workers," with income derived from their work (autonomous or dependent but rarely salaried and regulated by labor norms), the development of their own labor force, State's monetary transfers, free or highly subsidized access to public goods, own productive assets (machines, tools), durable products (housing, land), relationships of care, non- formal financing, and family or community savings funds. The primary unit of organization is the house, which extends its reproductive logic to individual and collective undertakings forms of economic organization as well as cooperatives and mutuals (Cavalcanti, 2009; Coraggio, 2020; Motta, 2014). The *popular* economy finds in the territory its conditions of possibility. The territory is the enclave of productive specialization (i.e., waste picking next to waste disposal centers, sewing workshops near large informal markets), the space of demands and dependence with local politicians and grassroots organizations, the place shared by reciprocal agents of solidary and care, and the location of the fundamental productive unit, the dwelling (Banck, 9186; Vio & Cabrera, 2014).

My ultimate goal is to identify under what conditions informalization stabilizes or undermines the social, political and economic order imposed by the State through housing projects, and whether this new order threatens or improves the living conditions of the *popular* sectors. The principal output of my research, of interest to academic as well as policy communities, is an in-depth empirical analysis of informal processes that occur within State subsidized housing projects. The results provide a set of qualitative data on informalization processes in cities of the global South to challenge and elaborate upon theories of housing sociology and point to the restrictions and opportunities of alternative modes of city-making. These contributions are especially important given the renaissance of political and technical

interest in housing issues within the current global housing crisis and the lack of housing innovation (Monkkonen, 2018). As one of the first studies to consider the informalization of the formal as a singular topic, I hope to contribute to theoretical, methodological, and policy debates on this multifaceted social and political scenario that takes place in spaces often "abandoned" by the design and planning disciplines. Analyzing why and how residents create local economies, governance systems and physical spaces over those spaces and practices already imposed by the State will contribute to developing a rigorous understanding of the role of social organization in fostering effective housing delivery models that can improve livability. It may also offer potential for advocacy for clarifying "what affordable housing should afford" (Vale et al., 2014) in the geographies where conventions such as property ownership, formal taxation systems, and standardized infrastructure are inadequate to the realities of urban life (Simone and Pieterse, 2018, 2).

The structure of the dissertation is as follows. In the first chapter, I present the contextual data and debates about the international reemergence of the housing agenda, in particular, why it is currently a central topic within national governments. Second, I propose a conceptual framework in order to position this research within the large academic literature about housing policy and informality. To do so, I offer an introductory analysis of the academic debates on large-scale housing projects and asset-based policies, specifically focusing on the assumptions and effects of these approaches. I also introduce the critical theories that define urban informality as a constitutive governance reality of Southern Urbanism. This body of literature guides my conceptualization of the "informalization of the formal" as an analytical category. I follow with my problem statement and definition: the informalization of the formal as an understudied phenomenon in the global South. I then present the scarce but specific academic literature on the topic, evaluating what the analytical gaps are that lead to the following section: my research hypothesis. Subsequently, I present the research questions that guided my investigations in Argentina, Colombia and South Africa.

In the second chapter, I introduce the overall methodological approach, specifying the data collection methods and sources, the levels of assessment, and my metrics for the empirical analysis. I also present my three case studies along with the justification for selection. I show my coding procedures, tools and references for the empirical analysis, and then examine the validity and limitations of my research. As I deployed different sets of data and research tools in each case, I explain the specifics of each protocol in the case study chapters. The third chapter is a theoretical review of the processes of low-income housing production in the global South: the role of the national State in massive housing construction and urbanization; the self-builders and the "social construction of popular habitats;" and the local planning in decentralizing and encouraging participatory "slum upgrading" and housing projects. I focus on these actors as city-makers, examining whether they resonate--or do not--with specific city-making cultures, that is, the discourses, models, customs, normative values and practices that define a particular mode of urban space production (Sanyal, 2005).

The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters are the Argentinean, South African, and Colombian cases, respectively. In each chapter, I offer an introduction, a section that describes and analyzes the context of the country, the city, and the public policy in which the housing projects are included. I also offer a detailed explanation of the fieldwork protocols, and a review of the genesis and development of the project. The subsequent empirical analysis includes interviews, maps, images, and observations from the fieldwork in each country. The cases are presented in

chronological order, since my intention is also to assess whether the planning culture of national governments experienced any kind of transformation guided by the informalization processes over time. Chapter four examines *barrio* Presidente Sarmiento in Argentina, where the physical transformation of space within a purely modernist project of the 1970s triggered complex governance processes for the local government, specifically with respect to interventions aimed at improving the decline of buildings and neighborhood infrastructure. Presidente Sarmiento is also a good introduction to further define the object of analysis; in other words, it is a clear example for differentiating building decay from informalization. The second case -and fifth chapter- is Joe Slovo housing redevelopment in Cape Town. This study focuses on the institutional transformation resulting from the takeover of the project by residents' organizations. The community materialized their struggle for housing and urban rights in creative examples of informal design practices that not only redefined the spatial control over Joe Slovo' s territory, but also, by the production of alternative urban space, challenged institutional spaces, redefining who plays what role in housing delivery. The sixth chapter, and most recent case, is Ciudad del Bicentenario in Cartagena, a mega-housing project where the normative and physical constraints imposed by the housing policy to families relocated from rural areas and informal settlements led to the development of a significant informal economy that transformed the physical and administrative landscape (services, maintenance, security).

It is important to note that this is not a strictly comparative research dissertation and that I maintain an independent investigation for each case study. However, I connect the three stories on the informalization of housing projects to look at the multifaceted and complex processes that give rise to the phenomenon. The seventh and last chapter proposes an interrelation that conjoins the three cases, not with the aim of universalizing the findings but with the objective of analyzing in depth how the informalization of the formal changes the socio-spatial order established by the State. In particular, to show how it contributes--or does not contribute--to the improvement of living conditions and community life, the sustainability of the built environment, and the local governance, and whether there are associations between these processes and the design characteristics of the project, the types of informalization, the age of the interventions, the income levels of the residents, the kinds of roles played by the local agents, the political regimes, and the hierarchies or horizontality of government. To this end, I examine my findings in terms of three major dimensions livelihoods and safety, norms and forms, and spatialized politics and governance. Lastly, I recap my findings and discuss the implications for planners, designers, and decision makers.

CHAPTER 1 – Context and Introduction

CONTEXT

The international reemergence of the housing agenda

The Global South is currently facing an urban demographic shift forty times greater than the wave experienced by countries of the 20th century Global North. In addition, migrations to cities are no longer being driven by job opportunities. This situation defines the reproduction of precarious environments as the main form of urbanization (Pieterse and Simone, 2013). Since 2000, the "global slum" population grew on average to six million a year, an increase of 16,500 people daily (UN HABITAT, 2016). Almost one billion people already live in informal settlements and at least 330 million urban households around the world live in substandard housing or be financially stretched by housing costs. This number could grow to 440 million by 2025 (McKinsey Global Institute, 2014; UN HABITAT, 2016). Some studies suggest that the affordable housing gap now stands at $650 billion a year and is expected to grow. Looking ahead, the biggest urban population growth will occur not in megacities but in small- and medium-sized cities in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where informality is the leading type of urbanization. By 2030, the world's urban population will reach the 5.1 billion. If the growth trend does not change, about 2 billion people will likely live in informal settlements (UN HABITAT, 2016). In Sub-Saharan Africa, 59 per cent of the urban population lives in slums and by 2050, Africa's urban dwellers are projected to have increased to 1.2 billion. In Latin America and the Caribbean region, where regularization of informal housing has historically contributed to providing housing solutions, informal settlements continue to be a significant feature of urban areas with at least twenty-one per cent of the region's urban population still residing in slums, in spite of a seventeen per cent decrease in this proportion over the last decade.

In this world, which has recently been urbanizing "out of the rule of law," most planning debates focus on the State's capacity to address urban based universal rights, manage urban growth and solve growth externalities. In particular, housing delivery is now positioned at the frontline of national political agendas in the Global South. The primary strategy to achieve this objective in emerging economies, such as the so-called BRICS[1], has been the development of large scale, nationally funded housing programs that presume social mobility for the poor will automatically follow if the State improves basic living conditions related to the built environment and, at the same time, provides wealth through gifting a capital asset. Also, home ownership proposed by these housing schemes is conceived as an important policy mechanism in bettering the detrimental social effects of market forces (Doling and Ronald, 2010). This policy approach assumes that formal housing is one of the major determinants of the standard of living achieved by households because it is the principal component of their wealth (DeSoto, 2001). It also mistakenly assumes that the house is an autonomous asset that works in isolation from livelihoods, governance, security and the environment (Vale et al., 2014).

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[1] BRICS is the acronym coined for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Since the early 2000s, there has been a sudden, extraordinarily simultaneous expansion of housing programs in many emerging economies in Africa, Asia and Latin America. However, these low-income national housing subsidy programs, targeted to both the demand and supply sides, show that despite the different political, institutional, demographic and economic contexts, their housing policies produce the same industrial-like neighborhoods located on the outskirts of cities (Buckley et al. 2016; Turok, 2015 and 2016). The homogeneity in the layout of new, mass-produced neighborhoods reduces social interactions and the use of open space (Peek et al., 2018), limits access to jobs and agglomeration advantages, increases commuting costs, and fragments preexisting social networks (Libertun, 2018). The production of mega-projects intended to curtail and prevent the expansion of informal settlements in inner cities of the Global South is, paradoxically, re-producing the housing deficit. Instead of providing a safer residential alternative to informal "slums," poorly located and poorly designed housing is instead eroding the economic livelihoods of families while disconnecting them from vital social networks (Libertun, 2018b; Turok, 2016). As a result, informal buildings quickly impinge upon government-sponsored housing projects. In other words, while the housing itself can be considered more "resilient" in the sense that it is more structurally sound, this resilience is not equitable because it falls short of enhancing the overall quality of life of the least-advantaged households. Therefore, after enormous public investment, the same government ends-up labelling these housing projects as 'informal settlements', 'backyarding', and "popular *barrios*."

There is already ample empirical evidence of governments that successfully expanded pro-poor, community-based processes in housing policy and on the importance of civil society and community participation in upgrading (Das, 2018; Mukherji, 2018). Examples such as the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), which operates within the Thai Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, are community-based approaches that have been successfully introduced through national large-scale policies. Implemented through the Baan Mankong program of the government of Thailand, the program suggests the existence of a national institutional framework that could be examined for possible replication elsewhere. One of the merits of the Thai government approach is that residential development is not detached from city building processes. Nor are slum dwellers unceremoniously pushed off their land. A quasi-experimental empirical analysis by the Thai Development Research Institute (TDRI) and the World Bank (2014) indicates that communities assisted by the program have had significantly improved conditions relative to those in similar communities that did not receive assistance. House values increased more than the subsidy amount, implying that the market value of the subsidy was higher than the government expenditure. In addition, families in assisted communities increased their educational expenditures for their children and had much better business prospects than those in similar, but unassisted, communities. The subsidy expenditures per unit under this program are much lower than those realized by the parallel housing program operated by the Thai government and by the sorts of housing programs generally adopted by governments. One of the findings of the study was that, compared with traditional public sector supply-side programs, a public sector agency that engages with local communities and expends funds over a long period of time can expand its reach enormously and improve basic living conditions of many more households (Buckley et al., 2016). In Latin America, the Uruguayan Federation of Cooperatives for Mutual Aid (FUCVAM, 1970) is a workers' initiative with support from the national State to provide affordable housing. Members of the cooperatives, who are also the future users of the houses, manage the design and development of their own housing projects, including access to subsidized loans, and participation in the design and construction of

the houses. The leaders of the cooperatives argue they could not have access to these benefits individually. The cooperatives create a model of belonging and empowerment, which is not only reflected in the quality of housing but also in the maintenance of buildings over time. Currently, FUCVAM is the largest and oldest social movement working on housing and urban development in Uruguay, with 500 federated cooperatives representing some 25,000 families. Through a combination of State and community interventions, housing cooperatives have been able to obtain urban infrastructure, educational facilities, cultural infrastructure, health programs and access to affordable food (Wainer, 2018).

In contrast to these examples, most governments ignore the considerable data and experiences showing how less participatory practices have fallen short or proved counterproductive. Holistic initiatives remain marginal in terms of resources allocation in most of Latin America and Africa. For example, the houses built by the Reconstruction Development Program (RDP) in South Africa aimed to provide a 'free, owned-house' for the bottom-end income group also reproduce the apartheid-era planning patterns of low density, satellite cities, and disconnection between jobs and residential areas (Lall, 2012; Lemanski, 2009). In addition, since 2011, the housing model has declined in terms of completion rates and title deed transfers, while construction costs have increased. Instead of questioning the model itself, the government accelerated the housing delivery and kept marginal other more holistic programs focused on self-building and upgrading, which still represent less than five percent of the total housing budget in the country (Turok, 2016). The outcomes of such large-scale housing programs become apparent through the analysis of two processes. First, as families experience a downgrade in social mobility, families have been abandoning their houses in State projects for a better location in the city. In Mexico, the government reported at least two hundred and fifty thousand abandoned houses in 2017, contributing to the country's high housing vacancy rate due to oversupply (Monkkonen, 2014). Second, informal buildings encroach upon government-sponsored housing projects. In Cape Town, backyard shacks built in formal RDP houses represented the "typology of informality" with the largest intercensal growth between 2001 and 2011 (Turok, 2016).

Large-scale housing: big assumptions and diminishing effects

Housing policy pursues social mobility for the poor by seeking to improve living conditions and to increase wealth through leveraging a capital asset. Most parts of Western Europe commenced forms of social housing soon after the First World War, while socialist nation-States treated housing provision for workers. In Latin America, affordable housing policy mostly known as "social housing" emerges between1920 and 1930 to house the new urban working class (Guillen, 2004; Violich 1944). Unsurprisingly, it entailed a significant process of adaptation from the European models, as architects incorporated local influences due to climate conditions, cultural determinants and technological constraints (Guillen, 2004; Segre 2005). These imported architectural forms still persist today, however, the most significant European and North American export in the field of housing has been the ideological adulation of the homeownership ideal. As historian Nancy Kwak masterfully demonstrates in *A World of Homeowners* (2015), the global spread of North American 'soft power' occurred not just through conventional politics or pop-culture but through the material artifacts of homes. Expanding homeownership mattered to those in power as a vital way to shore up an expanding middle class and make government seem more appealing (Gilbert, 2013).

Homeownership based policies took different shapes in the history of Latin American and African countries, from union and cooperatives initiatives in the early 20th Century, to subsidized real estate markets through public mortgage banks in the mid-century and, more recently, financial incentives to the demand, and titling programs in informal settlements (Pugh, 1994; Murray and Clapham, 2015; Rojas, 2015). The commitment to "housing as a right" came after many countries ratified their constitution in the 1990s. Since then, the notion of an 'asset-based' welfare has become increasingly central to debates on poverty in the global South (Watson, 2009). This shift was boosted by the Habitat II Agenda in 1996, which focused on increasing legal recognition of housing as a human right by national governments (United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1949). Colombia ratified this commitment in 1991, Argentina in 1994 and South Africa in 1996, all bringing the normative principle into a pragmatic argument which claimed that homeownership endorses economic prosperity shaping a new generation of national housing policies, such as the National Macroprojects of Social Interest (Macroprojectos de Interés Social Nacional --MISN; Libertun, 2018b; Rolnik, 2013). In addition, these policies followed macroeconomic goals around employment and the reactivation of the construction industry after decades of austerity and structural adjustment embodied in the infamous Washington Consensus, which end up with the highest unemployment levels in the history of the Latin American region (Cohen, 2012 and 2013; Moreno-Brid et al., 2004). This context led the rise of national "free" –or highly subsidized-- large-scale housing programs aimed at both provide a house and an employment and also reactivate the construction industry and other associated industries as well (Giang and Pheng, 2011).

The underlying principle of 'asset-based' welfare is that, rather than relying on State-managed social transfers, individuals assume duty for their own welfare needs by investing in property assets that increase in value over time (Ronald et al., 2017). In this sense, home ownership has been re-conceptualized as an important policy mechanism to overcome the detrimental social effects of market forces in the absence of redistributive programs during the 1990s (Cohen, 2012 b; Doling and Ronald, 2010). These principles rely on three interrelated assumptions. The first is that formal housing is one of the major determinants of the standard of living achieved by households because it is the principal component of their wealth (DeSoto, 2001), and also reduces rent expenditures (Hulchanski 1995) In this sense, is believed that home ownership stimulates the monetary economy of a household and its society as the firsts can spend more money in other goods (Lall et al. 2008). The second assumption is that poverty is a consequence of money scarcity and, therefore, it is an income generation and expenditures problem (Mullainathan and Shafir 2013, Pettifor 2017, Sen 1981). Third, this perspective implicitly assumes that the house is an autonomous asset that works in isolation from livelihoods, governance, safety and the environment (Vale et al. 2014). Consequently, governments expect to tackle housing deficit by creating new, formal neighborhoods on the outskirts of cities, where houses can be built at very low costs and developers can still generate returns (Celhay and Sanhueza 2011, Libertun 2018a, Turok 2016).

From a policy perspective, the sustainability of providing "free homes" has been questioned by the idea that this approach is financially unsustainable in the mid- and long-term (Buckley et. al 2016). However, cases such as the free housing program in Colombia demonstrate that these projects are actually inexpensive by international standards (Gilbert, 2014). The policy is in fact well received by the financial and construction industry sectors, who see it as an opportunity to enter into the low-income real estate market, which represent a large

portion of the total market in many global South cities (Buckley et al., 2016). However, the financial success of these kind of programs relies on cheap, available land, on lowering urbanization and construction standards and reducing the construction quality to the minimum (Massyn et al., 2015). The incoming residents assume the externalities involved in these decisions, such as extraordinary expenses from repairs, remodeling, and fixing problems in the units to increased expenses in transportation and other goods due to the remoteness to urban areas (Lall et al., 2012; Libertun, 2018b).

Despite of its success in implementation,[2] these large-scale housing projects increase poverty concentration by relocating large numbers of people in isolated areas where they spend two or three times more in commuting to jobs (Cernea, 2003, Libertun, 2018 b). The homogeneity in the layout of new, mass-produced neighborhoods reduces social interactions and the use of open space (Peek et al., 2018), limits access to jobs and agglomeration advantages, increases commuting costs, and fragments preexisting social networks (Libertun, 2018 b). Even when low-cost suburbanization offers residential improvements, such as access to infrastructures and tenure security, it also entails the loss of the major advantages of urban agglomeration, such as access to public services, affordable commutes and proximity to jobs (Buckley et al., 2016, Lall et al., 2008, Turok, 2016). Also, many times, low-income entrepreneurial enterprise relies on informal processes that housing policy overlooks, and its urban regulations diminish; thus, instead of providing a safer residential alternative to informal "slums," they are eroding the economic livelihoods of families while disconnecting them from vital social networks (Libertun, 2018b).

Neither homeownership nor modernism worked exactly as planned or promised. Homeownership did not create a stable middle-income class, and modern projects "suffer" from informalization processes: encroachment, backyarding, self-building, and other forms of physical informality. Nancy Kwak (2015) empirically asserts that local officials, informal dwellers, grassroots organizations, cooperatives, and small business keepers in different countries always contested aspects of homeownership in its ideological and pragmatical dimensions (pg. 236). Reasons for why Argentina, Colombia and South Africa still choose to replicate these failed housing schemes are complex and diverse and are developed later in the literature review (chapter 3), but here I can preview that the reasons are related to the planning culture of modern States, strongly rooted in spatialized managerial techniques.

Informality as a mode of urbanism

Although the literature that studies the intersection between informality and state theory often focuses on the realm of localities and cities, the genesis of informality in the urban governmental discourse does not link to local processes. Instead, informality emerged along with the consolidation of urban governance globally through institutions such as UN-Habitat. The genealogy of 'urban informality' reveals its origins in the knowledge-apparatus to intervene in 'stranger' environments that transnational capitalist planning could not understand. The 1976 Vancouver declaration reveals that planners could not find words to categorize and explain what they considered "overcrowded and chaotic illegal occupations." The following emergence of

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[2] According to public documents of the national ministries of housing, in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru alone, more than nine million houses have been built under this policy scheme.

informality as a "global urban phenomenon of various forms" was intrinsically related to the consolidation of international planning as a mode of disciplinary practice related to urban governance and the need to find new ways of "coding" space at a planetary dimension. The creation of informality as a universal meaning and mode of intervention in "contexts all over the world, in various forms and typologies, dimensions, locations" (UN-Habitat 2016) becomes a process to define canonical modes of intervention, such as redevelopment (housing), displacements and micro-projects (upgrading, small-scale improvements), and it operates through symbols re-coding realities in a language capable of being internalized by the global-scale capitalist planning system.

Informal settlements are usually characterized by lack of infrastructure (water, sanitation) and social services (access to schools and health centers), poor-quality buildings, environmental problems (pollution, waste, flooding), and insecure tenure among others (UN HABITAT, 2016). Since 2010, a global array of scholars has challenged the conventional wisdom about the relationship between formality and informality as a linear, unidirectional process that starts in organic, unplanned, precarious and illegal settlements, eventually formalized through State intervention. Today, conceptual and empirical evidence have demonstrated that urban informality involves a wide range of practices and spaces that are not confined to the built environment of the poor or their illegal occupation of land. Across the globe, there are informal/illegal practices of inhabitation ubiquitous across poor and elite residents in constantly changing contexts which can determine either marginalization or privilege (Bhan, Goswami, and Revi, 2013). For example, in the Metropolitan Region of Buenos Aires, the marginalized 'villas y asentamientos' coexist with wealthy gated communities (Cravino, 2013; Libertun, 2006; Pirez, 2002). While the former often are overcrowded and do not have basic infrastructures, the latter enjoy green spaces with lakes and beaches. Both types of settlements lack legal land ownership. Although the 'slums of the poor' and 'slums of the rich' often coexist, they experience opposite living conditions. The informal condition benefits the residents in the gated communities as they avoid taxes, they have their own private security system and they do not share public spaces. At the same time, informality punishes the poor people's settlements, who do not have access to basic services due to the constraints imposed by service companies.

Critical theory argues that informality is embedded in the State apparatus since discretion and deregulation are mechanisms of State control (Bhan, 2013; Roy, 2005 and 2009). Urban planning not only navigates contradictions and dualities between 'formal' and 'informal', but also creates them to enable open-ended, multiple interpretations of regulatory systems that serve interests of power by transforming the social relationships and the built environment itself. Authors in the global South also refer to "grey spaces" or states of exception, areas that are neither integrated nor eliminated and exist partially outside the scope of State authorities and city plans (Yiftachel, 2009). These are modes of urban governance: concessions, facilities, and temporary measures that respond to the variety of pressures and incentives that exceed the shape of the State (Krijnen and Fawaz, 2010; Murray, 2017).

Informality plays an important legitimacy function for the State and societies since it stabilizes political and social order in inequitable and poor societies, in which it is politically more convenient to allow large numbers of citizens to engage in informal activities that are beyond the reach of the State' control or the law (Davis, 2012). For instance, informal settlements have been gradually recognized from illegal to informal but legitimate settlements as

the housing shortage grows and the State's capacity to fulfill the housing needs of the population diminishes. The Vancouver 1976 UN-Habitat convention declared the establishment of settlements in territories occupied by force as "illegal" and "a practice condemned by the international community" (Articles 5 and 23). This language was completely transformed by 2016 when the Pretoria UN-Habitat declaration stated, "Informal settlements are a global urban phenomenon." It continues: "Acknowledge UN-Habitat's role in supporting States in the implementation of the proposed New Urban Agenda, especially through its Participatory Slum Upgrading Program (PSUP) among others (…)." Informality is often allowed, and many times induced, in the form of entrepreneurial support programs, sites and services, and incremental housing. But simple "allowance," intervention and hybrid terminology are not enough to explain the new modes of urbanism that are built on the praxis of "doubleness," which bridges the formal structures of government with the insurgent practices, mobilizations, and modes of resistance that constitute the "details" of everyday living. In this sense, Southern Urbanism requires a politics of experimentation that begins with the assumption that existing approaches to traditional formal home and property ownership, formal tax systems, infrastructure finance, and other tools of urban development are inadequate for explaining and creating the contemporary city. (Simone and Pieterse, 2018).

Urban scholars from the South have been instrumental in rematerializing inquires around urban citizenship to consider the role of the built form – including housing and architecture, public services and transportation networks as key sites of performative government practice as well as claims-making by elite and disenfranchised citizens (Diouf and Fredericks, 2014). Material and affective contestations surrounding infrastructures demonstrate how governments are manifest in the built environment, and how spatial transformations alter the social and political equilibrium between the forces of formality and those of informality generating negotiations and struggles, which can lead to continuous and increased instability or, on the contrary, provide stability and order (Davis, 2012; Marres and Lezaun, 2011). However, scholarship tends to focus on the shape of the built environment as a governance mechanism deployed by the State and powerful economic groups to exercise power over the population, with much less to say about how populations in turn resist, mobilize, and struggle by deploying informality as a way to materialize political control over the territories where they live (Benjamin, 2008; Holston, 2008). The analysis of spatial relations in housing reveals how space is manipulated to degrade disadvantaged people, but there is limited literature about the agency of spatial transformation in the empowerment of marginalized populations. My argument is that, while it is true that urban and architectural design are fundamental top-down mechanisms for determining who gains and who loses in housing production, these mechanisms also reveal more complex relationships and interfaces between populations and governments. Similarly, researchers rarely have studied the precise materiality and space of governance in geographies of poverty management. Instead, the analysis of spatial dimensions is kept at a frustrating level of abstraction, evidencing a missing analytical component when we want to explain the world, we live in. There is, therefore, a need to critically examine how architecture and urban design create and alter geographies of poverty in the implementation of welfare housing projects, and the means by which communities contest these using bottom-up spatial strategies to impose their own set of values of city-making.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

First observations on the informalization of the formal

The social, economic and spatial dynamics that emerge in these recently created housing projects challenge many assumptions about the role of State intervention with urban populations, such as the idea that a house represents a wealth asset that improves people's economic prospects and livelihoods. The informalization of large-scale housing projects is unprecedented –in terms of scale and velocity-- phenomenon expressed in the transformation of formal neighborhoods into informal ones, instead of the other way around. The informalization of the formal has many expressions. In physical terms, it can manifest as encroachments, backyarding, and self-building. From an economic perspective, informality is expressed in local and popular economies, trading nets and barter markets. Organizationally, informality takes the shape of neighborhood committees, people's associations, service companies and building administrations. These are forms of physical, economic and organizational informalization that the same housing policies had aimed to eliminate, revealing that informality indeed is not just as a previous immature stage of urban development but a by-product of policy decisions on the built environment (Lemanski, 2009). However, initial observations from my fieldwork indicate that informalization is not exclusively a "bottom-up" process. Other city-makers, including governmental actors such as municipal administrations, are active participants.

Right from the start of my fieldwork I noticed that the informalization of the formal is a very sensitive topic among policy makers. For instance, in Cartagena, the local State does not assume the responsibility of the informality emerging within Ciudad del Bicentenario, addressing the responsibility to the developer, in this case, the Fundación Santo Domingo, the developer. Likewise, the latter argues that the already-delivered houses fall under the local government's jurisdiction. Neither one has a clear response about what to do with the phenomenon. In Buenos Aires city, the Office of Urban Integration (OPISU), a recently created agency to upgrade all informal settlements in the metro area, has no defined vision or strategy about what to do with encroachments because this is –in their words- "a very sensitive issue." In Cape Town, as Ivan Turok and Jackie Borel-Saladin (2016) argue, backyarding is a well-known phenomenon from a quantitative point of view. Nevertheless, the authors say, the government does not understand the dynamics and does not know in which cases it is a stopgap for poor households desperate for somewhere to live and in which cases it is a kind of prototype solution to the urban housing crisis. Consequently, the government fails to improve dwelling conditions and to relieve the extra pressure on local services. I also notice that, while the informalization of the economy is well assumed and in fact something that is expected to happen, the informalization of the built environment and organizations gets more contested. While it is clear that the State indirectly induces these practices, it does not support them publicly; in fact, the State usually punishes and condemns the re-introduction of informal practices in State-driven urban development.

My interest in this phenomenon increased when in my preliminary observations, I noticed that the intentional introduction of select informalization strategies into formal housing projects is a practice that challenges the conventional wisdom about the relationship between formality and informality as way to describe legalities vs. illegalities, governments vs. excluded populations, planning vs. insurgent urbanism. The existing conceptual approaches to home and property ownership, formal tax systems, infrastructure finance, and other tools of urban

development are inadequate for explaining the contemporary Southern city (Watson, 2009). The informalization of the formal exposes this lack of explanatory power, as it bridges the formal structures of government with the insurgent practices, mobilizations, and modes of resistance that constitute the "details" of everyday living (Simone and Pieterse, 2018). As such, the informalization of the formal also challenges the theoretical assumptions on which housing policy is created, and our understanding about the nature of the State, in particular, how social order is produced, how city services and infrastructures get distributed, how spaces are utilized and allocated, and how citizens become mobilized (Davis, 2017, Simone and Pieterse, 2018).

As I considered this phenomenon further, little seem to fit into binary responses. I find a complex reality full of contradictions and paradoxes, what Simone and Pieterse (2018) call "practices of doubleness" instead. In the three cases, there is significant tension between physical 'forms' and social 'norms' expressed in the needs of the families, the multiple normative layers and the constraints of homogeneous, rigid, repetitive, low quality, built spaces that govern the housing projects. For instance, in Cartagena and Buenos Aires, the State's aspiration towards the economic autonomy of the households is in tension with the highly regulated built environment created by the State itself that limits the productive capacities of families. Thus, residents constantly navigate double standards and make trade-offs between vital aspects of their life in order to balance formal and informal rationalities into a sustainable life project. Also, selected informality provides a platform for community engagement by organizing the residents around the provision of urban services such as public space surveillance and garbage collection. These collective actions seem to be important either when the incoming population arrives to the new housing projects from different locations with no sense of collective identity at all, or when the resident community uses its social capital to push back against evictions.

Taken together, it seems that these households seek to retrofit the more socio-economically supportive aspects of informal livelihoods into the more austere conditions of formal mega-projects in terms of policy, programming, building design, and site design. However, while informality does provide socio-economic space for reproduction among low-income populations, it also brings significant challenges, such as significant tension with the State authority which loses control along with the physical transformation of space. It also induces a conflict of interest between those neighbors who take advantage of the informalization synergy and those who cannot develop informality due to the restrictions of the built environment itself and owing to the constraints of their own socio-economic conditions. While the informalization of the formal provides alternatives to the lack of services and the absence of formal, civic representation, it also creates a very complex power dynamic. This is contested in the same space, which seems to result in territories that are very difficult to govern. For instance, in Joe Slovo, the community's right not to be displaced to distant locations was guaranteed by reducing the State's implementation and delivery capacity. The community empowerment gained through taking site-control is in constant tension with the housing needs of those residents who still live in the remaining, not-yet-redeveloped areas. The result of fifteen years of spatial and political contestation led to what many consider to be an ungovernable territory, as a current high-level official assumed, "nobody knows what to do with Joe Slovo." In Cartagena, neither the non-profit developer of the housing project, Fundación Santo Domingo, nor the local government admit being responsible of the renovations, encroachments, shops and workshops rising in Ciudad del Bicentenario. The municipality argues this is "a problem of the developer" since it still manages the ongoing project, and the developer argues that they stop begin

accountable for the residents' behaviors as soon as the families get their properties. In Buenos Aires, informal strategies such as encroachments and ground floor shops emerged right after the local government implemented upgrading policies in the early 2000's. Some policy officials believe there is a correlation between a stronger municipal government and informal processes which end up weakening the same municipality as new, conflictive agendas emerge from land regularization problems, loss of public space control, and infrastructure damage risks in the neighborhoods.

Academic work on the informalization of the formal

There is a very limited amount of academic work regarding the informalization of the formal, and it can be grouped into three types of analysis. A first group focuses on the public policy perspective, in particular, on how deficiencies (or even failure) in housing policy design induce housing informalization. Almost all of the literature on this subject is based on the South African "backyarding," an informal rental system of rooms and shacks often attached to the minimum standards housing created by the national RDP policy. The first author to write about this phenomenon was Vanesa Watson, who in 1994 identified the beginnings of backyarding, giving visibility to the phenomenon in a descriptive character. Between 2007 and 2011, with already enough empirical evidence on the quantitative growth of backyarding practice in RDP houses, some authors focused on a deeper qualitative analysis. As the practice is closely linked to the development of the informal rental market in South African cities, this research focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of backyarding with respect to the traditional informal market in informal settlements, the living conditions of tenants and landlords, and in particular, how the RDP program induces the growth of the phenomenon (Bank, 2007; Govender et al., 2011; Lemanski, 2009). The findings show that the increase in the number of shacks within low-cost housing communities resulted in a huge increase in population density, placing the infrastructure designed for fewer people under significant strain, thus, while having more backyarders in an area may enlarge consumer spending and retail services, it also overloads public infrastructure and aggravates social tensions (Govender et al., 2011). These papers also make a special emphasis on the invisibility of the phenomenon. As Lemanski (2009) points out, backyarders lack the collective organization and visibility of communities occupying informal settlements because of their vulnerable position as tenants outside the purview of several forms of State regulation, including property registration, planning ordinances, building codes, environmental health standards, and payment for property rates and use of basic services (Lemanski, 2009).

A couple of more recent papers analyze backyarding as a more systemic phenomenon within Cape Town, where it represents the largest relative growth of populations living in informal settlements. In particular, these papers focus on the patterns and market dynamics of informal renting. Scheba and Turok (2020) explore backyarding as an undergoing energetic process of expansion and upgrading that both reflects and contributes to improved socioeconomic conditions of the RDP housing residents. The authors highlight that, while there are signs of formalization and professionalization, the government's neglect of this sector has contributed to the strong persistence of the associated "risks" of informality, such as unsafe construction processes, unstable tenement arrangements, and misallocation of investments. Brueckner et al., (2019) explore economic the incentives for backyarding, testing a theoretical model that exposes the trade-off faced by the homeowner in deciding how much backyard land

to rent out. The empirical results are consistent with the prediction that better job access increases the extent of backyarding. In addition, an inverse relationship between backyarding and parcel size suggests that lower homeowner income (that authors associate with small parcels) may spur backyarding.

In general terms, all this corps of literature argues that poor people choose this type of dwelling because it offers better access to services, better locations, a reduced threat of eviction, and greater personal safety than "slums" (Lemanski, 2009; Tshangana, 2014). For poor households dependent on irregular and informal employment, backyard dwellings offer a degree of locational flexibility, especially for those residents seeking for job opportunities (Brueckner et al., 201; Lemanski, 2009;). All these authors make clear that backyarding is induced by policy failure and -at the same time- it is an underrecognized problematic for the local governments because there is no deep understanding of its logics. There is, though, a lack of deeper ethnographic analysis seeking to understand the fine grain of backyarding everyday life and its background rationality. In a sense, backyarding is analyzed here from traditional urban theory, without decentering the perspective from a policy failure argument about and the deficits involved with living in informality.

In the same line, the most relevant academic piece to my inquiry looks at the re-informalization of a formalization program performed in the Turkish Northern Ankara Entrance Urban Transformation Project (NAEUTP). In this paper, Tahire Erman (2016) analyzes how dwellers reintroduced informal practices into a social housing estate as soon as the State's housing institution moved out, allowing residents to reappropriate spaces to meet their needs and create their block management system. According to the author, these solutions were created for the discrepancy between residents' way of life (many were rural-to-urban migrants) and a built environment designed for an urban middle-class way of life. The housing project also imposed a formal maintenance-fee structure while residents depend on informal economies. and minimum-wage jobs. While this re-informalization differed from the original informality, it produced new discrepancies related to the emergence of a strong stigma upon the project's residents. In particular it reproduced the view of rural migrants as unfit for apartment life, creating major disadvantages such as disinvestment and rapid deterioration of the built environment. Moreover, re- informalization practices fuel conflict among residents who have differentiated subjectivities. The findings of this research suggest that the re-profiting practices make livelihoods possible in the short-term but are negative processes in through longer periods of time. It is not clear though, whether the State just "disappears" from governing and regulating the area or whether, beyond designing an inadequate modernist project, it plays a specific role in the informalization of the formal.

The second body of literature focuses on the occupation of abandoned modernist buildings often located in decayed central areas of Latin American cities. Although the construction of popular habitat is a central theme in the social sciences in Latin America, the informalization of formal housing is much more invisible than in South Africa. In general, the informalization of housing developments is interpreted as building decay, without any distinction between processes of poor maintenance, infrastructure collapse, and lack of services from the emergence of informality itself. As I will show later in detail, there can be building decay without informality and informality without building decay. The issue only arises in a few architectural debates about two specific events: the occupation of abandoned buildings in city centers and the development of housing policies that aim at incremental unity. The first theme

has been mainly addressed by ETH's Urban Think Tank through the publication of the book "Torre David: informal vertical communities" (2013), which compiles the work done from ETH Zurich on the Centro Financiero Confinanzas, an unfinished abandoned skyscraper in downtown Caracas, Venezuela. The book focuses on a series of architectural interventions aimed at improving the material conditions of the residents who illegally occupied and live in the abandoned structure. Although it is a purely project-based exercise and does not include any scientific research, its articles refer to the constructive solutions, service provision systems and organization of this "informal vertical community." The Urban Think Tank also group made a documentary which won a Golden Lion at the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale.

In the same line, De Carli and Apsan Frediani (2016) study the occupation led by social movements and habitation of abandoned, modern buildings in the city center of São Paulo, Brazil. The authors argue that as squatted buildings acquire symbolic value in the debate over regeneration and gentrification processes in the inner-city, occupations are simultaneously a means to provide shelter to those in need, and an alternative way of producing low-income housing in well-located urban areas. The authors highlight that this process is producing new forms and practices of political belonging in São Paulo, enabling a personal and collective experience and the possibility of new ways of creating societal belonging in São Paulo.

The third body of literature refers to incremental housing approaches and public policy initiatives to control post-occupation informalization. Most of the written work studies the case of Elemental Studio in Chile, which since 2001, works with the Chilean National Housing Program to design an innovative approach for housing solutions to those at the bottom of the income spectrum who lack borrowing capacity. After empirical research found that the capital provided by the National Housing Program would cover half of the production cost of a low-cost house in the private market. They also observed that mass-production was unlikely to reduce the cost of single unit by more than 15 percent and that the most expensive component of the housing in Santiago de Chile was land. Elemental next conducted market research on the demand of the target group. This showed that low-income communities were likely to trade in housing quality for a good location with access to jobs (Wainer et. al., 2016). In this context, Elemental argues that producing a quality location is far more difficult than simply improving a house. Incremental building is not the same as building small, complete, houses that can be extended later, gradually, over time. While improving a house can be done at the individual scale, improving a neighborhood and location involves communities, businesses, and governments (Aravena, 2004). Also, as I develop in the third chapter, in Latin America there is a long tradition of self-construction, and many low-income residents in fact work in the construction industry and related sectors. Incremental housing as a systemic approach to low-income housing development and slum upgrading was already proposed theoretically by Nishikimoto (1994) and practiced in many countries through policy interventions, such as Favela Barrio in Brazil and the Incremental Housing Program in Chile, (Programa de Vivienda Progresiva, PVP).But Elemental implemented in practice the idea to construct "half of a better house" at large-scale (both physically and institutionally), using standardized but high quality design and involving the major construction companies of the country. The first 'half-houses' built in Quinta Monroy were two-storied with space left between houses for expansion. The second story was provided in line with a fundamental principle of incremental building: the most expensive and fundamental elements of the house should be provided, and cheaper elements left to residents to create. Similarly, the interior was left extremely bare and 'unfinished'-looking, for residents to

decorate, add partition walls or screens, etc., as they wished. Staircases and a 'wet core' (plumbed space) are more expensive, so were also provided, but again, in a very basic form (Aravena, 2004).

Due to its smart design solution, the project was very much celebrated in the architecture spheres. Elemental's real success relied on putting together three actors that, at first glance, seem irreconcilable in the production of good quality, low-income housing: the national State, the large-scale developers and poor communities (Wainer et. al., 2016). The model is a good strategy to provide better location and control over informal processes of self-built, but it did not progress without criticism. While the first project was a small and well-located *barrio* that included community participation, its successors scaled-up on the outskirts of cities. Elemental published free-of-charge on its website the plans and technical details of the houses model so that it could be adapted in other contexts with similar housing problems. Surprisingly, the model has not been much imitated in other geographies. The lack of spread suggests that the model implies more than a smart design, it requires a very particular political will: that of delivering a house that looks incomplete and that will make up a neighborhood that resembles an informal settlement in the medium term (Moore, 2016).

The review of the specific literature on the informalization of formal housing suggests that the phenomenon is associated with the failure of housing policy and marginalized populations' strategies to adapt unsuitable housing conditions to their livelihoods. However, these papers do not investigate the phenomenon as a category of precise analysis beyond specific and local phenomena, such as backyarding. In other words, there is uncertainty as to whether the cases mentioned here refer to a particular form of city production in the global South, or they are disjointed cases isolated from regional or macro processes. On the other hand, no literature links these processes with theories of territorial governance. While De Carli and Apsan Frediani (2016) show that the occupation movement is linked to the formation of social organizations, in this case, politicization emerges from "occupying" abandoned buildings and resisting evictions, rather than from the production of the city itself. In this sense, my analysis focuses not on illegally occupied projects but rather on those purely formal spaces that become informal. Finally, the view of design and architecture on these phenomena does not have scientific rigor. Designers often have a very particular approach, which is not necessarily analytical but prospective, given their intervention objectives. The different approaches to the matter in question highlight those designers, social scientists, and planners have remained disconnected when analyzing the informalization of the formal. The perspective of architects tends to be apolitical, and the role of architectural and urban design has been largely overlooked in the social, political and institutional analysis of the recent emergence of housing megaprojects, and the mechanisms by which poor communities challenge authoritarian urban policies across the global South.

Hypothesis

Based on my observations, I argue that selected informality introduced in formal housing projects does not exclusively represent a policy failure or a bottom-up, insurgent initiative. Unlike the case of decayed modernist housing projects such as the iconic Tlatelolco megaproject in Mexico City (1968), Barrio Ejército de los Andes, better known as Fuerte Apache (1966) in Buenos Aires city, this informality is a product of the conditions imposed by the housing policy,

at the same time, it is a product on how the State punishes popular and community-based practices in housing projects. The informalization of the formal also exposes the conflicts and confluences of different logics of city production. In particular, there is any uneasy confluence of three forces: massive housing projects based on the national States' modernist developmental agenda, the complex structure of informal living of the residents who deploy alternative livelihood strategies, and the holistic planning perspectives of local actors who attend the demands of the residents to build political capital for their own.

The three projects in Colombia, Argentina and South Africa are shaped by national housing policies inspired by a modernist, developmental planning culture based on principles of universalization, massive scale and sectoral policy design. Even if this approach has been dismissed in industrialized countries, many industrializing countries still adopt its principles when designing national-scale poverty alleviation policies, including low-income housing (Kwak, 2015; Sanyal, 2005). However, I find that these housing policies do not "land" on the localities and populations in a straightforward way. They are mediated by a multiplicity of actors that adapt the top-down housing projects to the realities of the targeted beneficiaries. These actors can be local governments, third sector organizations, the private sector, professional associations and political leaders. In my study cases, these are the Fundación Santo Domingo for Ciudad del Bicentenario, Cartagena; the district of Haedo, municipality of Morón for Presidente Sarmiento, Buenos Aires; and the The Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC) with the Joe Slovo Task Force in Cape Town. By providing a variety of tools and skills, such as job training, financial literacy, community building strategies, construction materials and also ensuring a sense of place and tenure safety, these actors mediate between the implementation of the universal, massive housing projects and the local agendas. At the third vector of this tripartite confluence, there are the residents of the housing projects, who may be collectively articulate or not. Despite of their levels of organization and solidarity, the residents always deploy strategies to transcend the austerity related to living on the outskirts of the city, far away from jobs, and disconnected from their social networks (Libertun, 2018; Turok, 2016). They also carry with them their own city-making traditions, often the products of an absent State and governments that do not provide housing solutions among other basic rights (Benjamin, 2008 Caldeira, 2017; Holston, 2001).

This tripartite encounter of city-making practices can be analyzed under the cultural lens. I present the idea of 'city-making cultures', drawing on the intersection between 'planning cultures' --the discourse, models, customs and practices driven by State building normative values (Sanyal, 2005), and the 'practical urbanism' rooted in everyday decisions of individuals and collectives that have small but discernible impacts on the experience and quality of life in cities (Shepard, 2017). To test the hypothesis that the informalization of the formal is a consequence of three city-making cultures building on the same space, I explore the nature of these relationships and whether there are correlations between informalization, and the kinds of roles played by the local agents, the political regimes, the macro-economic contexts, and the hierarchies or horizontality of government.

The hypothesis I just presented on the genesis of informalization as a systemic process and the confluence of three actors (national State/ local agents /residents) co-producing the same space poses a key theoretical question for my dissertation research: If informalization of the formal is a product of three city-making cultures converging in the same space, can it be interpreted as a systemic, articulate and effective housing delivery strategy or, conversely, does it

create a power vacuum between governments, local agents and communities that makes these territories very difficult --if not impossible-- to govern? These two scenarios imply very different challenges for the future of housing policy in the global South. The first scenario may shed light on role of social organization and local politics in clarifying "what affordable housing should afford" (Vale et al., 2014) in the geographies where conventions such as property ownership, formal taxation systems, standardized infrastructure are inadequate to cope with the realities of urban life (Simone and Pieterse, 2018). The second raises a warning flag over burgeoning "arenas of contestation," revealing power tensions and violence embedded in the production of space, diminishing the living conditions of the less resourceful (Bähre, 2007). In both scenarios, I hope that my research can foster a critical perspective through expanding the existing theories on which housing policy is created, while deepening the social and political meaning of that housing.

Research Questions

Through my three cases in Argentina, Colombia and South Africa, I intend to understand why, instead of benefiting from the expected outcomes of formalization, people and city-makers choose to change the physical conditions, the norms and the uses of their houses and neighborhoods. I also explore the social, economic and political outcomes for those families who choose to deploy informalization strategies to determine whether these families improve their living conditions --or fail to do so. Descriptively, I seek to explain under what conditions selective informality is introduced in formal housing projects and whether it provides --or does not provide-- a safer environment where families enhance their livelihoods and make decisions about their properties and collective goods. Analytically, I hope to determine whether informality is an unarticulated, family-based response to the austere conditions of formal mega-housing projects, or if it is a city-making culture created by the confluence of several actors producing the same space. If informalization is both response and city-making culture I am to understand how these forces interrelate. The following secondary questions guide my research:

Why, instead of benefiting from the expected outcomes of formalization, such as increased wealth, legal security, access to credit, and unlocked capital do people choose to change the physical conditions, the norms and the uses of their houses and neighborhoods—even though this may threaten their property tenure and their physical safety, and may induce conflict with the State and other neighbors?

Are there other actors actively -but necessarily openly- involved in informalization practices, and why?

When do residents introduce selected aspects of physical, economical and organizational informality into housing projects? Is it at a particular stage of the project development? Is it after certain number of years in residence? Is it related to the acquisition--or lack of acquisition—of property deeds?

Where do residents choose to deploy informal strategies? Is there a specific building typology that encourages this kind of strategies? Is the location of the project a condition for informalization? Is there a correlation between informality and the location of the housing project? Is it related to specific locations within the housing project?

How do residents introduce selected informality in their neighborhoods? How do residents build encroachments/ extensions/ new buildings? Who builds? How do they open shops and workshops? What kind of funding is available for entrepreneurial initiatives? Are there conflicts between/among these?

What type of governance, in terms of coercion and coalition, does low-income housing policy facilitate in cities and the urban peripheries? Does the housing policy encourage or punish the development of informality? Is there a willing to tolerate physical informality as long as some other kinds of formal norms are obeyed?

The spatial practice of my research on the 'informalization of formal housing' focuses on questions such as: What is the relationship between the urban / architecture projects and the governance models proposed by the government in each case? Why do these take the physical and institutional forms that they do? Why did the residents of the housing projects decide to create alternative organizations from those proposed by the authorities? What is the relationship between those organizations and the transformation of the built and economic environment? What is the relationship between the urban form and the social relations that emerge from city building? What technologies, and what (design) decisions take place when attempting to implement --or resist-- authoritarian projects? And, finally, what is the agency of spatial transformation in the empowerment of marginalized populations?

To define the impact of economic, physical and organizational informalization in the lives of the residents of each project, I chose a variety of economic, social and political metrics based on my preliminary findings and the conceptual framework of the Resilient Cities Housing Initiative (RCHI) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which seeks to operationalize the question of what affordable housing should afford once the goal becomes "building communities" rather than just building housing. To estimate economic and social impacts, I measure the families' livelihoods and safety, that is, whether this process enhances or undermines the families' socioeconomic structure, improves physical and mental health, and provides more or less personal and communal security for the residents. To measure the political consequences, I analyze impacts in terms of territorial control, that is, who claims to possess and control the housing project, who takes the decisions over the changes that occur within it, and who gets to decide over private properties and collective goods.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of my research indicates that either policy failure and bottom-up adaptation of unsuitable architectural designs and policy decisions can only explain partially the phenomenon. Informalization emerges as a city-making practice that attempts to undo the norms and forms imposed by the national State to transform large-scale housing into urban habitats more suited to the needs of its residents, community organizations, and local managers.

In search of better housing solutions than past experiences, the State creates alternative models of urban management, displacing local states and partnering with landowners and developers. In this power transfer, the national State legally and operationally dissociates itself from the production and administration of these housing projects while displacing the local government from its governing capacities. At the same time, modernist bureaucratic bodies, who are accountable in quantitative terms, impose efficiency parameters on space, land, and

construction costs. Spatial standardization and shrinking typologies are recurrent practices within national housing policies, where builders and developers are granted with "special standards" to maximize their profit. These abstract, alternative city models evolve as urban enclaves ruled by different parameters than the rest of the city, including administration systems that are unsustainable in physical, socio-economic, and political terms. In the short term, these models do not provide optimal responses to residents who previously lived in the area, neither to those families relocated from other areas of the city who need to anchor themselves to the territory as a strategy for livelihoods and life reproduction. In the long term, they also fail to respond to the demands of demographic growth and the increasing development expectations as the relational characteristics of the housing complex –such as location-- improve. The families' strategies to undo punitive norms and forms are driven by a reactive response to the bad policy and design decisions and by "importing" practices from informal, working-class, and rural built environments. Their physical relocation to these new projects also entails displacing their former knowledge, practices, and traditions that build expertise in constructing *popular* habitats strongly linked to the *popular* economy and livelihood strategies of care.

Beyond the power vacuum to local governments, local situated agents persistently commit to actively manage the conflicts and socio-spatial relations that govern these large territorial extensions. Within the jurisdictional and administrative absence of the local State, informalization is not a product of laissez-faire but arises from the active engagement of residents and de-facto managers (local politicians, NGOs, foundations, and municipalities) without enough legal-administrative capacity but committed to managing the social demands and conflicts of urban growth. Informalization is thus a practice of city-making that operates over a complex web of regulations and pre-existing forms created by the national State and "on the fly" practices and tacit rules that seek to anchor residents in their territories. I identify informalization as a "process of practices," counter-hegemonic in their nature, that together constitute a city-making culture within large-scale social housing projects in the global South. In particular, I found five practices of informalization to represent processes of undoing and redoing urban space:

Anchoring [people in the territories]. These are directly related to families' experiences when they are relocated from their former neighborhoods -- often informal settlements -- to the new housing projects on the periphery. In many cases, these families already carry a background of displacement, and the housing policies also force relocations that include violent practices. The anchoring practices, such as reblocking, occupying land, relocation boycotts and house improvements are also relevant in the long-term due to the importance of territorial belonging in the livelihood strategies, such as the dependence on relationships with local politicians or networks of care. To leave the neighborhood behind implies the likely loss of income and resources. Thus, I found that "No exit from the neighborhood" is a metaphor of both lack of choice and conscious choice related the comparative advantages of informalization that ensure livelihoods.

Individualizing [shared land]. In all three projects, there is evidence of the individualization of public or shared land as a recurrent practice. It is related to the original property regimes of the housing projects and to public spaces often seen as "no mas' land." It includes appropriation, occupation, encroachments, and physical delimitation of a piece of land that does not legally belong to individual residents. Families individualize land to improve the use value of the house and also to set clear boundaries for safety and privacy purposes. As these blunt limits acquire

preponderance in re-determining what is shared and what is private the systems of rights and responsibilities in the territory also get reconceptualized.

Incrementing [houses for extended families]. In general, all housing renovations and improvements occur incrementally, according to each families' economic capacity and changing needs. John Turner's famous phrase "housing as a verb" continues to have a substantial relevance. Incrementality takes on particular importance not only because it offers a more affordable solution but also because it transforms the house into a dynamic entity, a important characteristic for families whose extended families stay living in the houses and create houses within houses. The dynamism of the built environment generates an internal neighborhood logic based on the continuous resolution of micro-conflicts "on the fly" which turns to be a non-normative approach to urban management.

Unlocking [livelihoods]. Unlocking refers to practices that activate the local economy otherwise locked by law. Informalization plays a primary role in developing livelihoods in the neighborhood because, although the land uses regulations prohibit non-residential activities, houses are economic units and productive uses represent the main investment for families in their house. The symbiotic relationship between housing and work enables housing improvement to take place as the dwellings themselves improve opportunities for income generation. However, working from home also brings tensions between the domestic and productive experiences, which often takes place in small units, and it is not an aspirational setup for residents. While economic informality is well accepted among de-facto managers, its spatial imprint is a taboo. They provide support such as training programs and micro seed capital, but do not openly recognize the domestic economic ventures since they infringe the housing regulations, so much of the support happens informally.

Stabilizing [territories]. The lack of a regulatory system to manage the physical transformation of the houses leads to an "on the fly" management and in a less extent, but still present, the 'law of the strongest. In the three cases, most of the residents' interviewees say that conflicts are solved "between the neighbors," showing both autonomy and lack of institutional channels. Beyond this perception, I found that de facto managers spend much effort in the resolution of tensions, conflicts, and negotiations that happen transversally - but not wholly - outside the institutional channels and make these territories politically sustainable.

Far from a landscape of chaos and destruction, the informalization of Presidente Sarmiento, Joe Slovo, and Ciudad del Bicentenario has enhanced its use-value to residents in many dimensions and partially solved the contradictions between the assumptions of the creators and the needs of the families. Most importantly, informalization warrants the permanence of the families in their territory and plays a preponderant role in developing the families' livelihoods. As the neighborhoods' sociability builds on relationships, experiences, and expectations around the informalization, it also an important practical and symbolic rootedness content for relocated families. Despite the remarkable capacity of some residents to overcome the economic austerity of their new place of residence, the research discloses how informalization also brings tension within the family, between neighbors, and with the local authorities. The complexification of the urban form and the increasing scarcity of opportunities (space, structures, infrastructures) may imply decreasing effectiveness of the "on the fly" resolutions and empowerment of the use of privileges and violence. From this perspective, while selected informalization offers a livelihood

solution, it also produces a systematic complexification of the lives of low-income families. However, I did not find empirical evidence to assert that informalization produces, increases, or decreases violence in neighborhoods. Some practices of informalization, such as the appropriation of public spaces, are at times harmful to families, while other actions improve the conditions of the built environment in the face of insecurity in the neighborhoods. Although there are some associations between informalization and violence, associated questions to violence remain open for future research.

Based on the findings of this research, I am inclined to say that informalization creates territories that are very difficult to govern and manage. Interestingly, however, this hypothesis can only be confirmed by Spatio-temporal analysis. In the short term, the informalization of physical and institutional spaces makes large-scale housing projects' political and social sustainability possible. However, as informalization grows and space and resources become scarcer with time, the built and institutional environments become more complex, and significant social conflicts emerge within the community. My empirical findings indicate that, in practical terms, informalization does not seem to be a reversible process. Stopping, cutting, or even formalizing it from a traditional, bureaucratic State logic has not found a solution yet. For the State bureaucracy, undoing the norms, procedures, and rules created by themselves implies an immense challenge. There are no straightforward, short-term administrative mechanisms to "adapt" the new realities to the old norms and forms of the projects.

As the State loses control over these territories and, tensions between governments and communities increase, it is more difficult for the bureaucratic apparatuses to find valid and possible solutions to guarantee the physical security of people and social order within the neighborhoods. It remains highly uncertain what kind of actions the current programming of these projects will take concerning the high degree of physical and economic informality encroached upon, and even overtaking, the old formal and normative modernism of these projects. The difficulties are not only financial or technical but also of rationality, especially for local governments that wish to respect their own legal apparatuses and give response to social demands.

Research Contributions

The principal output of my research, of interest to academic as well as policy communities, will be in-depth empirical analysis and data on informal processes that occur within State subsidized housing projects. The results of this research will provide a set of empirical qualitative data on informalization processes in cities of the Global South to challenge and elaborate upon theories of housing sociology and point to the restrictions and opportunities of alternative modes of city production. It will also contribute policy and design suggestions on how to enhance the effectiveness of housing initiatives. This research will be one of the first studies to consider the informalization of the formal as a singular topic. The study will contribute to theoretical, methodological, and policy debates around this multifaceted social and political scenario takes place in geographies that are often "abandoned" by the design disciplines: the hyper ghetto, the Third World periphery, the slum, and the housing projects (Roy, 2015).

Methodologically, the study aims to contribute to exploring the intersection between design thinking and interpretive mixed-methods for analyzing the design-politics of city

production. There is a prevalent mismatch between the social and the built space –and between theories and practices of space. The current field of planning, architectural and urban design tends to be apolitical and disinterested in fostering effective engagements with social movements, community organizations, and local authorities. Likewise, the role of physical space and materiality is a secondary variable at best in the social sciences. I consider that my research can forester interdisciplinary critical research through expanding the existing methodologies that study socio-spatial relations in city production, particularly housing. By bringing together analysis of the built environment, planning and policy documents, and social behaviors, this study will triangulate to discern and corroborate social and political meaning of housing.

The contributions of this research are especially important given the renascence of political and technical interest in housing issues within the current global housing crisis and the lack of housing innovation (Monkkonen, 2018). I am concluding this dissertation in 2021, the official date for South Africa and Argentina to update their census data. Although the COVID-19 pandemic affected the census schedules, soon after the pandemic crisis, new housing deficit official statistics will be published. To have a sound amount of qualitative research to complement the new statistics seems like an important academic opportunity in order to expand the agenda to newspapers, social media and other general publications.

Analyzing why and how residents create local economies, governance systems and physical spaces over those spaces and practices already imposed by the State may help developing a rigorous understanding of the role of social organization in fostering effective housing delivery models that can improve livability. It may also offer potential for advocacy by clarifying "what affordable housing should afford" (Vale et al., 2014) in the geographies of the Global South, where conventions such as property ownership, formal taxation systems, standardized infrastructure are inadequate to the realities of urban life (Simone and Pieterse 2018, pg. 2). The research will also contribute to exploring systemic ways in which design can democratize decision making processes and legitimize non-mainstream design practices and may enable to incorporating design rationalities within other academic environments.

CHAPTER 2 – Research Design and Methods

METHOD

My method deploys a spatial turn of qualitative research, integrating systematic observations of both physical and social space. The spatial-design perspective, which is still underexplored in the social sciences and in the design disciplines, draws on the concept of "inventive methodologies," a set of methods and techniques to create new analytical "boundaries," or frameworks, for the objects and problems of research (Lury and Wakeford, 2012). This approach is valuable for my work because it allows for the study of not only what objects are but what else they can be by analyzing the metalanguage embedded in spatial arrangements and in the interaction between people and the built environment. Abdoumaliq Simone (2015) illustrates this idea by describing his research agenda on a large-scale, modernist, high-density housing complex in Jakarta, Indonesia. The "surface" of the project is evident: a hyper-dense project, extremely rigid architecture, and a standardized built environment meant to provide affordable housing for an emerging urban middle class. The project can also be described as the product of the international financialization of housing markets and the materialization of authoritarian policies. However, as Simone asks, what else can this project be? What kind of intersections, connections to other things can we discover in it? What are the edges and ambiguities of the residents' lived realities in these kinds of environments? In other words, this housing project could be read through its structural role in capitalist society, and, at the same time, it could be read as a space for new collectives or as an experimental landscape of social organization for city production.

Cases such as Simone's study case in Jakarta or my cases in Buenos Aires, Cartagena, and Cape Town suggest that these over standardized, overruled, overcontrolled landscapes are also places for experimentation unforeseen by architects and planners. In these places, new forms of collectivities emerge along with a new series of problems that are not easily handled by traditional management. In these dual landscapes, inventive methods such as spatial ethnography can be used to establish the given conditions of the objects or problems of research, and they also can be used to generate their own boundaries and conditions. As Simone (2015) articulates it, "proximity, territorial calculations, coding, measuring, screening, aesthetic intensity, and designing" are methodological devices for bringing different materials and people into relationship to observe both social and political interfaces of the "surface" and what else that "surface" can be.

The Social and the Spatial: historical review

During the 20th Century, urban sociology has studied the social change embedded in urbanization phenomena; thus, the relationship between the society and the spatial arrangements product of the built environment is a constitutive part of the discipline. The intellectual debates

about space have been dominated by a simple dichotomy between physical and social spaces. However, the many interpretations and definitions of 'space' also illustrate its complexity.[3]

Although classical social theorists of the late 19th Century rarely theorized about space, their descriptions about the living conditions in cities and their insights into the structure of the urban society offer valuable ideas for understanding how the production of urban space is rooted in changing social relationships. Durkheim's (1883) ideas about the division of labor have significant influence in this field. The new labor dynamics are not only expressed in the specialization of the workplace but also in the separation between working spaces and living spaces. Georg Simmel (1908, 1950) and Louis Wirth (1928), who are concerned with the impact of urban space on social interaction, also perceive that the working place tends to become dissociated from the place of residence as a product of the increasing 'impersonalization' and individuality of city life. Chicago School researchers such as Robert Park (1915) formulated new theoretical models based on the idea that competition and segregation lead to the formation of "natural areas," each with a separated and distinct moral order. Roderick McKenzie ([1925] 1967) argues that the fundamental quality of the struggle for urban existence is location, both for the individual and for groups or institutions. Under this lens, the social organization of the urban population is a spatial organization, and planners can manage social dislocations through the deployment of Euclidian zoning models that relate density and distance variables to social groups and land uses.

The work of the Chicago School of urban sociology deeply influenced the planning field, in particular, the technocratic practices used in the 1950s and 1960s in the U.S. by city officials such as Robert Moses. Perhaps the authors with greatest impact are Homer Hoyt and William Alonso, who set tools for spatial analysis and intervention of cities. Hoyt (1939) investigates patterns of residential development based on quantitative analysis and maps, a methodology still used by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) for assessing insurance requirements of long-term mortgage loans.[4] Alonso (1976) applies land distribution models to suggest that urban renewal processes should be implemented in a larger scale to develop a more efficient and affordable urban form. The assumption that empowering purchasing capacity would expand location choice leading to a "natural" separation of urban space into zones was counteracted by the real power relationships that construct the economic forces operating in the city. However, these ideas about population distribution across the city still prevail in the US housing policy schemes (Desmond, 2016).

The development of industrialization and urbanization processes into more complex cities leads authors interested in urban relationships to interact with other disciplines, such as architecture, planning, psychology and health sciences. At the beginning of the 20th Century, the impacts of spatial arrangements on the quality of living became a relevant topic among planners and architects, who were looking for new methodologies to experiment on how to account for the causes and consequences of the relationships between society and the built environment. They supported the idea that a societal transformation would occur through the reorganization of population in space; thus research acquires a proactive character. The main expression of this

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[3] Madanipour (1996) highlights that the Oxford English Dictionary gives no fewer than nineteen meanings for the term, including: "continuous expanse in which things exist and move", "amount of this taken by a particular thing or available for particular purpose", and "interval between points or objects".
[4] http://hoytgroup.org/homer-hoyt-institute/

trend was the emergence of diagrams that illustrate spatial, economic and social order in the city. The Garden City is the ultimate expression of "diagrammatic urbanism," where abstract, geometrical relationships reflect the urban process as a metabolism of life: work, food, waste are ordered under a logic of resource allocation (Howard, 1898; Wright, 1935). In this sense, populations, social structure and economic and environmental dynamics are all assumed to be tightly interconnected within space, a "container" of social relationships. The desired socio-spatial order of the city is expressed in a master plan, drawings or diagrams, supported by ideas of instrumental rationality and technocratic practice, and by the notions of physical and environmental determinism (Graham and Healey, 1999, pg. 624).

This conception of space means a great contribution in the development of methodologies and technologies such as mapping, coding and scheming, capable of determining patterns that are still very valuable for design and policy implementation. However, at the same time, planning and design adopted an overwhelming physical focus: efforts at changing the built environment were seen as efforts in changing socio-economic problems in cities. This led to authoritarian traditions of urban renewal, slum clearance, housing and infrastructure megaprojects. This predominant technocratic planning practice is first criticized by scholars such as Kevin Lynch (1960) and Jane Jacobs (1961). In particular, Lynch's work has been influential in reconceptualizing space by bridging "objective" and abstract representations of space, and subjective, existential experiences of "lived space", giving rise to concepts that still influence the social sciences.

The uneven development of capitalism becomes a popular topic for research within the end of the colonial rule in Africa and Asia, an emerging political landscape shaped by the Cuban Revolution, and the civil rights movements of the 1960s in the United States and Europe. This comes along with a widespread disappointment about planning practice: by the mid-60s the discipline is dominated by a technocratic, positivist method that fails to address the democratic processes and, in particular, the needs and realities of the disadvantaged populations. The central concern of urban critical studies which emerges in the early 1970s is how economic and political power relate each other and to socio-spatial forms in capitalist societies. As these scholars study capitalism through the city instead of the capitalist city itself, they assume that spatial forms are an outcome of social processes. In doing so, they invert the earlier spatial determinism predicated by the antecessors of the German and the Chicago Schools.

Neo-Marxist theory provided a framework to connect the analysis of social processes and its influence in spatial forms. Lefebvre (1974) theorizes that there is a relationship between modes of production and the shape of space they constitute: "each epoch produces its own space," introducing the analysis of the state and the role of the political in shaping people's experience in the city (Katznelson, 1993, pg. 96). What is required, according to Lefebvre (1974), is not a science of space *per se*, but rather a theory of how space is produced since capitalism has evolved from a system where commodities are produced in a spatial setting into a system where space itself is produced as a scarce and alienable commodity (pg. 7-9). David Harvey (1981) follows Lefebvre's theoretical formulations attempting to reconstruct Marx's analysis on how capitalist economy moves through space. Contrary to Lefebvre, for Harvey, the spatial organization of capitalism is not merely a reflection of capital accumulation: location is socially produced as a way to channel investment opportunities and correct the dislocation between surplus of capital and surplus of labor. Therefore, cities need to be destroyed and rebuilt to ensure investment. These ideas are further developed by Neil Smith (1984), who analyzes how

capital is continually invested in and withdrawn from the built environment so that it can move elsewhere and take advantage of higher profit rates.

These authors re-conceptualize space as an outcome of specific social processes, deeply affecting planning theory and its approach to uneven spatial development. Perhaps its greatest influence in planning practice is reflected in a normative transformation towards ideas such as 'the just, good city' and an increasing interest in the political economy of geographies. These ideas coincide with the emergence of advocacy and activist planners who recognize a multitude of conflicting social interests in the city, some of which may be irreconcilable (Fainstein and Fainstein, 1971). However, even if urban theory has increasingly moved away from spatial deterministic approaches, these ideas still prevail as a dominant foundation of professional planning practice. For instance, approaches such as Transit Oriented Development assume that by improving the relationship between public transport and urban land markets, cities will become more "compact" in terms of population density, uses and building, leading to increased housing affordability, social interaction, and community integration.[5]

Two authors drawing from the Marxist tradition aim to challenge the idea that space is an outcome of social relations under a particular mode of production, questioning the social determinism of space. Edward Soja (2010) argues that there is a dialectical rather than deterministic relationship between spatial arrangements and social processes to make a case for including spatial justice as a broad-ranging alternative to conceptualizing justice. Soja asserts that the spatiality of '(in)justice' affects social life just as much as social processes shape the spatiality of a specific geography (p. 5). Manuel Castells (1985) argues that social interests are equally shaped by production and consumption of collective goods. While the former creates social classes, the latter creates urban movements deeply rooted in the materiality of cities. Spatial relations affect the capacity of movements to mobilize resources, while oppressive spatial forms can give rise to grievances. Equally important is the fact that movements create spaces as integral parts of their mobilization strategies (pg.70).

The idea that state and people need a material basis to organize their power and autonomy has been largely influential for later authors who explore relations of structure and agency in traditionally marginalized geographies of the Global South (Holston, 1999; Bayat, 2000; Benjamin, 1999; Simone, 2004). This spatial turn in social sciences offers great explanatory power to better understand how social justice is created, maintained, and brought into question as a target for democratic social action (Soja 2010, pg. 2). However, empirical studies of urban movements, spatial justice and spatial governmentalities still privilege the analysis of the social processes over the spatial transformations without a clear, systemic understanding of the physical and material aspects of space. A clear demonstration of this absence is that most of these studies use the same methodological frameworks, mostly related to traditional qualitative research, which provide only a limited number of tools for spatial analysis.

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[5] See as an example Cape Town's TOD 2017 strategy
http://www.cesa.co.za/sites/default/files/GAMA2017_H1_Herron_Cllr percent20Brett percent20Herron_Connecting percent20Cape percent20Towns percent20Communities percent20through percent20TOD percent20V4.pdf

Spatial empirical research: current debates

Relational theories of urban and regional economics, and technological change have recently transformed the understanding of space. These suggest that the spatial essence of 'the urban' has multiple social levels: face to face interactions; flows of communication and social networks mediated by telecommunications and digital space (Fischer, 1975; Wellman, 1979); metabolic flows of regional dependences (Brenner, 2004); virtual circuits that link together strategic nodes of production and management across the globe (Borja and Castells, 1997; Sassen, 1994); and civil society strategic networks and international governmental institutions (Sassen, 2004; Appadurai, 2002). In the last decade, both urban planning and social sciences recognize that scales are not ontologically given but relational, resulting from struggles among actors placed in space and time (Purcell, 2006; Smith, 2005, Massey, 2004). For instance, localizing control over space can produce greater democracy or not, or greater social justice or not, depending on who is empowered by the processes of decentralization (Purcell 2006, pg. 1928). However, while urban and regional planners incorporate the new scale-space dynamics of advanced information technologies into their conceptions of cities, they still have difficulties in designing and implementing policy with these new, relational meanings capable of capturing the complexity of contemporary world (Graham and Healey, 1999; Massey, 2004).

The prevalent mismatch between the social and the built space –and between theories and practices of space-- remains disconnected. On one hand, the current fields of planning, architecture and urban design –as well as practitioners within it-- tend to be apolitical and disinterested in fostering effective engagements with social movements, community organizations, and local authorities. On the other hand, the role of physical space and materiality is a secondary variable at best when analyzing socio-spatial dynamics from the social sciences perspective. For instance, very few researchers have studied the precise materiality of governance in geography's poverty management (housing projects, informal statements). Instead, the analysis of spatial dimensions in social sciences is kept at a frustrating level of abstraction.

The epistemological neglect of the material world in the analysis of 'the social' leads to several unanswered research questions: What are we missing when we fail to understand the physicality of the world we live in? Is space shapeless until given shape by social agency? Are the spatial patterns through which social patterns are materialized then arbitrary? Do social relations generate an endless and continuous propagation of temporary spatial patterns with no relation between each other, with space unrelated to social causes? Or, to the contrary, is there a spatial inertia that transcends the social relations that created them, and influences new ones? I argue that through a 'new spatial turn' to the material world we can learn about society itself, but this implies a conceptual challenge and, perhaps, a greater methodological challenge. My interests in this dissertation flow around how to integrate social sciences and design thinking methodologies to construct an ethnography of socio-material space, or spatial ethnography. From a methodological perspective, the field of spatial ethnography, which is still underexplored in the social sciences, seeks to integrate systematic observations of both physical and social space (Kim, 2012).

Ethnographic knowledge is always already situated, and it is always a product of geographical change. As a method of data collection, ethnography entails examining the behavior of the participants in a certain specific social situation while also understanding their

interpretation of such behavior. As Setha Low (2017) suggests, ethnographers have an advantage with regard to understanding space and place because they begin their studies in the field. Conceptualizations of space that emerge from the ethnographic research draw on the strengths of studying people in situ. On the other hand, design-based thinking constructs its epistemological world between the materiality of things, the lived experience of the built environment and the symbolic meaning of objects and buildings. While both early ethnographers and architects relegated space to the description of the material setting, a contemporary understanding of space is process-oriented and allows for multiple forms of agency and political possibilities (Low, 2004). Spatial ethnography proposes to extend the observations of behaviors to the observations of the interaction between people and the built environment as well as the internal behaviors of the built environment itself. That is to say, how does building design operate in a historical context? How do buildings evolve over time? How do new buildings impact the existing environment and people? And how is the relationship of the material organization of the built environment linked to the social organization of the people who live in it? Spatial ethnography requires caution against reduction to spatial determinism. In this sense, the space component of the ethnographic work should call for what Lefebvre (1974) presents as a social theory of space, which can capture social space as "built, contested, seized, invested in, maintained, lost, mourned, renovated or altered" (Chari and Gidwani, 2005), including the analysis of the symbolic meaning of space and what this means to the people who use and design the built environment (Tobert, 1996).

Three case studies, one method

Through my three cases in Argentina, Colombia and South Africa, I intend to understand why, instead of benefiting from the expected outcomes of formalization--such as increased wealth, legal security, access to credit, and unlocked capital--people choose to change the physical conditions, the norms and the uses of their houses and neighborhoods. They do so even though this may threaten their property tenure and their physical safety and may induce conflict with the state and other neighbors. This section will also focus on the political relationship within the urban / architecture projects. Why did the residents of the housing projects decide to create alternative organizations to those proposed by the authorities? Why do these take the physical and institutional forms that they do? What is the relationship between those organizations and the transformation of the built and economic environment? What is the relationship between the urban form and the social relations that emerge from city building? What technologies, and what (design) decisions take place when attempting to implement --or resist-- authoritarian projects? And, finally, what is the agency of spatial transformation in the empowerment of marginalized populations?

Methodologically, I explored the possibilities of Lawrence Vale's design-politics framework, which proposes integrating qualitative methods from the social sciences, and design techniques, to observe both design and political interfaces. By "design" I mean urban design, architecture and spatial transformations developed by communities. Vale (2013) presents design-politics as a new analytical lens, which combines "the power of imagined ideals with the insights of materialist social analysis" to examine closely the social and political preferences which are expressed and manipulated through the medium of design such as number of units, size of rooms, location of gates and fences (pg. 30-32). In this sense, rather than using design-politics as

a theoretical approach, I employ it as a method for looking at the world and revealing the phenomena that are often difficult to verbalize. As Vale (2018) poses it: "Why does the world look the way it does? What are the juxtapositions that we see and how might those have come about? What is being expressed symbolically? What does this say about the role of power?" In this sense, design is a metalanguage to analyze power relations embedded in spatial arrangements. For instance, through the analysis of space and design, we can aim to understand whose sets of values define design decisions of housing for low-income sectors, and how these affect social relationships within resident communities (Vale, 2013). A deep examination of the design and spatial arrangements can also reveal hidden political rationalities behind housing policy decision-making that go beyond the official policy narratives.

Design-politics analysis also reveals unexpected consequences of adaptation, resistance, negotiation and struggle that, through the influence of existing material space and the production of alternatives, can challenge social and institutional spaces, opening new windows to think about alternative ways of city making. In "The Mixed-Use Sidewalk," Annette Kim (2012) integrates the analysis of sidewalks as both physical space and social construct through spatial ethnography and critical cartography to understand power regimes in public spaces. This method combines participant observation and interviewing with physical surveying and mapping to learn about the conflicts and negotiations that produce specific spatial arrangement, and how pre-defined spatial arrangements define a "sidewalk property rights system" where vendors, property abutters, and police negotiate the control of public space. Through their work, Kim and Vale elucidated what logics/factors contribute to the design of certain spatial arrangements, who takes the design decisions, in which ways the spatial arrangements shape politics of different groups of interests, and which specific spatial actions have an impact on the policy agenda.

Data and Analytical Methods

My research draws on data from unstructured and semi-structured interviews, participant observation of social behaviors and the built environment, archival research on policy papers, urban plans, financial records, architecture records and other secondary sources on housing policy in Argentina, Colombia and South Africa. For case study, I divided my research in two phases: Contextual Research and Socio-spatial Analysis. To standardize the structure of the dissertation, each case study chapter (Argentina, Colombia and South Africa) is structured in these two sections.

Contextual research

My first task is to describe the main features of the study cases and situate each housing project in a broader historical context. This task includes quantitative assessments of the city-wide housing deficit at different time periods, including the creation of the housing policy, the design and implementation of the housing project itself, and the following years after its implementation. I gathered quantitative information from official statistics in Argentina, Colombia and South Africa. I supported the quantitative assessment with Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data to examine the information in spatial terms. I also collected archival information about the nature of each housing policy including their motivations, participants, structures, finance, goals, planning processes, and implemented or planned events, to date. To do so, I examined public documents, technical reports, academic papers, journal

articles, and social media. Special attention is paid to the policy papers and official reports that illustrate the spatial normative goals of the housing policy in terms of urban regulation and standards.

An additional task of this research is to study in depth the architecture and urban design projects of Presidente Sarmiento, Ciudad del Bicentenario and Joe Slovo. Through the analysis of space and design, I analyze whose sets of values are embedded in the design decisions of housing for low-income sectors in each city as well as the expected outcomes of the physical, institutional and programmatic solutions. In examining the built environment, visual design and planning documentation, I draw on methods developed by Marcus (1975), Vale (2014), Fleming (1990) and Hayden (2002) who put together systematic observations of the built environment (house design, density, land division, public spaces) with policy and written narratives (population to be served, normative values about the city, expected outcomes). I studied the representations in archival information including layouts, diagrams, sections, perspectives, sketches, photographs of the site, plans, and drawings. I also sought the projects' design memories usually included in design magazines and publications. Published accounts by historical actors and archived local media (e.g., newspapers) were valuable references for understanding the evolving contexts for planning processes, decision making, public opinion, and controversies related to the housing projects. To strengthen this inquiry, I conducted in-person semi-structured interviews with the designers and decision makers of the projects to triangulate the intention and meaning of particular design decisions as seen in the built environment, design representations, and written documents (Zeisel, 2006).

Socio-spatial Analysis

The second task of the research is to (1) understand why, instead of benefiting from the expected outcomes of formalization, people choose to change the physical conditions, the norms and the uses of their houses and neighborhoods; (2) elucidate under what conditions selected informality stabilizes or undermines the social, political and economic order imposed by the state through housing projects; and (3) determine whether this new order threatens or improves the living conditions of the residents. To answer these questions, I carried out in depth semi-structured interviews and systemic observations of the social behaviors and the built environment to understand the fine grain of why and how the informalization of the formal works.

To this end, I conducted semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, such as policy makers, politicians, architects, community leaders and academics to provide a more detailed analysis of the creation and evolution of the housing projects from multiple perspectives. My interview questions asked interviewees to describe their participation in the project, their perceptions about the policy goals, the evolution of the project in time, the conflicts, the problems and strengths of each process. In particular, I explored how stakeholders see the development of informality within state subsidized formal housing projects. These interviews explored the extent to which emergent informal processes support or are in tension with top-down architecture and planning perspectives. I also conducted interviews with residents and field observations aimed to understand the experience of the families affected by the housing policies. In particular, I am interested in both how people are "deploying" informality, and the impact that informality has on actors and institutions along the way.

The interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions preceded by a brief introduction explaining the purposes of the research that I held the interviews in total confidentiality. For the three cases, I conducted in-person unstructured interviews during field research trips, as well as phone or Skype interviews before or following the field trips. I requested to audio record the interviews, or take extensive hand-written notes where recordings were not possible, or permission was not granted by the interviewers. I then transcribed the interviews and coded them, based on descriptive and analytical indicators created through a preliminary analysis of the results. I used a combination of coding using NVIVO and by hand to first develop descriptive categories and then gradually develop broader analytical categories. Following the interviews, primary and secondary data sources served triangulate the empirical information, and examine discrepancies, where these occurred. Interviews in Argentina and Colombia are in Spanish. Interviews in South Africa are in English, which may not be the native language of many of the interviewees, but it is still one of the official languages of the country and the one shared by different ethnic and national groups. An interview protocol questionnaire for each case study is included in Appendix 1. The number of interviews will depend on each case.

During the fieldwork visits and interviews, I took systemic notes on the built environment and the relationship between people, spatial arrangements and the material surroundings. Observing the built environment means systematically looking at conscious or unconscious physical traces to infer how an environment got to be the way it is, what decisions people made about the space and materiality, how people use it, how people feel about it and what does it mean symbolically (Zeisel 2006). Observing the relationship between the built environment and behavior means recording how people use and produce their built environment. What do they do? How do people relate to one another spatially? How do people relate individually to space? How does the built environment influence on behaviors? How does the built environment affect relationships between people? With this purpose in mind, I prepare the graphic documentation of each project, that is, the general and units' layout, the perspectives and sections using archive sources and satellite images over time. For each in-person interview, I carried the questionnaire, and a set of drawings, where I took systemic notes of the built environment. Observations go from general to particular. Do the configuration and size of the house's spaces support the family's functions? Does the space have complexity that allows it to be enjoyed in a variety of activities? What remains like in the original design? What has been modified and how? What are the new ways to use the space? Does the house design fulfill the children and elderly needs? (Fleming 1990). I will record my observations in diagrams and words. I organize these observations according to groups of variables such as program and uses, morphology, construction, public spaces and governance. If possible, and with the consent of the owners of the house, I took pictures recording the observations. I then code my observations with the images in order to have specific visual references of the written notes.

Limitations and Challenges

Internal validity of this research is relevant to capture the lived reality and the fine grain of everyday life in Presidente Sarmiento, Ciudad Bicentenario and Joe Slovo (Singleton & Straits, 2009). This research aims to achieve internal construct validity by using mixed methods, selecting cases and cities of which I have a deep knowledge about, and validating the research findings with key informants. I ensure internal validity through two main factors. First, the fieldwork and semi structured interviews seek to cover the totality of actors involved in these housing projects. I held meetings with local academics and NGO leaders, key people in the government, NGO spheres, and the communities. Second, the design of the fieldwork is informed by theoretical frameworks that cover multiple dimensions of the institutional, social and political relations that may manifest in the implementation of housing projects in each city.

The risk of neglecting perspectives is reduced by my knowledge of the cities, where I have studied, conducted previous research and worked for several years. Both methodologies, semi-structured interviews and ethnography of space, are inevitably crossed by my inter-subjectivity (Becker, 1967; Feldman, 1995; Geddes, 2003). My interpretations of verbal language and design metalanguage are also influenced by specific theoretical background linked to ideological values which are reflected in the literature review. My interpretations about how power is embedded in physical and social space may be challenged by different perspectives. Other expected challenges raise from the fact that this is a very sensitive topic among public officials, community members and other stakeholders, as it touches on illegal status of private property, contested actions around land, recognition of city building process out of the rule of law and political power. During my fieldwork research I noticed that this is a sensitive topic of discussion and interviewees may show resistance in replying to questions related to the projects because the three are still under construction and political contestation. I used my long-term connections in each site to gain trust among interviewees so they can openly share they thoughts about politics and power. Finally, I resolved these challenges by validating my conclusions with existing local scholars and experts. I share summaries of my research findings to validate my conclusions with the committee members.

This study does not seek to prove causality of specific variables or make global claims. Housing policy is highly context-specific of its societies, governments and historical moments. The aim of case study research is to "expand and generalize theories" rather than provide explanations of causality (Noor, 2008; Yin, 2013). Also, these housing projects are urban landscapes in constant change. I therefore limit my analysis primarily to a snapshot of the processes that have occurred before and during my fieldwork.

STUDY CASES

Study Case selection

Through my preliminary observations, I noticed that the spatial, economic and social dynamics of these neighborhoods vary from those in the traditional informal settlements usually called slums, shack-towns, favelas or villas. They also vary from the non-informalized housing projects, even those projects that have experienced significant processes of decay. I aim to conceptualize the 'informalization of the formal' in different geopolitical and historical contexts. To do so, I propose a three-case study dissertation, which links together three spatial-ethnographic studies of the 'informalization of formal housing' as a central, but previously understudied, aspect of the practice of contemporary urbanism.

Building on the broad-ranging historical and theoretical study of the politics of housing and informality, the dissertation will center on three cases in Colombia and Argentina (South America) and Cape Town (South Africa). The selection of these case studies offers the chance to collect insights into the complex lived realities of the beneficiaries of low-income housing policies in the Global South.

Figure 1. Three study cases in geographical and historical context
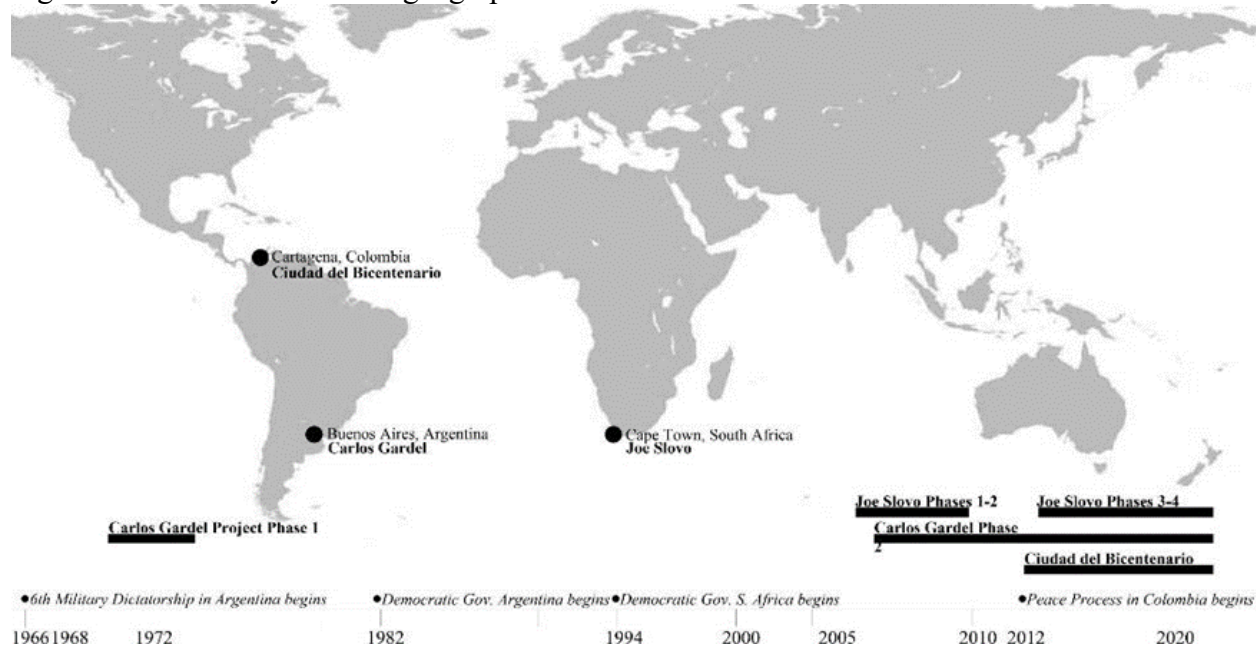
This multiple case dissertation also offers an opportunity to observe relational aspects of how housing design-politics are influenced by the transfer of models across different times and geographies. For instance, the three projects were created under housing programs designed and implemented by the national state, and the three ended up in free-house delivery schemes aimed at solving the needs of the most disadvantaged populations. However, this dissertation will not focus on a comparative approach. My objectives are centered on studying the singularities of

what I consider is repetitive and, at the same time, a singular phenomenon in the peripheries of cities in the Global South.

I chose these cases because after many years of fieldwork and professional practice, I distinguished a systemic, large and repetitive pattern of physical, economic and institutional informality that I cannot explain through existing theories about housing decay in the policy literature. The academic and technical work on housing policies is filled with generalized reflections that aim to transfer best practices from one city to the other. I intend to deep into the fine grain and particularities of each case. In particular, I aim to study the clash between the top-down universal-based policies, the contextualized adoption of these policies in each project, and the lived realities of the communities who inhabit these projects. A three-essay dissertation will allow me to have enough flexibility to create in-depth conceptual and empirical narratives and understand the 'whys' and 'hows' of each process.

Therefore, this research consists of three, interconnected single case studies classified as 'paradigmatic' given its potential to "highlight more general characteristics of the society in question…with metaphorical and prototypical value" (Flyvbjerg; 2006, pg. 322). The case studies discussed in this dissertation are not unique in their own context, they can be subscribed into a group of similar cases in their countries regarding scale, location, policy framework and population characteristics. The following matrix (Figure 2) illustrates similar housing developments per metropolitan area where I distinguished processes of decay, informalization, or both. Each selection of cases responds to projects built within the same national housing policies: Slums Eradication Program in Argentina, Macroprojects of National Social Interest in Colombia, and Breaking New Ground in South Africa. The chart displays contextual variables for each case, organized in terms of policy, typology, location, population, and the dependent variable of the research (the informalization of the formal). However, despite the existence of other similar cases, one factor in particular positions them as paradigmatic cases of "metaphorical and prototypical value." The three cases represented "model" processes and products for their time, i.e., they were projects designed to represent a new vision of how to build housing, how to live in the city, of the integral role of being able to offer a superior housing solution that has a tangible impact on the lives of its inhabitants. The three projects were "pilots" of innovation: Ciudad del Bicentenario was the first macroproject in Colombia and the first experience of the Santo Domingo Foundation as a social housing developer and administrator of its DINCS model to "build communities and not just housing"; Presidente Sarmiento was the first PEVE project developed by the STAFF studio, which marked a profound change in the design and programming of large housing complexes in Argentina; and Joe Slovo was conceived as the pilot project of BNG, a new housing policy proposed to change the regulatory and operational direction of social housing in South Africa.

The matrix also shows that, in empirical terms, decay and informalization can be independent phenomena. Based on this universe of cases, my selection is based on the availability of data, my connections to arrange interviews, and my access to key informants. The selection is also based on the particular characteristics of these three projects in terms of the informalization of the formal: the large scale of the informalization in relation to the scale of the original housing project, and the variety of (formal) architectural typologies within the same project, including multifamily buildings. These two variables, scale and variety of typologies, are particularly important to my research. The scale of the informalization within each project denotes that the process is not a few, isolated initiatives but a pattern that has taken over the

logics of the neighborhood. The variety of typologies allows me to investigate informalization in different material conditions, both to analyze the relationship between form and process and to avoid assertions of spatial determinism. The latter is particularly important in the South African case, where backyarding is a phenomenon often associated to the physical characteristics of the RDP Housing: low-density, small single-family houses, big land parcels, and peripheral location. The aim of this threefold exploration is to understand why and how informalization emerges and develops in various settlement types, why this outcome is not necessarily a policy failure, and why it takes different physical and symbolic forms that shape the community and the relationship between the communities and the State. The following chart and map illustrate the general context of the three cases.

Figure 2. Case study selection matrix

PROJECTS	POLICY				TYPOLOGY				LAND			POPULATION			building DECAY	INFORMALIZATION
	National Housing Policy	Local Government implementation	Private Construction company	Architecture Studio Design	single family - low-density	multi family - mid/high-density	only residential uses	community services	peripherial at time of construction	peripherial at time of analysis	beneficiaries become homeowners	more than 5.000 inhabitants	targeted at low-income	relocated population		
ARGENTINA Buenos Aires metro area																
Ejercito Los Andes																
Soldati 1 y 2																
Presidente Sarmiento																
Don Orione																
COLOMBIA Cartagena-Barranquilla metro region																
Villas de San Pablo																
Ciudad del Bicentenario																
Villaz Aranjuez																
SOUTH AFRICA Cape Town metro area																
Joe Slovo Phase 1-2-3																
Pelikan Park																
Roosendaal in Delft																

Source: Laura Wainer

Table 1. General context data of study cases

Project	Presidente Sarmiento	Ciudad del Bicentenario	Joe Slovo
City - Country	Cartagena, Colombia	Buenos Aires, Argentina	Cape Town, South Africa
City population (estimated at 2020 in the metro area)*	1060395 (2020)	15153729 (2020)	4617560 (2020)
at date of project design and implementation*	919,212 (2010)	8.420.000 (1970)	3.700.000 (2005)
Country GDP**	6,301.59 USD (2017)	14,401.97 USD (2017)	6,160.73 USD (2017)
Housing Deficit (quantitative and qualitative, last official record ***	13.8 percent (2018)	16.1 percent (2010)	18.55 percent (2018)
at date design and implementation (last official record)	13.4 percent (2005)	25 percent (1968)	18.8 percent (2001)
Type of Government Regime	The government of Argentina, within the framework of a federal system, is a presidential representative democratic republic. The President of Argentina is both head of state and head of government. Executive power is exercised by the President. Legislative power is vested in the National Congress. The Judiciary is independent from the Executive and from the Legislature. Provinces and cities have urban planning and housing power capacities.	The Government of Colombia is a republic with separation of powers into executive, judicial and legislative branches. Its legislature has a congress, its judiciary has a supreme court, and its executive branch has a president. President is elected through direct vote. Provinces and cities have urban planning and housing power capacities.	The Republic of South Africa is a parliamentary republic with three-tier system of government and an independent judiciary, operating in a parliamentary system. Legislative authority is held by the Parliament of South Africa. Executive authority is vested in the President of South Africa who is head of state and head of government, and his Cabinet. The President is elected by the Parliament to serve a fixed term. Provinces and cities have urban planning and housing power capacities.

at date of project design and implementation	Junta of Commanders of the Armed Forces. Military dictatorship leaded by Juan Carlos Onganía Carballo who was de facto President of Argentina from 29 June 1966 to 8 June 1970. He rose to power as military dictator after toggling the president Arturo Illia in a coup d'état self-named Revolución Argentina.	Some regions of Bolivar and the Pacific Coast of Colombia are ruled by Right-wing paramilitary groups have been blamed for the vast majority of human rights violations in Colombia. The United Nations has estimated that approximately 80 percent of all killings in Colombia's civil conflict have been committed by paramilitaries, 12 percent by leftist guerrillas, and the remaining 8 percent by government forces.	Ten years after the end of Apartheid Regime, a system of institutionalized racial segregation that existed in South Africa and Namibia from 1948 until the early 1990s. Apartheid was characterized by an authoritarian political culture based on white supremacy. The economic legacy and social effects of apartheid continue to the present day.
Housing Policy Context	The national government designed both transitory and permanent housing solutions named Núcleos Habitacionales Transitorios (NHT) and Grandes Conjuntos Habitacionales (GCH), respectively. The funds came from the national budget and the InterAmerican Development Bank. The construction of the housing took place within the national public policies, which promoted the eradication of the population living in "slums" under the promise of "decent housing." In less than two decades (1970-	Colombia's housing policy belongs to a larger initiative called "Macroprojects of National Social Interest" (Macroproyectos de Interés Social Nacional) which also involves programs on infrastructure, mining and energy. The national government intervenes directly in the management and execution of large-scale housing projects that are focused on expanding urban land markets. The management scheme, created as part of a nationwide strategy, is to 1) increase the units of affordable housing (VIP and VIS) and 2) facilitate areas for	The N2-Gateway was conceived as a pilot project of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements, informally known as Breaking New Ground (BNG), created after eight years of strong criticisms of the Reconstruction Development Program (RDP 1996) that questioned the quantitative emphasis on the delivery of "bricks and mortar" over other holistic urban approaches. The BNG proposed a new normative framework: densification of housing projects shifting from a single-family prototype to

	1980), the national government built 80 large-scale housing projects in the Metropolitan Region of Buenos Aires (RMBA) (an area now housing 14 million people. Today these projects house about 41,445 families (Habitar 2013).	affordable housing through adequate provision of public utilities, road system, public space and public facilities. Since 2010, the national government has invested USD $1,448,275,862 to build 100,000 housing units across the country.	multistory buildings; rental housing units developed along with the traditional ownership schemes; and neighborhoods designed for mixed-income groups (BNG, 2004).
Current policies implemented in the project	Since 2005, the provincial government started the implementation of the Subprogram for Housing Development and Precarious Settlements to solve infrastructure, services and public spaces deficit.	Macroprojects of National Social Interest in Ciudad del Bicentenario is still under implementation, with about 25 percent of the project completed	The Joe Slovo redevelopment plan is still under implementation, now on Phase 4, with about 30 percent of the original informal settlement still present.
Scale of the project (units to be delivered by original plans)	1,172 apartments (1968-1972)	29,120 houses	500 apartments in phase 1
Housing units delivered by 2020	1,868 houses between 1972- and 2019	5,117 houses between 2010- and 2019	2,880 houses between 2004 and 2018
Population served (estimated)	5,274	23,026	12,960
Distance to CDB	20km in a 50km radius	15 km in a 15km radius	12 km in 30km radius
Site scale (in surface)	18 hectares	388 hectares	33 hectares

Source: Laura Wainer

*Data source: UN-data based on national statistics at https://data.un.org

**Data source: World Bank Indicators at https://data.worldbank.org

***Data sources: DANE Colombia 2005 and 2018, Censo Argentina 2010 and Dirección de Política Habitacional del Instituto Provincial de la Vivienda de Buenos Aires; Municipal Economic Review and Outlook (Mero) Cape Town and National SA Census 20001 and 2010

CHAPTER 3 – City-making Cultures in the global South

INTRODUCTION

My interest in housing projects for the most vulnerable populations stems from an underlying interest in the relationship between power and its materiality. In particular, I am interested in what the power bids are behind the production of the city. As Larry Vale (2019) says, public housing projects are not only architectural objects in the urban landscape; they also represent exercises in governance. The literal and ideological construction of housing projects is carried by actors whose interests and actions are defined by structure, agency and historical contingency (Vale, 2019). In fact, the production and transformation of the built environment does not happen without conflict of interests, and in turn, neither does it take place without a certain level of agreement. Each building is ultimately a compromise between the intentions of the architects, the capabilities of the builders, the economy, the politics, the people who use the building, and the people who paid for the building (Hyde, 2019). But, while buildings have great capacity to carry symbolic power, the real dispute over city production is materialized in the treatment and social distribution and redistribution of land-- its typification, morphology, and the legal substance. One of my great teachers of urbanism, Alfredo Garay (2012), explains to his students that the fundamental unit of analysis of the city is the plot, also known as the urban parcel. Embedded in urban regulations, the scale of investments, the boundaries between the public and the private, the plot materializes the social and technical relations of city production and the power rooted in these relations. The plot is also where each family, each developer, each tenant, each owner projects their desires, aspirations, savings and dreams. The city is, in short, the social and physical fabric that materializes spatialized power relationships embedded in a large number of individuals deciding over an infinite number of public and private plots.

Governments, in defense of the public good, a powerful elite or their own interests, intervene in the conflict emerging from the transformation of the city with diverse public planning tools: regulations, tenancy regimes, public works investment, sector plans, and urban projects, among others. Urban planning theory, from positivist-utilitarian to Marxist and postcolonial, usually presents planners as "mediators" who intervene in conflicts among different groups of interest to ensure either the betterment of society (Hall, 1975), the reproduction of surplus to be appropriated by capitalists (Harvey, 1996), or the necessary social cohesion for the continuation of commodity production and exchange (Scott and Roweis, 1977). While all these authors make important claims on the ways urban planning emerges in specific historical contexts to balance social tensions, the evolution of planning disciplines through modern history uncovers that 'mediation; works for societal fragmentation and socio-spatial exclusion (Williams, 2020). Apartheid planning in South Africa, redlining in the U.S., gated communities in Latin America are a few examples on how planners serve to mediate and build social cohesion only among specific groups, while they deliberately exclude and marginalize others. This speaks directly to the structural, exclusionary condition of private property as a fundamental generator of legal inequality within capitalist societies.

A clear example of planning's mediation-exclusion role occurs when governments decide to intervene in the production of cities through large-scale housing projects for the most

vulnerable social groups. In this kind of project, the great complexity involved in city production is reduced to a unidirectional, simplified and often undemocratic decision-making process (Chang, 2016; Davis, 2014; Scott, 1998). In favor of mediating social demands, governments exclude "beneficiaries" of housing policies from the city-production process, that is, they are not part of the decision-making, the design, or the construction of their houses and neighborhoods (Chatterjee, 2004). This undemocratic decision-making process carries its own materiality. Fascinatingly, no matter what decade, geography, public policy ideology, or political regime-- and moreover, no matter whether they have been built under capitalism or socialism--these projects almost always look the same: large-scale neighborhoods with standardized architecture, and a lack of any folkloric or cultural identity. These projects are too often located on the edges of cities with repetitive urban grids which are not integrated to the surroundings, and without any awareness of the natural environment where they are implemented. As I develop later in the chapter, this outstanding capacity to transcend almost everything including political and economic regimes, speaks to the important role of materiality as a fundamental device for the emergence and reproduction of the modern State (Chatterjee, 2004; Scott, 1998). It also speaks to the central role of spatialized power, embedded in legal/ architecture arrangements, to the modern State's coercive agenda, even within extensively democratic contexts (Foucault, 1977). From this perspective, authoritarian spaces are created independently of the kind of the regime that accommodates them. While easier to observe in authoritarian regimes and public buildings, they constitute a form of power and political regulation, which serve the interests of coalitions of power seeking to spread the standardization of new – modern – rationalities as a limitation on pluralism and democratic practices (Planel, 2015). Perhaps the most inconceivable example of this capacity for transcendence are the housing projects built by the national governments during and after the South African apartheid. Although the political, social, and economic objectives of the apartheid regime and Mandela's democratic government were opposed, as were their housing policies, the materialization of such divergent visions has all too similar characteristics well documented by South African academia (Bond & Tait, 1997; Huchzermeyer, 2001; Leibbrandt et al., 2010; Pieterse, 2014; Turok, 2015).

Often, authoritarian space refers to spatial arrangements created under State domination to exercise social control through devices such as maps, land registries, statistical systems, planning standards, and legal registers (Scott, 1998). Both the spatial arrangements and the devices deployed by the State vary in their degree of formal /informal development (Roy, 2009; Planel, 2015). Modernistic housing projects are associated with authoritarian, spatial practices because they often ignore the realities of their territories. By standardizing the built environment in remote areas, these industrializing, modern technologies constrain more than housing; they also constrain the diverse livelihood practices, and conflicts of interest on the creation of urban land. However, the authoritarian spatial exercise of power cannot be restricted to the top-down exercise of state power to subordinate social groups, but it reflects a complex and localized interplay of power including actors operating both outside and inside the state apparatus (Roy, 2009 and 2010). From this perspective, a spatial approach to the authoritarian phenomenon should explore the practices of control and resistance not just conjointly but together, as a twofold purpose (Planel, 2015). My interest in the processes of informalization of large-scale, formal housing projects lies not only in an alternative view of informality, but also in an inquiry about what the necessary efforts are that people must deploy to dismantle - or at least try to transform - spatialized authoritarianism. Specifically, what are alternative city-making practices to that of the modern state and capitalism? Can those practices constitute a city-making rationale

or are they just reactions, adaptations and tactics? And, what happens when multiple city-making rationalities compete for control of the same physical space and territories?

To answer these questions, my literature review focuses on the logics of contested city-making practices that I find in the informalization of housing projects: the national housing policy, the informal encroachments deployed by the residents, and the local actors that mediate between them. In 2003, Vanessa Watson alerted us to the "conflicting rationalities" arising at the interface between techno-managerial government practices, such as these housing megaprojects, and survival strategies under conditions of informality in the Global South. Like Marxists and liberal theorists, she also situates planners as trapped within this fundamental tension-- professionals with good intentions but little guidance about how to work within such complex scenarios and contradictory agendas (Watson, 2009). Almost twenty years later, I draw on the concept of 'conflicting rationalities' to shed light on how the politics of city-making unfolds in the urban peripheries filled up with large-scale, low-income housing projects. Rather than focusing on the worldviews and value systems that guide the State's actions, as well as contestation, political protest and civic mobilization (Watson, 2003), this literature analysis focuses on the pragmatic practice of city-making of divergent "makers." To do so, I introduce an in-depth analysis of the rationalities involved in the production and transformation of these housing projects. I present the idea of 'city-making cultures', drawing on the intersection between 'planning cultures' --the discourse, models, customs and practices driven by State building normative values (Sanyal, 2005) and the 'practical urbanism' rooted in everyday decisions of individuals and collectives that have small but discernible impacts on the experience and quality of life in cities (Shepard, 2017). Under the lens of city-making cultures, I analyze three bodies of theoretical debates: the planning culture of the modern State; the productive rationality of informal, self-building; and the role of 'situated' actors. These actors are municipalities, corporations, local politicians and NGOs, who operate in specific local contexts merging private but collective agendas with the realpolitik of city-making on the ground.

In what follows, I offer an overview of how the key literature helps frame this dissertation. I then present a more in-depth analysis of the existing literature on the role of the national State in city-making, the processes of self-building, and the links between 'situated' actors and housing production. I finalize with a brief discussion about the insights and the unanswered questions of the role of divergent actors and their city-making cultures.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Housing policies ought to be situated in the larger contexts of the welfare state, neoliberalism, family structure and function, and broad patterns of consumption and production, instead of being examined solely as a tenure type or an architectural reality (Ronald and Elsinga, 2010; Vale, 2019). When studying the role of the national state in city-making, it is assumed that the institutional contexts for housing policy vary widely due to differences in history, government structure, legal traditions, and economic resources. However, national planning cultures opposition to be complex responses to sociopolitical challenges that occur both within and outside the boundaries of a given nation-state (Sanyal, 2005). Indeed, national-scale policies for poverty alleviation in developing countries, such as low-income housing, have been highly influenced by imported –or imposed—techniques of colonialism, such as individual private property regimes, modern architecture, and urban planning (Kwak, 2015; Chang, 2016). The

intimate relationship between housing, property and space-making takes us to the colonial period and the creation of social structures, physical forms, and legal frameworks that persist today. Property formation –in the shape of land law and tenure practices-- had a crucial role in the spatial dynamics of early colonization and is still intimately involved in making states, making subjects, and making space (Bhandar, 2018; Gree, 2018). Modern housing policy is deeply influenced by the colonial, spatialized politics of property in many ways: by reproducing the logics of possession and dispossession, by pushing the dispossessed to the physical and social margins, by creating individual property rights, and by producing differentiated spaces according to race, gender and class (Bhandar, 2018; Chang & King, 2011; Fails & Krieckhaus, 2010). One of the most direct influences of colonial property formation that is materialized in housing policy is how individualism permeates modern moral and historical discourses about the ideal of homeownership (Gree, 2018).

The important role that mass-housing has as a "civilizing technology" in the formation of modern, post-colonial states explains why national-scale planning triggered so much attention from international institutions such as the United Nations. Expanding homeownership mattered to those in power as a vital way to shore up an expanding middle class and make government seem more appealing. The promise of homeownership viewed good citizenship, democracy, modernism, and capitalism as mutually constituted (Gilbert, 2013). Planning and design were instruments to accelerate and give direction to the modernization project, in particular homeownership. Back in the mid-20th century, transplanting planning and design ideals could be justified by the belief in a universal pathway for socioeconomic development (Healey, 2011). In addition, the magnitude of massive housing programs ensures the dependence of emerging economies on international finance, often facilitated through institutions such as the World Bank and aid agencies that have had powerful impacts in promoting and applying northern/western theories and practices of housing (Chang, 2016; Rolnik, 2019). These institutions created conditions for specific city-making cultures that favored capitalist, liberal ideals shaping the political agendas of countries in the Global South. In the field of housing, the ideological adulation of homeownership is accompanied by the notion of an 'asset-based' welfare, which has become increasingly central to debates on poverty after many countries committed to the constitutional right to housing in the 1990s (Libertun, 2018b).

By looking at the ways homeownership and modernist architecture work together as civilizing technologies, it is impossible to differentiate the transformation of the built environment from the massive transformation of different modes of tenure. Diverse kinship, customary rule and collective tenures were all merged into individual property to standardize local processes of land valuation, use, and tenure into a uniform system to facilitate national and international investment. Through these processes early national housing policies in post-colonial countries not only pushed land but also people to the physical and symbolic margins of the urban life, with a very specific, "modern" version of debt-driven, state-regulated ownership and physical landscapes (Bhandar, 2018; Kwak, 2015; Rolnik, 2013, 2019). Homeownership-based policies took different shapes in the history of Latin American and southern African countries, from initiatives by unions and cooperatives in the early twentieth century, to subsidized real estate markets through public mortgage banks in the mid-century and, more recently, demand-side financial incentives, and titling programs in informal settlements (Pugh, 2001; Murray and Clapham, 2015; Rojas, 2015). Despite these diverse approaches an allegedly apolitical "bureaucratic intelligentsia" (Scott, 1998) identified with science and socioeconomic

progress, implemented standardized and 'neutral' technical expertise, and shaped the outskirts of our cities. The great capacity of modernism relies on transcending political ideologies and contexts relies on the fact that modernist principles are not a particular ideological model to follow, but they are a quasi-religion that imposed truth on efficiency, order and social progress. The principles are intrinsically related to the genesis and permanence of the modern state. Its aseptic architecture reduced to the minimum aesthetic expression and the predominance of the private over the public, are still utilitarian principles for the standardization of housing and its urban landscapes. Under these principles, despite the different political, institutional, demographic and economic contexts of countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, Brazil, Argentina, India, and Thailand, their housing policies produce the same industrial-like neighborhoods located on the outskirts of cities. We also see a homogenization of house design and construction technologies that look similarly inadequate (Buckley et al., 2016; Turok, 2015 and 2016). Even more, the takeover of the housing sector by finance –a political narrative that rejected the idea of modernism and state intervention-- did not represent a different type of built environment. On the contrary, it reinforced a planning culture of standardized, low-cost real-estate developments in the expansion of the cities (Rolnik, 2019). Nowadays, within a worldwide housing financialization phenomenon, the standardized architectural and legal design of the houses and public spaces often fails to consider environmental sustainability, risk protection, and climate adaptation strategies, yielding new forms of vulnerability (Rolnik, 2013; Simone and Pieterse, 2018).

Despite these big efforts in imposing a modernist agenda to the production of cities in Latin American and African countries, the persistence of large proportions of the population living in informal settlements speaks to the failure of modernism as both an economic and a political project. It is well-assumed that large parts of the southern cities are actually produced outside the spheres of legality, urban planning and design (Abramo, 2012). At the same time, Latin America and Africa have been relatively tolerant of substandard housing and this may account for their higher rates of ownership. In countries willing to accommodate housing that is initially substandard, low-income households will have greater opportunity to become owners (Jacobs and Savedoff, 1999). The production of the non-modern city in modern regimes occurs through variants that combine individuals or families and collective-organized actors in the different stages of the housing cycle, from settlements initiated in land occupations, to cooperative housing projects, and self-building (Rodriguez et al., 2007).

Academia and governments have historically looked at self-building as socioeconomic and physical processes that emerge from the logic of "necessity" of the social groups that are left behind by the logics of the market (Abramo, 2012). They supposedly operate "out of the rule of law" while they wait for regularization, formalization and integration into the formal city through time and policy intervention (Ward, 2012). However, the atemporal persistence and the physical and demographic scale that the self-built territories have acquired over the last decades, define these practices as a mode of city production that exceeds tactical or reactive responses to the State's abandonment. I argue that self-building secures its own normative culture, and its own political praxis that co-exists with the market and the State.

By analyzing the extensive literature on Latin America and southern Africa, it is possible to characterize self-building as a city-making culture that is in constant crossover between the legal and the illegal, the product and the process, the finished house and the progressive construction. As Caldeira (2017) points out, popular habitats often self-built in peripheral

locations, do not involve spaces already made that can be consumed as finished products before they are even inhabited. Thus, self-building involves a distinctive temporality termed in long-term processes of incompletion and continuous improvement led by their own residents (Caldeira, 2017; Motta, 2014). Self-builders intervene actively in a large part or in the entire production process of their homes, where the roles of producer and final user or consumer overlap (Di Virgilio et al., 2014). The house is also the space for work, for developing an economic activity, workshops, activities of care, education and life reproduction (Cavalcanti, 2009; Motta, 2014). Thus, individual and exclusive ownership cannot capture the complex ways collective ownership and inheritance are negotiated in practice (Ward et al., 2011), neither the self-builders' values based on shared arrangements (Ward, 2012), the localized logics of informal lending (Mitlin et al., 2018) and the overall rationality which merges reproduction (domestic activities) and production (economic activities); (Kellett and Tigsle 2000).

Despite the diversity in histories, practices and cases, public policies have historically assumed standardized parameters to interpret and intervene in the self-building. As self-built neighborhoods became relevant in the discussion of international organizations focused on making effective policies to foster homeownership models in the "developing world," governments have applied "internationalized" solutions often divorced from the diverse local realities. This influence is due to the technical and financial efforts of multilateral credit organizations, such as the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank, in shaping the urban agendas of poverty (Roy, 2010). For instance, from 1970 onwards, "sites-and-services" emerged as the main technical solution for the financial support of self-building practices.

An interesting entry point to understand the logics of self-building starts by questioning the assumptions on which these self-help, regularization, sites and services and other policies were created to support self-building processes. I found four assumptions that speak directly to the rationales of self-building and its possibility to be viewed as a planning culture itself. The first states that families need titling regularization and legal ownership to enjoy secure tenure, to feel "attached to their land," and to make significant investments in the house (Ward, 2011). The second is that self-built neighborhoods will benefit from efficiently planned built environments with readable urban grids, sectorized land use regulations, and standardized urban morphology (Bredenoord and Verkoren 2010). The third assumption relies on the financial capacity of self-builders, and the idea that formal, appropriate finance can greatly increase the speed and lower the cost of incremental housing (Smets 2006, Ferguson and Smets, 2009). The fourth assumption is that self-building is about housing affordability (Turner, 1967). While I develop these assumptions in depth later in the chapter, what transpires from its analysis is that self-building does not operate out the capitalist markets of land, but in transversal paths to the dominant logics of real estate, banks, finance corporations, and professional design expertise (Caldeira, 2017; Grauber 2020). The self-built territories are not necessarily clandestine and do not grow in isolation from the official logics of legal property, formal labor, state regulation, and market capitalism, but they unsettle them. In fact, the modalities of self-construction are not limited to domestic work or to a secondary activity within the work environment, but rather to an interrelation of actors and institutions (including the State) that co-produce the popular habitat in different ways. Cravino (2001) identifies three processes of self-construction, which are not exclusive but complementary and juxtaposed: self-management, that is, groups of neighbors on their own initiative who share resources and labor; collectives, assisted by the State, which contribute with economic resources and also organizes and controls the tasks and labor; and self-

construction, assisted by non-governmental organizations, which generally provide technical assistance and financing.

The widespread self-building exemplifies both the drawbacks, and the instrumentality of how ownership-centered housing ideologies operate in countries where informality represents a large share of the productive life (Grubbauer, 2020). It is also in these countries where planning practitioners and academics have expended significant effort into creating urban agendas based on a wide range of ideologies, values and techniques--from the Right to The City and Inclusive Development to Incremental Design. These approaches have been created to overcome the deficits involved with large parts of the cities being developed "under the rule of law." In a context where housing is increasingly recognized as a local governance challenge, local governments have called for an effective transfer of skills to participate in national housing programs (Huchzermeyer 2001). In practice, however, it is unclear if the local State is a key driver in the process of securing housing for economically marginal communities. For instance, in Latin American and southern Africa countries, housing policy established by national authorities outside of the local planning often contradicts the local governments' plans and does little to incorporate urban normative frameworks and new ideas in design and management. Consequently, the local government has limited implementation and decision-making power and its role is reduced to enable institutional cooperation and partnership models (Ley, 2010). With limited financial resources and decision-making power, local governments lose their legitimacy with communities that deem higher levels of public administration as more capable of addressing local needs (Pimentel Walker, 2016).

In the production of housing in the global South, the most common encounter between communities and the national State in the development of low-income territories is not necessarily the local state but local *politics* (Banck, 1986). The lack of government decentralization in the global South questions whether the concept of "local" is accurate to analyze actors who do not necessarily reflect local forces. Even when globalization leads to a re-territorialization of the State in multiple scales, and the urbanization of poverty underscores the imperative of downscaling the developmental State to the city scale (Parnell, 2004), the national State maintains the territorial conditions for social reproduction, in particular for the most disadvantaged populations. This control happens by means of various forms of housing, infrastructure, transportation policy, producing uneven geographical development (Brenner 2004, Ong, 2006).

To avoid overemphasizing the power of the local in the southern context, the term 'situated agents' refers to those who operate in given structural scenarios and unstable sets of social relationships deploying strategies and tactics to achieve their particular ends (Zunino, 2006). The difference between local and situated agents is that the former imply relative stability of governing coalitions and fixed categorizations of governance arrangements (Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989), while the latter assumes unstable social relationships and conflicted rationalities between the logic of governing (control and development) and the logic of survival (efforts of those excluded from the 'formal' economy (Zunino, 2006, Watson, 2009). These are NGOs, foundations, local administrations, corporations, cooperatives, unions and individuals representing a wide variety of collectives.

In the realpolitik of city-production, alternative organized collectives make serious effort to inculcate protocols of speech, style and organization to pool resources, establish lobbying,

provide mutual risk management devices and, when necessary, negotiate with government structures. In other words, in the absence of the State, "action-based" organizations, a conglomerate between organized communities and third sector organizations, emerge to put communities of the urban poor at the center of their own development and co-produce habitats in incremental development (Holston, 1998; Appadurai, 2002; Bayat, 2002). But it is particularly in the absence of the State, and not in the production of public housing projects, that this development model emerges and is implemented. Empirical evidence about the outcomes of situated agents involved in low-income housing projects is rather dissimilar and shows that its performance depends on a complex interaction of participants, interests, objectives, resources and processes that go beyond their own culture and normative objectives (Miraftab, 2003; Larrizalde, 2008).

EXTENDED LITERATURE REVIEW: CITY-MAKERS

National housing policies

Housing as civilizing technology

When studying the role of the national state in city-making, it is assumed that the institutional contexts for housing policy vary widely due to differences in history, government structure, legal traditions, and economic resources. However, national planning cultures opposition to be complex responses to sociopolitical challenges that occur both within and outside the states' boundaries (Sanyal, 2005). Indeed, national-scale policies for poverty alleviation in developing countries, such as low-income housing, have been highly influenced by imported –or imposed—techniques of colonialism (Roy, 2015; Kwak, 2015). The important role that massive housing has as a "civilizing technology" in the formation of modern, post-colonial states defines why national-scale planning is a matter of international politics (Escobar, 1998). In addition, the magnitude of massive housing programs implies the dependence of emerging economies on international finance often facilitated through institutions, such as the World Bank and aid agencies that have had powerful impacts in promoting and applying northwestern theories and practices of housing (Pugh, 2001). These institutions created conditions and planning cultures that favored capitalistic, liberal ideals shaping the political agendas of southern societies.

In the field of housing, the most significant European and North American exported ideal has been the ideological adulation of homeownership. The global agenda of North American 'soft power' took shape in conventional politics, cultural hegemony and the material artifacts of homes (Kwak, 2015).

Unsurprisingly, due to the variety of contexts, homeownership entailed a significant process of adaptation, not only in financial and legal planning, but also in architecture and design (Guillen, 2004; Segre, 2005). The intimate relationship between housing, property and space-making takes us to the colonial period and the creation of social structures, physical forms and legal frameworks that persist today. Property formation –in the shape of land law and tenure practices-- had a crucial role in the spatial dynamics of early colonization and is still intimately involved in making states, making subjects, and making space (Bhandar, 2018). The institution

of colonial property was more than a practical device for ensuring the efficient allocation of resources and stimulating economic growth; it was the main mechanism for establishing colonial jurisdictions and defining the legal apparatus of sovereignty, reminding us that colonization took place in space and that territorial possession is a defining feature (Gree, 2018).

In differentiating space, property also differentiates people: the included and the excluded, those who have the right to possess, those who were dispossessed, and those who were considered property themselves (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013). For instance, ownership fabricates racial difference and gender identities in the same way that it creates a mutually constitutive relationship between owners and land, defining those qualified to own ("whites"), those qualified to be owned ("Blacks, Indians"; Harris, 1993; Geer, 2018). The *propertizing* of the lives of Black people established the basis for the merger of white personhood with property (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013; Harris, 1993) and consequently with the right to produce space (Bhandar, 2018). The relationship between private property and selected individualism sets the predisposition to treat some individuals as the fundamental unit of the social, and to exalt the individual, typically constructed as a white male (Geer, 2018). In this sense, private property is a technology that creates discretional control over land and materializes the willpower of selected individuals about spatial arrangements (Scott and Roweis, 1977).

Through this entangled relationship between race and property, historical forms of domination in which whiteness has come to have value as a property in itself (Harris, 1993). These forms have evolved to reproduce subordination in the present, when the dispossessed are still pushed to the margins of the multiple social and physical peripheries of the social structure. Modern housing policy is deeply influenced by the colonial, spatialized politics of property in many ways: by reproducing the logics of possession and dispossession, by pushing the dispossessed to the physical and social margins, by creating individual property rights, and by producing differentiated spaces according to race, gender and class. One of the most direct influences of colonial property formation that is materialized in housing policy is how individualism permeates modern moral and historical discourses about the ideal of homeownership. "A nation of owners" is a slogan that, with local variations, has captured many housing ministries (Jacobs and Savedoff, 1999) as housing plays a vital role in mediating between the interests of property owners and social disruption. In this sense, property formation exposes the ways in which governments create tenures and also the ways in which property relations work to create and sustain governments (Geer, 2018). For example, by the mid-1950s, various officials of the apartheid regime in South Africa were strong advocates for homeownership, a matter that stood in contradiction to the government's posture that Black South Africans were temporary residents of cities. However, the government waived property rights for Black South Africans as a means of social engineering. Apartheid's architect D.M Calderwood cites the 1952's National Housing Planning Commission urging homeownership because, from an administrative point of view, ownership schemes are "(…) easier to administer and regulate, and homeownership is a stabilizing influence and one of the main bastions against Communism and other social ills" (Calderwood, 1953:14, in Haarhoff, 2011). This example illustrates how the apparent contradiction of Black African homeownership during the apartheid regime was created to normalize behaviors through a system of institutional inclusion and spatial exclusion. Rather than creating social cohesion or harmonization among the society, Black African homeownership was materialized as a technology of dispossession, the other side of property formation.

Within the decolonialization period and subsequent nation-state building processes, the tensions between diverse geographies, government structures, institutional traditions, and universalized expertise serving purposes of economic and political domination have shaped housing policy all across the global South (Kwak, 2015). Expanding homeownership mattered to those in power as a vital way to shore up an expanding middle class and make government seem more appealing. The promise of homeownership viewed good citizenship, democracy, modernism and capitalism as mutually constituted (Gilbert, 2013). Planning and design were instruments to accelerate and give direction to the modernization project, in particular homeownership. Back in the mid-20th century, transplanting planning and design ideals could be justified by the belief in a universal pathway for socioeconomic development (Healey, 2011). The hygienic architecture movement spread to South America and Southern Asia, as one part of a larger modernist belief that the built environment could be the quintessential agent for modernization and social change, covering up a eugenic project for the whitening of the population. The first Latin American "social housing" initiatives emerged between 1910 and 1930 to house the new urban working class in countries such as Mexico, Uruguay, Brazil and Argentina. The European-based (but not necessarily modern) architecture of these projects offered "bourgeois respectability" to the proletarian neighborhoods in what Roberto Segre calls a "failed attempt" to forestall the social and physical fragmentation of the emerging Latin-American cities (Segre, 2005). Social housing proponents aligned themselves with the emerging hygienist movement that supported state intervention in the production of residential neighborhoods for the working class, as revealed during the first Pan-American congress on Popular Housing celebrated in Buenos Aires in 1939. Importantly for the development of modernist housing, Guillen (2004) argues, public housing was understood as a type of "infrastructure," falling under the purview of engineers who were concerned with top-down methods, standardization, and industrialization in a social engineering project (Guillen, 2004; Chang, 2016).

In Africa, early modern architecture first emerged within late-colonial regimes in the 20th century, seeking imported European models to replicate western living conditions in the colonies and to improve "the sanitary order," following public health initiatives in Europe, which were also spreading to South America (Chang, 2016). These targeted both white European and non-white populations, but, in a similar fashion to Latin-America, modern architectural solutions were very different for the elite than for the working class. The first relied on the expertise of architects and the second on the field of civil engineering. By the early 1960s, nationalist independence movements spread across the continent, and governments quickly put-up infrastructure projects following North American regional planning traditions, even as national elites attempted to define new aesthetic models (Okoye, 2002; Bekele, 2003; Bahre and Lecocq, 2007). Modern architecture and planning proved to be a powerful technical tool for racist policy goals in countries such as South Africa and Namibia until the mid-1990s. Starting in the 1950s, "Native Housing Initiatives" created below-standard, industrial-like townships on the urban periphery—a low-rise but far more densely-occupied parallel to the Garden City inspired residential areas for the white elites (Haarhoff, 2011). In Nigeria, the government adopted the most orthodox modernist models in colonial-reservation areas and townships, shaped by "global" norms imported from elsewhere, particularly the British Empire, and caring little about different geographical and economic contexts (Immerwahr, 2007, Chang, 2016). For instance, in Festac-Lagos, low-rise flats designed in the 1970s for an emerging, Black, middle-income class featured modern kitchens, but women preferred to use the balconies for traditional mortar and pestle

cooking. Then, since the balconies had not been designed to support the weight of heavy cooking uses, local authorities responded with policing schemes to control family behavior (Immerwahr, 2007).

By looking at the ways homeownership and modernist architecture worked together as civilizing technologies, it is impossible to differentiate the transformation of the built environment from the massive transformation of different modes of tenure which include kinship, customary rule and collective tenure, all transformed into individual property. In order to fuel the expansion of global capitalism by standardizing local processes of land valuation, use, and tenure into a uniform system to facilitate national and international investment, early national housing policies in post-colonial countries not only pushed land but also people to the physical and symbolical margins of the urban life, with a very specific, "modern" version of debt-driven, state-regulated ownership and physical landscapes. This is how, despite quite different economic and political contexts, between 1940 and the late 1970's industrial-like housing experiments proliferated in the peripheries of cities in Latin America and southern Africa. One of the greatest examples is Getulio Vargas's popular-welfare regime (Brazil, 1930-1945 and 1951-1954) that evinced enthusiasm for modern ideas about equality, standardization, progress, and social change through design. His developmentalist presidential successor, Juscelino Kubitschek, quickly made Brasília irreversible by 1960, with all classes intended to co-habit Niemeyer's sleek towers in Costa's bold "superquadras" (superblocks)--the ultimate modern, urban utopia. Yet, only a decade later, Chilean and Argentinean military governments utilized high-rise modern housing to "clear" inner city slums and displace socially marginalized populations to the peripheries (Gutiérrez et al., 1988, Davis, 2014). Contrary to early ideals about social change and progress, modernist architecture, particularly when targeted for low-income occupancy (in Latin America, as in the Africa), represented a repressive social engineering project. Even more, the ways the modernist planning and social housing were implemented for the bottom-end of the economic pyramid established spatial, political and social conditions that made urban violence more likely–both from the state and as an outcome of social marginalization (Davis, 2014).

The capacity of modernism to transcend political ideologies relied on its identification with science and socioeconomic progress. An allegedly apolitical "bureaucratic intelligentsia" (Scott, 1998) implemented standardized and neutralized technical expertise. Housing was conceived as a scientific and rational process requiring expert and technical knowledge. The topic of national culture was rarely, if ever, discussed. This was because, in part, the goal of planning was to change the national cultures as to rapidly modernize, both economically and politically (Sanyal, 2005). For instance, the idea embedded in the technicians' superiority over the political rationales made it possible to detach the aesthetics of high modernism-- whether through Apartheid segregation or the authoritarianism of military Juntas-- and to transform it into the aesthetics of the democratic welfare state.

Between the late 1950s and mid-1970s, the modernist approach to social housing, characterized by the idea of transforming society through the medium of space, faced withering criticism from architects and planners in the global North, including Catherine Bauer (1957), Charles Abrams (1964), John Turner (1972) and Colin Ward (1976). The stark failure of Pruitt-Igoe had its Southern counterparts, including Caracas's modern superblocks '23 de Enero' built in 1958, and the Lugano I and II towers in Buenos Aires built in the 1970s. Critics focused on ways that modernist housing alienates and segregates communities, destroying local livelihoods

and overlooking vernacular traditions (Gilbert, 2004). Moreover, by imagining large scale urban environments as tabula-rasa, high modernists engaged in an "aesthetics of erasure" of informal and vernacular landscapes (Muller-Friedman 2008, Vale 2013). Others complained about the tendency of modernism to monopolize knowledge and degrade local experience. They argued that modern architecture has been premised on assumptions about the superiority of Northern/Western practices and technologies that conceive social life as a technical problem and a as matter of "rational" decision making to be entrusted to expert professionals (Nelly, 1993; Escobar, 1998).

These arguments were rarely applied to a critique of homeownership. The promotion of the ideology of homeownership, remained a central element of the modern paradigm of housing but rarely questioned by international agencies and governments. The World Bank played a particularly important role in normalizing an American version of mass homeownership at the end of the twentieth century. As an intent to diverge from the idea of modernist housing, it developed alternative schemed of standardization and legibility, following the ideas of John Turner. In its sites-and-services, slum upgrading, market enabling, and finally, sector-wide initiatives from the 1970s to the 2000s, the World Bank urged techniques and institutions specific to the American experience. Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto's widely embraced and polemic book *The Mystery of Capital* built upon the homeownership ideal, arguing that the formalization of land titles in the developing world would provide badly needed collateral for entrepreneurial credit (Pugh, 2001). De Soto noted that "the single most important source of funds for new business in the United States is a mortgage on the entrepreneur's house," (De Soto, 2000 pg.6). World Bank housing experts concurred, declaring de Soto's observations oversimplified in their emphasis on titling. Still, the increasing dominance of financial actors, markets, practices, measurements and narratives resulted in policy that dismantled the basic institutional components that sustained the welfare state systems, included state provided housing and public housing. Adopted by governments or imposed as a conditionality to access loans by multilateral financial institutions by the end of the 1970s, the new housing paradigm proposed implementation of policies that create "stronger and bigger" housing financial markets, drawing in the low- and middle-income consumers previously excluded from the mortgages systems (Rolnik, 2019; Ronald et al., 2017).

Although homeownership-based policies took different shapes in the history of Latin American and southern African countries, from initiatives by unions and cooperatives in the early twentieth century, to subsidized real estate markets through public mortgage banks in the mid-century and, more recently, demand-side financial incentives and titling programs in informal settlements (Pugh, 2001; Murray and Clapham, 2015; Rojas, 2015), the takeover of the housing sector by finance did not represent the production of a different built environment. To the contrary, it reinforced a planning culture of standardized, low-cost real-estate/financial developments in the expansion of the cities (Rolnik, 2019).

Housing as asset-based right

The commitment to "housing as a right" came after many countries ratified new constitutions in the 1990s. Since then, the notion of an 'asset-based' welfare has become increasingly central to debates on poverty in the global South (Watson, 2009). In 1996 the Habitat II Agenda boosted this shift by focusing on increased legal recognition of housing as a human right by national governments (United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

1949). Most countries in Latin America and Africa ratified this commitment between 1976 and 1996, bringing the normative principle into a pragmatic economic prosperity argument for homeownership, shaping a new generation of national housing policies (Rolnik, 2013). In addition, these policies followed macroeconomic goals around employment and the reactivation of the construction industry (Libertun, 2018b).

As after World War II, both in Latin America and southern Africa, the resurgence of massive housing programs in the mid1990s – 2000s came along with the idea of "reconstruction." After decades of austerity and structural adjustment and the dismantling of the social welfare system embodied in the infamous Washington Consensus (Rolnik 2014), the Latin American region faced record high unemployment levels (Moreno-Brid et al., 2004). This context led to the rise of national "free" –or highly subsidized-- large-scale housing programs aimed at providing both a house and a job (Rojas, 2015), while also reactivating the construction sector and other associated industries as well (Giang and Pheng, 2011). In this context, homeownership has been reconceptualized as an important policy mechanism to overcome the detrimental social effects of market forces in the absence of redistributive programs during the 1990s (Doling and Ronald, 2010). In South Africa, the democratic transition in 1994 implied the inclusion of 80 percent of the population into citizenship, recognizing social, civic and human rights previously unaddressed. To carry out this regime change, the government of President Nelson Mandela proposed that cities should operate as catalysts of a new social contract, so, in many ways, they became the place to solve inherited social injustices. The political narrative proposed a new urban form characterized by more compact, denser and heterogeneous cities, capable of offering access to agglomeration advantages to every citizen (Turok, 2001). The country's main economic development plan, called the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) had as a goal the social and economic transformation of South Africa's cities to attack poverty and exclusion. In this context, the National government implemented the largest housing policy of any democratic modern political system in the history, constructing 3.3-million houses, nearly 20 percent of the current housing stock.

As Rolnik (2019) argues, to create housing as a means of access to wealth indicates that the home becomes a fixed capital asset whose value resides in its expectation of generating more value in the future. The underlying principle of 'asset-based' welfare is that, rather than relying on state-managed social transfers, individuals assume responsibility for their own welfare needs by investing in property assets that increase in value over time (Ronald et al., 2017). The use of homeownership as wealth stock worked, in practical terms, as potential substitutes for public pension and retirement systems but putting the risk on individuals and families instead of the State or companies (Rolnik 2019). Rather than relying on social transfers to counter welfare insecurity, individuals themselves were increasingly expected to accept greater personal responsibility for accumulating assets that enable them to make their own welfare arrangements, thus, Housing was not the only asset of asset-based welfare, but typically constituted a household's largest, most effective accumulation vehicle (Ronald et al., 2017).

These principles rely on three interrelated assumptions. The first is that formal housing is one of the major determinants of the standard of living achieved by households because it is the principal component of their wealth (DeSoto, 2001), and also reduces rent expenditures (Hulchanski, 1995). Proponents argue that homeownership stimulates the monetary economy of a household and its society since the former can spend more money in other goods and provides

economic prosperity by facilitating access to formal credit (Campbell, 2013). The second assumption is that poverty stems from a lack of money and, therefore, is an income generation and expenditures problem (Sen, 1981). Third, this perspective assumes that the house is an autonomous asset that can be viewed in isolation from livelihoods, governance, safety and the environment (Vale et al., 2014). Consequently, governments expect to tackle housing deficit by creating new, formal neighborhoods on the outskirts of cities, where houses can be built at very low cost and developers can still generate returns (Libertun, 2018a; Rolnik 2019). For regular homebuyers, the calculations of everyday life came to mimic those of professional investors with life-courses featuring a series of investment decisions and long-term financial planning (Watson, 2010). In the housing market this became extant with people buying and selling not only as a means to get better housing, but also to 'increase the store of wealth afforded by owner-occupation' (Groves et al., 2007 pg.189).

Self-builders and "auto-construction"

City production "from below"

As I presented in the first section of this chapter, in Latin American and African countries, housing policies aimed at establishing homeownership are well established, however, there is enough empirical evidence that they often fail to reach the poorest segments of society and improve the living conditions of the beneficiary families. The persistence of large proportions of the population living in informal settlements speaks to the failure of 'residential capitalism' as both an economic and a political project, in particular, how housing reproduces capitalist ideologies through privileging private property ownership and modernist built environments. At the same time, Latin America and Africa have been relatively tolerant of substandard housing and this may account for their higher rates of ownership. In countries willing to accommodate housing that is initially substandard, low-income households will have greater opportunity to become owners (Jacobs and Savedoff, 1999). In this sense, the self-built home exemplifies both the drawbacks, and the instrumentality of how ownership-centered housing ideologies operate in emerging economies where informality represents a large share of the economy. In this sense, unlike the modernization projects in the global North, governments need to constantly calibrate tolerance for informality in order to achieve equilibrium between political legitimacy, economic prosperity and social order (Davis, 2012). As a result, both in Africa and Latin America, "slum urbanism" constitutes one of the main types of urbanism and definitely almost the only one for working classes, low-income groups and popular classes (Pierterse, 2012).

In the study of the diverse aspects of the lives of the popular classes, several urban theorists focus on how the same residents build not only their own houses but also, frequently, their neighborhoods. The processes of self-building, self-management and self-design are often conceptualized as "self-help." The idea of self-help covers variants that combine the role played by individuals or families and collective-organized actors in the different stages of the housing cycle, from settlements initiated in land occupations, to cooperative housing projects and state interventions (Rodriguez et al., 2007). Both in Latin America and Southern Africa, we find early records of self-help initiatives, such as the well-known "casas chorizo" (sausage houses), a prevalent typology among the Argentinian, urban, emerging middle-class in the beginnings of

the 20th century. These houses allow families to progressively "add" rooms around a side-yard, according to their needs and economic prospects (Carbonari and Chiavoni, 2017). However, self-help practices are not an exclusively "southern" phenomenon. State-aided self-help arose as a pragmatic response to severe housing shortages after the First World War in Europe and the Soviet Union. In the 1930s, it was adopted as a mainstream policy in both Europe and the U.S., but it was not until the end of post-war years that it became most widespread, attaining prominence in public debates (Harris, 2014). In the global South, the self-help concept is applied to the habitats created by poor, low-income, unemployed, informally employed and socioeconomically marginalized groups. The authors of the southern "self-help school," such as John Turner and Charles Abrams, define the self-built urban environments in opposition to the "formal city" built by the real-estate industry (the market) and the state. This school of thought includes positivist views (Jacobs and Savedoff, 1999; Duhau and Giglia, 2008) that analyze the phenomenon as a problem related to the precariousness of housing and the irregular informality, and also post-functionalist works that situate the production of these territories as countercultures (Simone, 2004; Bayat, 2008; Solomon, 2008). Although this is a wide theoretical range, the urban habitat created by the popular classes is always conceptualized as an anomaly. Instead of analyzing these bottom-up city-making traditions in contraposition to the logics of the market and the state, I explore how and why the production of the city by popular classes can be considered a planning culture itself, and a process that exists in relation but not in opposition to the formal city.

Early studies on "where the poor live" in the global South focus on the negative "place effects" often associated with their neighborhoods, such as social exclusion, spatial segregation, and territorial control by gangs engaged in illicit activities (Duhau, 1998). These studies also suggest the advantages and disadvantages of property regularization programs, and the positive impacts of legal property tenure (Cavalcanti, 2009). The idea that a single analytical unit --often referred to as informal or self-help, indistinctly-- serves to describe diverse popular habitats (slums, favelas, villas and settlements, shantytowns, townships) can be interpreted as a singular reading of these diverse realities. Often academic, government and third sector actors observe these places as "abnormal" in contraposition to the formal city. The association between popular habitats and illegality, and deficit and crime are not only observed by conservative views, but also by points of view that are critical of the injustices experienced by their residents (Cavalcanti, 2009). This understanding of the livelihoods and strategies of the poor often produces a symbolic imagery marked by absences: of money, education, police, and the state. These absences are especially present in the discourse of the professionals responsible for producing diagnoses and proposing solutions to "improve people's lives" (Motta, 2014).

Although the discourse about the habitat of the popular classes progressively distances itself from the criminalization of poverty, these territories continue to be defined as "informal", that is to say, as anomalies of the "formal" city. For instance, even if international organizations such as UN-HABITAT shifted their narratives from criminalization to regularization, these habitats and their modes of production are still considered something distinctively different from the traditional urbanization processes. As the Vancouver 1976 UN-Habitat convention declared: "The establishment of settlements in territories occupied by force is illegal. It is condemned by the international community. However, action remains to be taken against the establishment of such settlement" (Article 5). This narrative was completely transformed by 2016, when the Pretoria UN-Habitat acknowledged "Informal Settlements" as "an urban phenomenon, existing

in urban contexts all over the world, in various forms and typologies, dimensions, locations and a great deal of the New Urban agenda focused on "transforming the lives of slum dwellers, and fostering cities and human settlements that are inclusive, promote equal opportunity, and are sustainable."

Despite this progress, academia and governments have historically looked at self-building as socioeconomic and physical processes that emerge from the logic of "necessity" of the social groups left behind by the logics of the market. They supposedly operate "out of the rule of law" while they wait for regularization, formalization and integration into the formal city through time and policy intervention. However, the temporal persistence and the physical and demographic scale that the self-built territories have acquired over the last decades, define that the "slum urbanism" is a mode of city production that acquires its own normative culture, co-existing with the market and the state. These territories are not necessarily clandestine and do not grow in isolation (Caldeira, 2017). Self-builders establish partial and punctual relations with the formal institutions, typically making decisions in a decentralized manner and choosing which norms and standards to follow. Self-builders operate inside capitalist markets of land; they access finance and use traditional construction technologies but in transversal paths to the dominant logics of real estate, banks, finance corporations, and professional design expertise (Grubbauer, 2020). As Caldeira (2017) points out, these transversal practices unsettle the official logics of legal property, formal labor, state regulation, and market capitalism, but they do not necessarily contest them directly. Instead, self-builders negotiate with the state, developers and property owners to resolve the many problems of land occupation. As an example, they often take documents and state processes as frameworks for the practical implementation of customary regulations, such as written contracts for rentals and for buying and selling, though they are not registered with the public bodies that would officially validate them (Motta, 2014).

From this perspective, it is difficult to categorize self-building as a binary variable, such as informal (vs. formal), illegal (vs. legal), or irregular (vs. regular). In fact, the modalities of self-construction are not limited to domestic work or to a secondary activity within the work environment, but rather to an interrelation of actors and institutions (including the state) that co-produce the popular habitat in different ways. Cravino (2001) identifies three processes of self-construction, which are not exclusive but complementary and juxtaposed: self-management, that is, groups of neighbors on their own initiative who share resources and labor; collectives, assisted by the State, which contributes economic resources also organizes and controls the tasks and labor; and self-construction, assisted by non-governmental organizations, which generally provide technical assistance and financing. The results of these modes of city production are various: large extensions of irregular settlements, slums, favelas, shantytowns, popular barrios, ranch neighborhoods, irregular parcels, self-produced human settlements, callampas, clandestine subdivisions, and pirated urbanization (Connolly, 2011). This diverse reality demonstrates that self-building is a heterogeneous phenomenon. As such, it cannot be analyzed as a single physical and social reality. Although self-building is a widespread process throughout the global South, it shapes cities unevenly and presents dissimilar cases. Unlike housing projects or administrative jurisdictions, such as municipalities or cities, defining the meaning of self-built territories presents a conceptual challenge. Rather than a single or uniform phenomenon that can be theorized upon, it is the theory that defines the object of study. The juxtaposition of these diverse cases and the exploration of the tensions and variations that exist among them open up new possibilities of understanding urbanization in very unequal societies (Caldeira, 2017). In this

sense, the idea of self-built as a city-making culture allows rethinking urbanism "from the slum" (Pieterse, 2015) as a way to decentralize urban theory from the northern preeminence.

Social production of habitat and political praxis

In the attempt to decentralize urban theory and understand the productive and social logics of self-building, it is important to differentiate general processes of self-help from the social production of popular habitats. The former takes place all over the world, including in Europe, the former Soviet Union and even in Latin America. Conceptually, the idea of self-help focuses on the pragmatic production process of the house and its value chain when it is managed by the owners themselves in a context dominated by the construction industry. The social production of popular habitats also involves processes related to self-help, such as self-building and self-management of the construction process of the house, but it is defined by its physical, social and symbolic location. Latin American intellectuals led by the International Habitat Coalition named "social production of popular habitat" to the city-building processes carried by dispossessed groups, often displaced to the peripheries of the cities through state intervention or real estate market dynamics. Borrowing from Lefebvre (1974), the study of the "social production of popular habitat" provides a framework to connect the analysis of the spatial practices that integrate the social relations of production and reproduction (and the provision of workforce and the biological procreation of the family). In particular, authors such as Holston and Caldeira, Raquel Rolnik, Benjamin Solomon, Pedro Abramo and Cristina Cravino focused on the dynamics of poverty and inequality and their influence in spatial forms, the redistribution of urban resources, the representations of space in the urban peripheries, as well as the accumulated knowledge by which societies transform their built environment. In consequence, the popular habitat is seen as the result of relations of asymmetric forces in the configuration of the urban-social space, and it is situated, physically and symbolically, on the urban periphery, where the expansion of capitalism deterritorializes people through "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2004; Rolnik, 2013). Therefore, not in all capitalist societies are there necessarily popular habitats that involve the social production of space, but in those where inequality has a distinctive spatial dimension and the society is extremely unequal between those empowered and those dispossessed of land (Gassull, 2015; Caldeira, 2017). Another difference between self-help and social production relies on who the actors are. While self-help focuses on individuals and families, the social production of the habitat focuses on the dispossessed collectives. While the former focuses on the house, the latter focuses on the habitat, meaning the house, the neighborhoods and the communities. While the study of self-help focuses on the processes of city production and inhabiting, the study of the popular habitat adds a political element to these processes.

The social construction of popular habitats is the way in which the poor, deprived of access to land, live and produce not only their physical, economic but also their political space within the city. The families play a leading role not only in the construction of their homes and in the consolidation of the neighborhoods by building infrastructure, replacing infrastructure and pushing for improvements in the provision of services and collective goods. Likewise, in some cases, the inhabitants of the neighborhoods carry out the laying of this infrastructure with the collaboration of the state. These action-based claims and negotiations for rights with the state establish forms of self-organization, such as Neighborhood Committees, which play a central

political role in community life (Di Virgilio, 2014). Some authors refer to this phenomenon as the "Latin American paradigm of the popular habitat" (Conolly, 2011), a political praxis where the residents of the urban peripheries, build insurgently their own urban habitat as a livelihood strategy and as a struggle for the right to have a dignified, daily life. Accordingly, their demands get conceived in terms of housing, property, plumbing, daycare, security, and other aspects of residential life (Holston 1991, 246). This epistemology of the social construction of popular habitats differs from the apolitical essence of self-help illustrated by northwestern literature, making clear that as communities build their own residences and neighborhoods, they also often unfold a political praxis.

Sites and Services

Despite the diversity in histories, practices and cases of popular habitats, public policies have historically assumed standardized parameters to interpret them and then intervene. As self-built neighborhoods became relevant in the discussion of international organizations focused on making effective policies to foster homeownership models in the "developing world," governments have applied "internationalized" solutions often divorced from the diverse local realities. This influence is due to the technical and financial efforts of multilateral credit organizations such as the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank in shaping the urban agendas of poverty (Roy, 2010).

From 1970 onwards, the "sites-and-services" emerged as the main technical solution for the financial support of self-help practices. It is an infrastructure-based program where governments, with the financial aid of international development banks, parcel great extensions of land on the outskirts of cities. Then they provide this new peri-urban lots with basic infrastructure to low-income families so they could build their own houses according to the needs and investment capacities. The site-and-services approach translated the academic work of J.F.C. Turner and the "self-help school" into a simplistic scheme of cheap, urbanized land provision. As an advocate of self -help, Turner changed the way north-western researchers thought about housing by the mid-1960s. His observations on city making processes in *popular barrios* on the outskirts of Lima, Peru, in 1954 emphasized that -- for low-income groups -- housing takes place over time, following the income flows of the household, the life cycle of the inhabitants and the needs of those who occupy the house (Turner, 1976). As the house is upgraded over time, the physical characteristics of the house will most likely improve, indicating that governments should give people the "freedom to build" (Turner, 1972). In this regard, owners should have the control of the construction process although not necessarily as participants in the actual building activities but in the decision making instead (Marais et al., 2008). Consequently, Turner proposed site-and-services (referred to as "aided self-help" schemes) as a scheme where governments take responsibility for the provision of basic services, and individual households are responsible for the construction of the housing unit (Pugh, 2001). Despite this clear and straightforward idea, instead of working as a means of self-control, Turner's arguments were re-coded and simplified by a conservative brand of the political economy. These interpretations of Turner's work received further momentum when the World Bank started to propose site-and-services as a policy direction, despite the fact that the same World Bank followed an inherently different ideological standpoint (Pugh, 2001; Harris, 2003).

Although Turner's work was influenced on ideas of community development through personal autonomy and dweller-control inspired by intellectual anarchists, such as Lewis

Mumford, Patrick Geddes, and Peter Kropotkin (Ward, 1976; Harris 2014), the World Bank adopted aided self-help as the focus of their new housing agenda. While Turner is in favor of dweller-control of the housing process highlighting the rights and capacities of the urban poor, the World Bank's approach is based on the economics of housing, the reduction of housing costs and the cost-recovery opportunities of lending for poverty alleviation policy (Marais et al., 2008). Very soon the World Bank's sites-and-services projects flourished in many of the largest cities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where low-income groups were given plots of land including basic infrastructure, such as electricity, drinking water and sewerage. As Michael Cohen, leader of the Urban Group at the World Bank between 1972 and 1999 poses, "we entered to the housing challenge trough the bathroom and the kitchen," illustrating how the house was reduced to an infrastructure problem. The influence of the World Bank represented a big shift in Latin America's policies. The impact of sites-and-services has been large. The World Bank has lent over $1.5 billion to 20 countries in support of these the program between 1972 and 1981(Jimenez, 1981). From the 1960s to the 1990s U.S.'s private and public interests played a large role in moving housing aid away from support for improved "low-income" housing, to a prominence on "low-cost" housing (Kwak, 2015). This meant that the self-help projects should be affordable for the poor and that the beneficiaries themselves were to be held responsible for the repayment of the loans for their serviced lots in the peripheries (Bredenoord and van Lindert, 2010) while at the same time they should have the financial capacity to build the houses by themselves. For families, the scheme typically required families to pay for a defined package of basic services, and to accept fixed building standards, thereby depriving them of their capacity to make decisions for themselves about what and how to build (Harris, 2014). Borrowing conditions required legal property titles and consequently the implementation of individual homeownership and massive land titling (Kwak, 2015).

Aided self-help housing promised a means of resolving a housing crisis that conventional policy had failed to meet, however, it quickly encountered the seeds of its own failure. In general, these projects were small-scale and were often situated on the urban peripheries due to the relatively low land value in urban fringe zones, which enabled governments to reduce costs in land acquisition and end up in the physical expansion of the cities in low-density, low -quality environments (Bredenoord and Verkoren, 2010). Due to this peripheral location, the provision of infrastructure became disproportionately expensive, thus, in spite of the relatively low land prices, in many cases the total acquisition costs simply proved to be too high for the urban poor (Bredenoord and van Lindert, 2010). Despite the promises of technical assistance to self-builders, in practice the needed resources and trained staff often failed to opposition, suggesting that the rhetoric of self-help could simply become a mask to validate the state's disengagement from housing provision at the political level, the organizational level, the implementation level, and perhaps most crucially, the funding level (Gyger, 2013)

The sites-and-services policy was deemed a fiasco soon after the World Bank failed to meet their own goals, most notably in the arena of cost recovery. It was largely abandoned in the late 1970s (Kawk, 2015; Owens et al., 2018). Turner's ideas were also heavily disputed by Marxist scholars, who argued that self-help leads to the transformation of dwellers into homeowners and the consequent commodification of housing, a mechanism aimed at disciplining the workforce and prolonging the working day for low-income workers (Burgess, 1977). In response, some authors argue that the Marxist school fails in equalizing Turner's work to the sites-and-services approach (Harris, 2014). For instance, in countries such as Uruguay and Cuba

aided self-help was implemented through housing cooperatives and mutual aid societies, rather than by site-and-service schemes, having a great success (Marais et al., 2008). Recently, World Bank experts concluded that –in some selected cases in India-- in spite of being a financial fiasco, the approach was successful in creating the basis for incremental development of well-planned and well-serviced neighborhoods that are both livable and inclusive (Owens et al., 2018). Despite that site-and-services programs was abandoned by multilateral lending agencies, many governments in the Latin America and Africa continued to provide lots with services. This influence represented a significant shift in "what" is to be delivered by a housing policy, as delivering finished homes to enabling housing markets was replaced by allowing lower-income households better access to financing for houses produced by the private sector or themselves (Green and Rojas, 2018). Pragmatically, governments implement a type of low-cost housing policy, strongly inspired by the idea of providing a serviced lot and a minimal "starter" unit, which families could gradually improve and expand. But, unlike Turner's original ideas, the idea of providing the "commons" and leaving in the autonomy of the families what corresponds to the private sphere, the understanding of self-building processes suffered from a series of failed assumptions.

Policy assumptions about self-building

The first failed assumption about self-building is that families need titling regularization and legal ownership to enjoy secure tenure, to feel "attached to their land," and to make significant investments in the house. Legal securitization is also a requisite for families to receive formal financial support and become beneficiaries of service provision, such as piped water and electricity. Supporters of sites-and-services programs argue that legal tenure of land alleviates the burden for families of confirming security through possession, a process that obligates families to build a rudimentary construction soon after occupation, in effect substituting affordability for quality in the short term. This initial investment may take a substantial proportion of surplus income and/or savings and may imply significant opportunity costs, especially as the initial construction is soon replaced and households will be unable to recover the full value of their investment unless the property is legally recognized (Gough, 1996). Thus, a frequent argument in favor of compulsory titling is that it encourages home investment and consolidation (Ward, 2011). However, evidence in Latin America shows that many self-help builders amply invested and consolidated before title regularization ever appeared on the horizon (Ward et al., 2014). On the contrary, self-construction processes imply a constant crossover between the legal and the illegal, the product and the process, the finished house and the progressive construction.

In many ways, the static essence of property titles is in constant contradiction with the dynamic essence of self-building. As Caldeira (2017) points out, popular habitats in peripheral locations do not involve spaces already made that can be consumed as finished products before they are even inhabited. In the formal market families undergo renovations by planning ahead, hiring experts and gathering documentation. They get official approvals and validate the new uses, rooms, spaces of the house with the municipal offices. Renovations can happen more or less sporadically, but they always represent discrete moments in the life cycle of a house. In self-built neighborhoods, the spaces are always in the making, the construction work evolve progressively and slowly following the changing needs and financial capacities of the families and their extended relatives. Thus, self-building involves a distinctive temporality termed in

long-term processes of incompletion and continuous improvement led by their own residents (Caldeira, 2017; Motta, 2014). Each phase involves a great amount of improvisation, complex strategies and calculations and constant imagination of what the home might look like in the future (Holston, 1991). This constant evolution of spaces, uses and morphology that are never quite done, always being altered, expanded, and elaborated upon, present significant challenges for the regulatory frameworks of conventional private property, which is based on the idea of a "final product".

Sites-and-services, regularization and titling serve the administrative system making more feasible and practicable planning, taxation, and land use controls for local government. The extent to which title makes the market work more effectively and enhances opportunities for low-income families to exchange their properties is less obvious. When is appropriate to establish the completion of the construction work? When is it convenient to present to the city authorities the plans of a house under constant construction? What should be shown in the public records? What uses should be considered appropriate for residential standards? Since self-construction is progressive and houses are in constant transformation and may have a succession of owners, how often should these houses be re-titled to regularize their condition? Assisted self-help also assumes individual and exclusive ownership in opposition to the complex ways collective ownership and inheritance are negotiated in practice (Ward et al., 2011), privileging private property ownership, market allocation mechanisms and the individualization of needs (Grubbauer, 2020). A single-family self-built house can be divided or expanded into multiple homes at several stages of its life cycle, with different owners and family members who move over the time and own not only residences within the main home but often non-residential uses, such as shops (Gough & Kellett, 2001; Ward, 2015). As Ward (2015) demonstrates with extensive data in Mexico City and Bogota, while the house constantly changes, self-built settlements show minimal evidence of turnover of ownership from the first pioneers who captured the land informally. The lack of mobility among owners is juxtaposed with multiple modalities of tenure in a single house, reinforcing Gilbert's (1999) argument that for low-income self-builder owners of the 1960s and 1970s "a home is forever".

A second flawed assumption is that self-built neighborhoods will benefit from efficiently planned built environments with readable urban grids, sectorized land use regulations and standardized urban morphology. Regulations imposed by the sites-and-services impose rigid spatial and morphological regulations that often oppose to the self-builders' values. However, despite the overcrowding and lack of privacy that residents of incremental house experience, there are several social-capital and asset-building advantages adult-children living in shared arrangements with their parents and other relatives (Ward, 2012). For instance, they are able to capitalize exchange relationships, to share household expenses and to redistribute childcare (Motta, 2014). The social reproduction systems of the families are disrupted by rigid regulations and hyper-standardized houses that –at the same time-- are governed by double-standards and informal practices. The standardization also entails the homogenization of diverse social groups in terms of previous living arrangements, economic status, and urban-rural lifestyles (Vale and Wainer xxx). If self-building involves a distinctive form of agency and residents are agents of urbanization, not simply consumers of spaces developed and regulated by others, what building regulations and standards should be followed and according to whose parameters?

Third, as self-building involves substantial consumption related to the acquisition of both building materials and appliance, furniture, and decorative items, however, self-builders typically lack access to credit from institutions, such as banks, to finance the acquisition of land or construction of homes (Caldeira, 2017; Grubbauer, 2020). Informal credit providers are personal lenders, commercial lenders and financial organizations, group savings, small loans from neighbors, moneylenders or pawnbrokers, and barter arrangements (Ferguson & Smets, 2010; Grubbauer, 2020). The availability of financial resources plays a central role in these processes and is ultimately what sets the pace of the transformations. Self-building was conceived as an alternative mechanism to finance the house, that is to build the house progressively instead of buying a new finished unit and pay it progressively. Those resources are generally devoted to the purchase of materials and sometimes to the subcontracting of specialized labor for certain works (electricity, plumbing, gas, etc.; Di Virgilio et al., 2014). Resources dedicated to incremental housing have to compete with other needs of the household, thus investment processes are often slow. Not surprisingly, the incremental homebuilding process can take low/moderate-income families decades a median of sixteen years to complete a home in one study conducted in Mexico by CEMEX (Prahalad, 2005).

Another failed assumption relies on the financial capacity of self-builders, and the idea that formal, appropriate finance can greatly increase the speed and lower the cost of incremental housing (Smets 2006, Ferguson and Smets, 2009). Assisted self-help policies aim at providing financial access to obtain urbanized land within the legal parameters, loans to acquire construction materials, pay for the provision of infrastructure within the progressive processes of housing and neighborhood transformation. This policy assumes that families have sufficient capacity to save in time and form to manage debts and additional expenses to the process of self-construction. Assisted self-help, titling and regularization approaches disrupt the personal, complex and localized logics of informal lending since they were created on the basis of traditional housing markets' financial ideas, such as mortgage housing-finance (Mitlin et al., 2018). Consequently, formal aid ends up adding more financial burden upon the financial burden that self-building practices imply to the families (saving to afford a progressive evolution of the house) , as they must also save for paying their debts following rigid payment schedules that go against the flexible, informal nature of their income flow (Libertun de Duren, 2018b). In this sense, rather than alleviating the financial burden of families, financial aid to support self-building normalizes credit-based consumption for everyday life by capitalizing on the desires of households to have a choice regarding building materials, design solutions, appliance and furniture and reinforces property ownership as a political project in the global South (Grubbauer, 2020; Kwak, 2015). For instance, as Huchzermeyer exposes, Slum Dwellers International approach, based on community savings and negotiation with the local public authorities, is often misinterpreted as a means of accumulating individual savings when the real objective is to build an independent communal pool, through which members have continual access to various forms of credit. What is often overlooked is the fact that the Federation's philosophy is not capitalist but a long-term commitment to a shared way of life (Huchzermeyer, 2010)

Finally, a fourth assumption is that self-building is about housing affordability, while -- for families-- it is about both housing and labor. Self-building is one of the many strategies to meet the needs that are not covered by either direct or indirect wages. The construction process itself is an important economic aspect of the self-building cycle. While closely linked to the

growth of the family, it seems to be deeply conditioned by the economic and material resources available to families over time, allowing households to build in stages in order to 'synchronize investment in buildings and community facilities with the rhythm of social and economic change (Datta, 2012; Di Virgilio et al., 2014). Self-builders intervene actively in a large part or in the entire production process of their homes, where the roles of producer and final user or consumer overlap (Di Virgilio et al., 2014). Most self-built housing is both family-based labor force and local employment in the form of paid assistance to artisans, specialists, and skilled labor (Datta, 2012).

Self-built houses cost approximately one-half of contracted housing due to the lack of standards and bureaucracy (Datta, 2012; Turner, 1967). However, a great part of this economic "efficiency" relies on a big contradiction that can diminish livelihoods in the long term. On the one hand, self-building remains an engine for social reproduction of life, combining everyday activities with economic strategies, serving the households' changing needs, creating social capital within the families and neighborhoods and providing local economies to poor areas of the city. On the other hand, incremental building is usually based on low remuneration, informal labor arrangements, family-based labor during days of rest and recreation, and lowering of basic health standards, such as ventilation (Grubbauer, 2020; Smets, 2006). This overlap between non-remunerative "sweat equity" and paid labor places self-building outside the traditional forms of capitalist city production (Virgilio, 2014).

Although the role of intermediaries can potentially counter some of this contradiction and other problems such as investment inefficiency, coordination of constructions at the neighborhood level, making the building process more productive, increase efficiency of material use, allowing the incorporation of professional expertise and learning experiences from other projects, interventions too often have unexpected negative consequences due to the lack of understanding of the localized practices . For instance, one of the most widespread "best practices" policies in Latin America is financial and technical assistance in the construction materials supply chain. Governmental organizations and NGOs have been instrumental in the establishment of special distribution centers for building materials and fostering finance for materials acquisition, aimed at reducing the building costs for self-help builders. However, as Van Gough demonstrated in her empirical research in Mexico, such approach can have significant flaws. In Latin America, large-scale retailers such as CEMEX in Mexico, Promigas and Corona in Colombia, and Loma Negra in Argentina already have efficient distribution networks, thus producers are not necessarily expanding their markets, leading to little difference in prices. But the choices of self-builders are not exclusively driven by prices. Buying procedures imposed by government aided agencies can damage informal, small scale retailers who already exist in the neighborhoods and manage a more personal contact with self-builders (Gough & Kellett, 2001).

Building-material producers and their networks of building-supply stores raise questions about the ways the building-supply chain and how intermediaries and services are reconfigured intervene in the low-income markets (Grubbauer, 2019). The relationship is indeed not new and dates back several decades through very clear commercial strategies, such as the development of construction cartoon manuals that illustrate how to carry out the building of a house and can be found in any magazine shack shop in the region. The high level of building consolidation of self-built settlements in Latin America --a notable difference with their African counterparts --can be partially attributed to the early interest of large building material companies in penetrating the

popular housing markets. For instance, the multinational company CEMEX has developed programs such as "Patrimonio Hoy" that operates in México, República Dominicana, Nicaragua, Colombia and Costa Rica serving about 2.5 million people organized in into small savings groups, who jointly take micro-credits and make saving payments while CEMEX, in turn, provides building materials and technical advice. This suggests that the aforementioned transversality of self-building is not an exclusive bottom-up process but rather a confluence of multiple forces willing to operate outside the traditional channels of city production. In particular, certain formal market sections adequate their practices to actively participate in the process of social construction of habitat and are an indispensable actor in the development and consolidation of self-built neighborhoods.

Houses are also economic units. The house is the space for work, for developing an economic activity, workshops, activities of care, education and life reproduction. Home-based enterprises reveal the fundamental economic role of the dwelling, and the symbiotic relationship between housing and work, which enables housing improvement and consolidation to take place as the dwellings themselves improve opportunities for income generation, employment prospects and productivity (Gough and Kellett, 2001) The transformation of house sections into shops and workshops offers a great deal of flexibility, as these spaces constantly adapt to the variant economic strategies that happen simultaneously or during short periods of time. The distinction between reproduction (domestic activities) and production (economic activities) is not clearly drawn in most households in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Kellett and Tigsle, 2000). Different forms of making money are combined simultaneously and over a lifetime. As Motta (2014) illustrates through extensive ethnographic work, in Brazil's favelas, residents do not dichotomize between formal employment, small trade or temporary work, but between diverse ways of earning money and caring for the family. Particularly for women, decisions about whether to work or not near or inside their own homes, are not exclusively related to an economic rationality but to wider understanding of livelihoods that includes safety and care. These choices may not be always the best possible option from an economic perspective. Women often abandon jobs and activities far from the house and with regular payment despite the disadvantages of staying at home in order to keep their kids and belongings safe. To open a shop at home can be a way to generate a daily income, to "keep an eye" on the children and teenagers and stay protected from Gangs (Motta, 2014). It can be an effective way to look after the house from occupations and robbery (Vio & Cabrera, 2016). Home-based work can also hide exploitation. The isolation and lack of visibility of home workers can allow the exploitation of home-based workers in outworking systems where self-employed entrepreneurs are in reality dependent workers or disguised wage earners (Kellett and Tipple, 2000).

Economic income can also come from renting rooms and transferring plots or parts of them, which leads to new subdivisions either by the sale or transfer of the air space of the house and/or a fraction of the land, or by the subdivision and/or air expansion of the original house to offer rooms for rent. Renting out part of the dwelling or using the plot and house to generate income through home-based activities are alternative strategies for raising money for basic subsistence or for financing the construction of the dwelling (Gough and Kellett, 2001; Ward, 2014). Often, combined rents are more than the value of the rent for the house prior to the division. Dividing up spaces is a recourse commonly used to increase the income from sales and leases of properties (Motta, 2014). Through time, self-builders consolidate their houses with more and better constructed rooms and higher levels of infrastructure provision, creating

opportunities for scaling-up income-generating enterprises, such as more space available to set up a shop on the ground floor, or electricity to power a machine (Virgilio, 2014). The population dynamics are accompanied by processes of densification and verticalization of the neighborhoods as building consolidation is driven by families' expansion and rentier activities. Rental markets not only increase the income-earning potential of the home for owners but also adds to the affordable rental housing supply of the neighborhood (Gough & Kellett, 2001). Renting of self-built rooms and apartments is a particularly widespread practice in South Africa. While the specificity of this phenomenon will be addressed in detail later on, it is important to highlight now some of its characteristics in relation to the social production of the habitat. Popularly known as backyarding, families add structures, typically rudimentary and made from corrugated iron or zinc sheets and wooden frames, in the yards of formal houses, often in townships created specifically for Black people during apartheid, separated from the majority-white urban core and suburbs, and provided with minimal basic infrastructure. Legal occupants of the limited housing stock provided rental space, first inside the house and then in the yards, to relatives and paying lodgers (Crankshaw, Gilbert, & Morris, 2000).

Backyarding got commercialized and widespread as an income generating activity. The structures may be erected by the homeowner/landlord or the occupier, and there may be several shacks in a back- and/ or front-yard. The landlords typically share their core services (electricity, water, sanitation and refuse collection) with the tenants in return for rent. The shacks vary in quality and most consist of a single room in which households undertake all their daily functions. Some backyards host multiple shacks, and landlords typically share electricity, water, sanitation and refuse collection with backyard tenants, in return for rent. Unlike in Latin America, where the informal rental market is a proxy for settlement consolidation, in South Africa backyarding practices do not necessarily imply the same. On the contrary, the increasing pressure on urban infrastructure such as sewage and water systems due to the densification process may imply a deterioration of previous stages (Lemanski 2009). Only recently, simple micro-flats are steadily replacing shacks, where landlords construct a small freestanding block or blocks of rental units next to the original house, usually containing two to six rooms. Micro-flats offer better living conditions than shacks because materials are more durable, facilities are provided, and walls are plastered inside and out (Sheba and Turok, 2018). Although being a widespread practice, backyard shacks are typically outside the purview of several forms of state regulation, including property registration, planning ordinances, building codes, environmental health standards, and payment for property rates and use of basic services (Sheba and Turok, 2018).

Situated Actors

Beyond the public and the private

Just as it is difficult to merge diverse practices of social production of habitat into a single analytical category, it is also challenging to find a single concept to analyze the actors who build the city outside the pure logics of the State, the market and the popular classes. These are NGOs, foundations, local administrations, corporations, cooperatives, unions and individuals representing a wide variety of collectives. A homogeneous reading of the work of these agents is not only an impossible task but also an incorrect interpretation of the reality. However, the

diversification of agents that intervene in the implementation of housing projects suggests that there are other forces beyond the government, the private interests, and the peoples' needs.

The dynamics of multiple agents intervening in urban affairs has been mostly studied from a governance, not a production, perspective. Much has been written about the deconstruction of government and its restructuring into multiple governance agents. Governance is conceptually broader than government, as it focuses on the interaction between the public sector and the various actors or groups in civil society (Mc Carney, 2003). The governance approach to urban politics highlights the wide range of constraints on local authorities' abilities to bring change in the local community and emphasizes outcomes over formal, political processes and policy implementation (Pierre, 1999, pg. 376). As a consequence, governance theories helped bringing together a wide set of theories into a broader framework to understand the nature of state and society.

The neoliberal reforms and globalization processes triggered by the impact of informational and logistical technologies in production and social relationships in the late 1970s led to major transformations on how cities are governed, opening up the political space to multiple agents out of the state realm. Within this new, political and economic context, many authors started analyzing the nature of power dynamics and how decision-making actually happened in this new system of authority established from the breakdown of the centralized nation-state. This represented a pragmatical and intellectual shift from government-based power to a governance model. From a comparative perspective, governance has been treated by some as an important signal of a new shift in thinking power, and by others as global hegemony of knowledge developed in the global North and transplanted to the South (Mc Carney, et al. 1994). The increased use of the term governance at the start of the 1990s aroused academic debate on whether governance ought to be seen as an appropriate framework to study complex systems of authority and power, or just another fashionable, international donor driven term to be coped with and viewed with suspicion. There are scholars who see that institutions adopted a network form of organization representing non-hierarchical, pluralistic and participatory based politics (Sassen, 2004; Stone 2011). Other scholars see these models (urban entrepreneurialism, localism, decentralization) as new mechanisms of social control and uneven allocation of power and resources (Harvey, 1989; Borja and Castells, 1997). Southern authors argue that urban governance theories elaborated in the Global North cannot capture the complex dimensions of the state and the society in the Global South, which does not follow predictable, stable and liberal democratic traditions (Watson, 2009).

Interesting enough, for the purpose of analyzing urban politics, the governance framework allowed all authors (North and South, Liberals and Marxists) to look at urban politics through the lens of structure and agency. Intermediate structures are entities through which political agents blend macro-forces, and around which nuances are introduced (Stone, 2011; Pierre, 2005). What the realpolitik of governance leaves us is a complex scenario of power exercise and the assumption this power exercise must have some kind of relationship to the material world. For instance, the decentralization of fiscal capacities and the reduction of the managerial capacities of the national state and inter-city competition for job markets have severe consequences in the spatial distribution of urban processes: successful urban projects mask increasing urban inequalities (Harvey, 1989). These processes are immersed in a constant tension between the local and the global, between the structure and the agency, and the effects of these tensions on the populations who cannot count on nation-wide redistribution mechanisms

(Chatterjee, 2005). In this sense, governance processes are not value neutral but reflect and sustain political values beyond partisan conflict, not autonomous from larger systems of political, economic, and social values from which the urban regime derives its legitimacy (Pierre, 2005).

The local and the situated

Following Watson (2009) and Chatterjee (2005), multiscale governance and decentralization of territories is a clearly unfinished project in the global South, where the dichotomies such as state/society or legal/illegal do not capture reality. Urban governance is particularly complex and fluid due to the high degree of urban and institutional informality (Pieterse 2008), and due to diversity of actors who replace government activities, such as infrastructure provision (Appadurai, 2002, Simone, 2013, Haferburg and Huchzermeyer, 2015). In this sense, the state is one type of authority in city-making along with traditional chiefs, grassroot organizations, warlords and mafias (Watson, 2009; Weinstein, 2008).

As housing is increasingly recognized as a governance challenge, the role of local government in a context with limited implementation and decision-making power, is to enable institutional cooperation and partnership models (Ley, 2010). Local governments are assumed as important mediators of local conflicts and strategies because of its horizontal connections to other local stakeholders within and beyond the state, and its vertical connections with upper tiers of government (Brenner, 2004; Keivani and Mattingly, 2007). A widespread call from local governments has been for an effective transfer of skills, in order for local government to participate in national housing programs (Huchzermeyer, 2001). Assumptions such as that decentralization is necessary for democratization, that 'local people' represent popular sovereignty and 'community-based development' have significant impact in the narratives of development and urban poverty policies (Purcell, 2006). For instance, it is often argued that users' participation is crucial for the performance of low-cost housing projects responding to what is assumed to be "the decisions of the community" (Lizarralde & Massyn, 2008) and it is the role of the local government to mediate between these actors and the central governments.

In practice, however, it is unclear if the local state is the key driver in the process of securing housing for economically marginal communities. The capacity to implement joint projects depends on the characteristics that are both internal to the local state and the community and external larger institutions and structures (Oldfield, 2000). With limited financial resources, local governments potentially lose their legitimacy and are often bypassed by national governments and by communities that either deem provincial and national governments as more capable of addressing local needs or bypass local state by acting unilaterally through land invasions, informal connections to the electricity supply network and so on (Pimentel Walker, 2016).

This complex institutional scenario overlaps with the ways the neoliberal project was adapted to the singular political cultures of southern countries. Authors such as Caldeira and Holston in Brazil (2005), Chaves in Uruguay (2004), Auyero in Argentina (2001), Zunino in Chile (2006) and Parnell and Robinson (2010) in South Africa show that the neoliberal globalization, as well as its consequences in governance and decentralization, never became fully realized in southern geographies. In Argentina, Colombia and South Africa, the politics of re-spatialization is determined by the prevalence of the economic and political supremacy of the capital cities, the historic persistence of a one-party ruler, the transitory elimination of local

democratic structures for political participation, the management of the capital cities as a national affair, the federal systems that remain highly influenced by the presidential figure, and the role of the national executive in shaping development polices (Davis and Alvarado 2002; Libertun 2004; Oranje, 2020). In fact, in most Latin America and Southern Africa countries, housing is one of the least decentralized government responsibilities (Huchzermeyer, 2001, Whitaker Ferreira, 2020), and at the same time, housing solutions are mostly carried out by individuals and collectives who operate out of the rule of law through informal strategies.

The lack of government decentralization in the South questions whether the concept "local" is accurate to analyze those actors who do not necessarily reflect local forces but operate locally in contexts of unstable political arrangements. Even when globalization leads to a re-territorialization of the state in multiple scales and the urbanization of poverty underscores the imperative of downscaling the developmental state to the city scale (Parnell, 2004), the national State maintains the territorial conditions for social reproduction. This control happens by means of various forms of housing, infrastructure, transportation policy, producing uneven geographical development (Brenner, 2004; Ong, 2006). Against the danger to overemphasize the power of the local in the southern context, the term 'situated agents' refers to those who operate in given structural scenarios and unstable set of social relationships deploying strategies and tactics to achieve their particular ends (Zunino, 2006), local political practice and informal institutional spaces locally embedded and in relation to national structures (Drivdal, 2016). The difference between local and situated agents is that the former implies relative stability of governing coalitions and fixed categorizations of governance arrangements (Elkin, 1987; Stone, 1989) while the latter assumes unstable social relationships and conflicted rationalities between the logic of governing (control and development) and the logic of survival (efforts of those excluded from the 'formal' economy (Zunino, 2006; Watson, 2009).

Housing production and local politics

Some authors argue that situated agents not only take an important role in governance but also in the production of cities. This occurs through participation, decision-making, and co-production of housing, service provision, and public spaces in geographies often abandoned by the state. In the realpolitik of city-production, alternative organized collectives make serious effort to inculcate protocols of speech, style and organization to pool resources, establish lobbying, provide mutual risk management devices and, when necessary, negotiate with government structures. It is particularly in the absence of the state, that community organizations are capable of addressing the multiple aspects of urban poverty, often related to the construction of their own habitat (Appadurai, 2002; Bayat 2008; Holston, 1998;). The deficiencies of the formal state in providing housing solutions suggest the importance of civil society organizations in developing alternative mechanisms for households (Ley, 2010). In this sense, in the production of housing in the global South, the most common encounter between local organizations and the national state is not necessarily the local state but local politics, which plays a fundamental role in the development of low-income territories. Local politics does not emerge in the shape of a formal local government and partnership models but through a complex network of material and symbolic resource distribution (Banck, 1986). Local politicians, who depend to a great extent on state resources, primarily articulate demands for bigger houses, lots allocations, social service provisions among others and monopolize information about the communities (Banck, 1986) The networks are often integrated by local authorities who become

legitimate through local historical processes: religious, ethnic, cultural or political, violence or imposed coercive force (Abramo, 2009). Their mechanisms ensure a source of goods and services, a safety net protecting against the risks of everyday life, paths of social mobility, and a solidaristic community that stands in opposition to the hardship and exclusion experienced on those living in poor and destitute areas (Auyero, 2001). It also ensures the local social order and some type of coercion in order to restrict and control conflictive (or deviant) behaviors, especially in relation to the contractual conditions that regulate the occupation of plots and houses, in regulating informal land markets, in serving as the mediating institution for contractual conflicts and allow these contracts to be respected and/or negotiated between the parties (Drivdal, 2016). The fluidity of these leaders' informal positions, which are often intertemporal and intergenerational, implies that they may switch roles between community activists, public servants encountering and directly dealing with residents' problems, enforcers and regulators of order, administrators and political representatives (Drivdal, 2016). The leadership mechanisms vary but always include some level of discretional decision-making (Auyero, 2001). This entails subjectivities in –for instance—determining access to housing beyond national eligibility criteria, thus controlling the realization of citizenship rights (Patel, 2016). However, what is usually presented as negative clientelist relations are in fact experienced as legitimate, habitual, and taken for granted (Auyero, 2001). Indeed, they operate in different ways than mafia organizations that move into land development, investing in the city's lucrative property markets and construction industry (Weinstein, 2008).

    The absence of the state is also the context for the emergence of an "action-based" organization model, a conglomerate between organized communities and third sector organizations that provide expertise, organizational structure, representation, and fundraising. This kind of model is being employed to put organized communities of the urban poor at the center of their own development and co-produce habitats in incremental development. For instance, in South Africa, since 1994, SDI's South African Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP) has built more than 15,000 houses as part of the South African government's People's Housing Process (PHP; (Bradlow et al., 2011). Appadurai (2002, 35) identifies these processes as a form of counter-governmentality, animated by the social relations of shared poverty, by the active participation in the politics of knowledge, and by the openness to exercise other forms everyday politics. But these organizations are not actors that only operate at the household or community level. New technologies, especially the public access to Internet, expand the geography for civil society actors beyond the strategic networks of global cities to include peripheralized localities (Sassen, 2004). The emergence of globalized information technologies provides local organizations platforms to create international networks of collaboration, knowledge and action (Appadurai, 2002).

    The empirical evidence about the outcomes the role of situated agents in city-production and in housing in particular is rather dissimilar and shows that, in low-income housing projects, it depends on a complex interaction of participants, interests, objectives, resources and processes that go beyond the benefits of the participation of the beneficiaries (Lizarralde and Massyn, 2008) and the implementation of third-sector normative objectives (Miraftab, 2003). Some scholars show both unexpected negative and positive consequences of process mediated by situated agents, such as the PHP process in South Africa, where the overall performance of low-cost housing projects does not depend on community participation, and the mediations of NGOs (Lizarralde and Massyn, 2008; Miraftab, 2003). Members of grassroots organizations,

foundations and NGOs yielding decision-making power in steering committees deliberately sacrificed control of the project for urgent, short-term benefits (Lizarralde and Massyn, 2008). Empirical evidence also shows that community can materialize their struggle for housing and urban rights in creative examples of territorial control, space production and "design from below." By the production of alternative urban space, community organizations along with NGOs and activists challenged institutional spaces, re-defining who plays what role in housing delivery. The findings reveal multidirectional design politics between governments and communities that occur when the state loses control over design decision-making processes. The community's right to not be displaced to distant locations was guaranteed by reducing the state's implementation and delivery capacity (Wainer, 2019).

Situated agents are sometimes capable of producing or co-producing alternative modes of city production, often informal and innovative solutions. But scaling up innovation and successful micro experiences is not simple. The intrinsic relationship between innovation and informality stresses two main challenges. On the one hand, public and private sectors incorporate innovative solutions that many times come from pushing the boundaries of legality within policy schemes and market strategies. On the other hand, low-income users are often the ones who must deal with innovation's burden. Local governments' lack of capacity to coordinate successful cases into a territorial strategy may represent a liability at the aggregate scale. As Sheela Patel, founder and Director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres in India, claimed: "poor people do not want to live in islands that are pilot renders of founders, philanthropic institutions, and creative architects, where each project is isolated, is different and has its own autonomous logic" (Wainer, 2018)

When translating progressive prescribed rights and aspirations about community participation, local knowledge, co-production into practice, certain specific conditions are critical— namely, the realm in which participatory processes are initiated and the way in which community participation is institutionalized (Miraftab, 2003). In cases where housing actors seriously attempt to develop valid representative structures at community level (often assisted by non-governmental organizations, NGOs) the principal focus in housing delivery remains to be the mass delivery of completely serviced housing sites and contractor-driven housing (Bradlow et al., 2011; Huchzermeyer, 2010; Miraftab, 2003). In this sense, even when governance narratives and practices take place, classic local government continues to occupy a strategic position by the proportion of public service spending. The drawbacks to the success of situated agents of city-production also include pressures from donors and governments to NGOs to operate efficiently, questions of honesty, and how representative and socially embedded NGOs and their local partners are. In this sense, NGOs must connect two policy agendas: one based on people-centered development and another based on the goals of the funders, usually related to capitalist modernization, liberalization and democratization (Grugel, 2000).

DISCUSSION

Asset-based housing projects have adapted and endured, shaping and being shaped by developments in markets and policies that emphasize the role of homeownership in social, economic and welfare relations (Ronald et al., 2017). Currently, within a worldwide housing financialization phenomenon, the standardized architectural and legal design of the houses and public spaces often fails to consider environmental sustainability, risk protection, and climate

adaptation strategies, yielding new forms of vulnerability (Rolnik, 2013; Simone and Pieterse, 2018). Planning academics argue that the urban design of these projects is inadequate because they are large-scale, top-down subsidy programs, a product of rigid regulations combined with low-construction costs, cheap-underserved land, and architects with a lack of creativity (Hauser and Clausing, 1988; Lizarralde and Massyn, 2008). Some social science scholars also claim that bad social outcomes are the result of the disconnection between design expertise and designers' lack of knowledge of social norms and cultural values of poor communities (Kim, 2015; Roy, 2004; Simone, 2004). In general, the poor materiality of these housing projects, and their associated social costs, are an alleged consequence of the political economy of housing: large scale developers setting the rules for city production, constraining the capacities of the administration to implement the policies' normative frameworks usually related to spatial justice, redistribution and social mobility (Buckley et al. 2016; Turok 2016, Rolnik 2019). But the analysis of national housing policy interventions as we know them today takes us back to the very formation of modern post-colonial states.

The historical analysis of the role of modern housing policy in Latin America and Africa reveals complex, multidimensional conditions. During its first southern incursions in the mid-20th Century, migrant modern architecture and homeownership ideals made manifest several different purposes: an aesthetic language for liberal avant-garde elites, a tool to legitimize distribution of public resources within welfare-state agendas and, more ominously, a mechanism for authoritarian regimes to implement space-based violence. This multivalent identity exposes the well-known paradox of modern architecture and planning as vehicles for radical-positive social reform, even as such design practices embraced social engineering that materialized marginalization and violence. The history of property regimes in relation to individual identity based on racial and gender differentiation added to the commodification of the home as a product of change. These property regimes determine a national planning culture marked by the normalization and materialization of homeownership as the basis of both an economic and a political project, what Neil Smith (2010) describes as "residential capitalism."

Although the modernist principles that guide the design and implementation of large-scale housing projects are not a particular ideological model to follow, they represent a quasi-religion that imposed truth on efficiency, order and social progress intrinsically related to the genesis and permanence of the modern State (Scott, 1998). Its aseptic principles, the architecture reduced to the minimum aesthetic expression and the predominance of the private over the public, still are utilitarian principles for the standardization of housing and its urban landscapes, reducing the costs of urbanization and construction to a minimum. Under these principles, despite the different political, institutional, demographic and economic conditions, their housing policies produce the same industrial-like neighborhoods located on the outskirts of cities. From this perspective, it is feasible to claim that national housing policies constitute a culture itself – that is, a set of discourse, models, customs and practices driven by modern normative values and the modernist practices often deployed to materialize poverty alleviation policies. Due to the capacity to transcend not only geography and time but also political regimes, I argue that 'residential capitalism' extends to 'residential modernity.'

Self-building practices operate transversely to these spatialized modern regimes. Importantly enough, they do not constitute clandestine practices that grow in isolation from the market forces and the State's modernism. Self-builders establish partial and punctual relations with the formal institutions, typically making decisions in a decentralized manner. Self-builders

operate mostly inside capitalist land markets; they access finance and use traditional construction technologies but in transversal paths to the dominant logics of real estate, banks, finance corporations, and professional design expertise (Grubbauer, 2020). As Caldeira (2017) points out, these transversal practices unsettle the official logics of legal property, formal labor, state regulation, and market capitalism, but they do not necessarily contest them directly.

These practices also contest territorial power and control and, where materiality plays an important role in shaping the conditions of sociopolitical mobilization. While self-building cannot be considered a 'social movement', as a practice where the urban poor assert territorial claims and interfere with the state bureaucracy, it is also distinct from survival strategies or 'everyday resistance' (Bayat, 2000; Benjamin, 2008). In this sense, self-building practices create not only habitat solutions but also new modes of politics that produce new kinds of citizens, claims, and contestations. These politics are rooted in the production of urban space, with its qualities and deficiencies (Caldeira, 2015). Importantly enough, this type of quiet and gradual city-making process contests many fundamental aspects of 'residential capitalism': the state prerogatives, the meaning of order, the control of public space, the division between public and private goods, and the relevance of modernity (Bayat, 2000).

The discussions above show that the state is crucial in creating conditions for urbanization, legalization, and the incorporation of the poor in the city. In particular, the State's city-making culture for the poor is deeply related to what Chatterjee (2004) calls the "ethos of instrumentalism," a modus operandi driven by an extreme modernity that transcends time, geography, and regimes. Although each country has its own planning culture defining different (and even divergent) narratives, visions, and specific objectives for its housing policies, the materialization of these cultures in the built environment seems to be homogenized and simplified into a single type of response, or a single kind of housing project. The austere modernity of the built environment of large housing projects, their regulations, and the administrative processes for dealing with the poor (relocation, dispossession, evictions) are based on how the State sees and builds poverty as a homogeneous social group. In the practice of State dominated city-making, 'the poor' are not perceived as citizens carriers of rights, such as private property, capable of participating in the conflicts and concessions inherent in city building; they are rather seen and targeted as 'a population' subject to public policies. As Chatterjee (2004) explains, modern state regimes secure legitimacy not by the participation of citizens in matters of the society but by claiming to provide for the well-being of the population through instrumental notions of costs and benefits.

In this sense, while the State "entitle" dispossessed families into homeownership, it denies them proprietary citizenship and the rights of participating in the production of the city. Industrial-like national housing policy provides the poor with "a solution," materialized in a typified, standardized and repeated housing prototype; a house that is ultimately a technopolitical device of legibility, control and coercion, but not necessarily a means of social inclusion. John Turner's approach beyond the simplified World Bank's version which I present later in this chapter, presses for a fundamental reorganization of the existing institutions involved in the production of housing, deconstructing the modernist normative values of city building by opposing to the idea that the State's rationality is the only possible good rationality (Harris, 2014). Despite the attractiveness of this claim, it is valid to question whether this argument is not a theoretical and practical oxymoron. Is structural institutional reorganization enough to include

productive logics that oppose the very essence of the modern State and its governmental machinery?

It is clear that the State does not act in the favor of self-builders out of its own heart and that policy intervention often seeks at normalizing self-building practices. This is not only a managerial purpose but a political objective as well. Self-building is not necessarily a social movement, but it carries their own ethos, one transversal to the logics of capitalism, which relies on continued transformation, intergenerational arrangements, shared tenure, localized financial mechanisms and fragmented decision making. This type of social construction of popular habitats is the way in which the poor, deprived of access to land, live and produce not only their physical but also their political space within the city. Some authors refer to this phenomenon as the "Latin American paradigm of the popular habitat" (Conolly, 2011), a political praxis where the residents of the urban peripheries, build insurgently their own urban and social space as both a livelihoods strategy and as a struggle for the right to have a dignified life. Accordingly, their demands get conceived in terms of housing, property, plumbing, daycare, security, and other aspects of residential life (Holston 1991, 246). But this epistemology of the social construction of popular habitats differs from the apolitical essence of self-help illustrated by northwestern literature, making clear that as communities build their own residences and neighborhoods, they also often unfold a political praxis.

In this sense, as Banck (1986) pioneeringly claimed, the most common encounter between the popular classes and the national State in the production of housing is not necessarily the local state but local politics. In fact, there is not enough empirical or theoretical evidence that "situated actors" produce substantially different territories than those produced by the self-builders (and their informal markets) or the State. Negotiation, administrative practices, and even housing and infrastructure provision which resemble the State's practices are not necessarily that different, nor the territories they create. It remains to be discovered whether these actors just operate as intermediaries between antagonistic State-people forces, or whether they constitute themselves as agents of city-production. In other words, is mediation accessory or instrumental to any of the city-production forces? And can the role of these actors be defined as a city-making culture?

CHAPTER 5: PRESIDENTE SARMIENTO

INTRODUCTION

What are you doing here? Aren't you afraid to enter the neighborhood alone? These were recurring questions from my female interviewees, primarily young women, during our meetings in Presidente Sarmiento. "I go carefully, I don't carry valuable belongings, and nothing happened so far." But I was afraid. During my fieldwork, many times, I feared before "entering" Presidente Sarmiento. It is easy to fear the neighborhood when you are an "outsider" as it is usually known as one of the "spiciest" barrios of the "conurbano" (the Buenos Aires metro area). Mass media often portraits it as a violent and unsafe place where good citizens do not belong. "The distance between the outside and the inside is unbridgeable," mentions journalist Marcelo Gioffré in La Nación newspaper (2021).

The fear always dissipated as soon as I started walking through the streets, entering the stores, chatting with people, buying candy or some coffee to suppress the morning cravings. Even though I witnessed tense situations, fights, "surveillance" (people following my steps), it was the "buenos días," the "mucho gusto," and "gracias" that characterize my relationship with the neighbors. I often heard phrases from neighbors such as, "80% of the neighbors are working people, the rest are the ones you see in the media," or "we are not what people see from the outside." All these opinions seem very authentic after "entering" Presidente Sarmiento and witnessing the everyday life beyond what is portrayed by the mass communicators. The battle against what society at large sees and thinks of Presidente Sarmiento is a daily struggle for its residents.

My experience in the neighborhood, a biased, temporary, and distant feeling compared to daily life, does not pretend to understate a reality and its problems. Security and crime are recurring topics in conversations, and people show severe concerns about the safety of their children. Nevertheless, "thieves, drug dealers, or slum dwellers" are all that "outsiders" see, and residents have a desperate need to change that image. The pejorative view of the media adds up to the derogatory view of professionals and academics, such as architects, urban planners, engineers, and lawyers, who see the housing project as an example of modernist architecture's failure in Buenos Aires city. They also see Presidente Sarmiento as the inevitable outcome of the slum eradication policy carried out by the military governments in the 1970s. Politicians, public officers, and technical bodies who worked in Presidente Sarmiento see the informalization processes as part of its failure and one of the leading causes of the barrio's decay and abandonment. The widespread "failure" perception also leads to the State's abandonment of these territories because --as one policymaker put it to me, "nobody knows what to do with these housing projects." I argue that to look at Presidente Sarmiento as a "policy failure" stigmatizes the population living in them and the practices they deploy to make their homes and neighborhoods livable.

My interest in the informalization of Presidente Sarmiento stems from the intuition that informality, rather than failure, is the very reason why the barrio continued to be a place where many people chose to live. During my first visits, I could observe that most of the neighbors see informal practices as a "natural path" to the barrio's original project. Others think that only certain informal practices are genuinely problematic, and many consider that informalization opportunities are a comparative advantage to other neighbors in the city.

Presidente Sarmiento is one of eighty large-scale, modernist housing projects in the Metropolitan Region of Buenos Aires sponsored by the National state between 1965 and 1985.

Named after Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, activist, intellectual, writer, statesman and the seventh President of Argentina, the housing complex was built between 1968 and 1972 to accommodate the population living in the inner city "slums" under the promise of "decent housing." The development of the Plan took place in a challenging context: a land shortage for the construction of permanent houses; an intensification of slum eradication policies; highly complex and bureaucratic public bidding processes; and a national policy with changing targets. As a result, since the mid-80s, Presidente Sarmiento suffers of abandonment, precipitating critical environmental situations: gas leaks and power cuts, polluted water, structures in risk, and lack of waste collection, among others. However, interviews with key actors indicate that informality did not emerge as a systemic practice until the mid-2000s, when the new local administration progressive agenda marked the reestablishment of the State in the neighborhood, after decades of neglect.

As a result of informalization, both the original layout of Presidente Sarmiento and the internal structure of the houses have mutated in the last decade, transforming the public spaces between the buildings. New construction and house extensions have encroached on previously empty areas, shared spaces, and "green areas." A 2018 survey conducted by the Province of Buenos Aires identifies 580 new constructions, of which 62 are occupations of open-plan ground-floors of the apartment buildings and, and 518 are encroachments in the public space. These constructions are not exclusively residential solutions. In order to overcome the "dormitory city" logic of the original project, the neighbors incorporated other uses such as commerce, workshops, garages, and warehouses. Unlike some of my informants who argue that informality appeared in the mid-2000s, I found that since the mid-80s neighborhood-scale stores sprang up within and around the buildings. These small stores not only satisfy residents' demand for local consumption but are also sources of jobs, making the local community more resilient in the face of Argentina's recurrent economic crises. The transformations also express the cultural preferences of Buenos Aires residents. People converted unfinished balconies into barbecue grills, created soccer fields out of empty spaces, and enclosed public areas to create private small gardens and backyards. As these transformations accumulate and spread, the old formal logic of the housing project becomes much more difficult to read. However, far from a landscape of chaos and destruction, the altered occupation of this place has increased its use-value for residents in social and economic dimensions.

When and why does informality precisely arise in Presidente Sarmiento and why? Is it associated with building deterioration, as academic works indicate? What is the position of the local government towards informalization? How do neighbors deal with informalization? Is it through conflict or with solidarity? How do formal and informal livelihood strategies relate to each other and how do they relate to the overregulated built environment?

To answer these questions, I conducted extensive archival research, coupled with fieldwork between January 2020 and March 2021. The fieldwork included twenty-eight semi-structured interviews with residents who have modified their original units, seventeen sporadic and unstructured talks with other neighbors, three semi-structured in-depth interviews with community leaders, and eleven with public officials in different ranks and phases of the project. I interviewed twice the only surviving architect of the architecture studio that designed the project. I also spoke with three academics who have worked in the neighborhood. I conducted all my interviews and talks with neighbors during three months of visits between January 2021 and March 2021, in which I also made observations of the built environment and sociability within

the neighborhood. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, I conducted my interviews with experts, professionals, and academics between May 2020 and October 2021. A detailed explanation of the fieldwork method is presented in Appendix I.

This case study speaks to the difference between the theories on the failure of modernist housing and the coping mechanisms of low-income households that can address urban inequities generated by macroeconomic recessions and the impoverishment of living conditions. I argue that the failure approach ignores community leaded resilience-building in contexts of extreme poverty. The informal practices seek to retrofit the more socio-economically supportive aspects of informal livelihoods into the more austere conditions of formal, modernist mega-projects. To understand how the informalization of modernist city-making can shed light on new ways to improve low-income housing, it is essential to review the political history of housing policy in Argentina. In particular, the development of public housing policy in Argentina during the second half of the 20th century cannot be explained without analyzing the intermittent political periods between democracies and de facto governments and their impact on the territorial and social dynamics of the Buenos Aires metropolitan area[6]. Therefore, the first section of the case study presents a historical-contextual analysis of the genesis and development of Presidente Sarmiento fifty years ago, the political rationality of the military government's slum eradication policy, and the role of the architecture firm STAFF in materializing the modernist visions into a new approach to social housing. I also analyze the project's early years and the following decade, marked by an intermittent period of democracies and de facto governments.

In the second part of the chapter, I analyze the evolution of the project from the variable of informality. One of the findings of my research structures this analysis: for the residents, informalization does not exist as a unique, continuous, and homogeneous process but as diverse spatial practices embedded in the "natural" evolution of the built environment and life itself. These occupations of open-plan ground-floor, expansions of ground-floor apartments, encroachments on "green" areas, and vertical growth have varying degrees of legitimacy. Neighbors understand some as good practices, but others represent social conflict and a violent imprint on controlling the territory by the "law of the strongest." Although residents do not exercise these practices with normative judgments in mind, I found that they have rules and create a territorial management based on the individualization of shared space and the idea that a house is for life --and the life of the descendants as well. The relevance and permanence in the territory are not only due to the inability to move out or –as residents say— "to leave it behind" but also, they are a positive choice linked to the geo-economic dynamics of the *popular classes*[7] in the metro area of Buenos Aires. People stay because they need to belong to a *political* territory in order to channel multiple survival strategies. Even if these processes might imply social tension, the capacity to transform the built environment with dynamism and speed with rules

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[6] A de facto government is one which has seized power by force or in any other unconstitutional method (Duhaime.org). Military government or popularly known as "military juntas" are considered de facto governments in Argentina.

[7] In contrast to the concept of "working class," which is defined by relations of work and wealth, the "popular sectors" are a more heterogeneous identity; it refers to a population that is exploited and dominated or entails self-exploitation. As a labor force, the popular classes are subjects of exploitation and oppression. However, domination exceeds the labor relations and is also expressed in political and cultural relations of subalternity with the elites and the dominant classes, such as race and ethnicity. Despite their fragmentation and heterogeneity, aspects of the popular world --as a subaltern one-- are represented in daily life, work, ideologies, and their forms of organization and struggle (Adamosvsky, 2012; Di Meglio, 2012)

based on changing needs is, for residents, a comparative advantage regarding other neighborhoods in the city. These dynamic rules function to maintain social order within the neighborhood, conflict resolution, and the relationship with the local State. However, it is uncertain whether this will sustain in the short-term future, as space becomes scarcer, and infrastructure get more contested. This constitutes a city-making culture where sociability is intercepted by the spatial management of Presidente Sarmiento.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Housing Policy for Slum Eradication

The development of public housing policy in Argentina during the second half of the 20th century cannot be explained without analyzing the intermittent political periods between democracies and de facto governments. This case study belongs to a national, public housing policy devised in 1964 during the democratic government of President Arturo Illia, who carried out a developmental and liberal agenda for the country. However, the de facto government that succeeded him developed and implemented most of the program, marking a significant imprint in conceiving housing as a legal and spatial apparatus to exercise authoritarian power, social repression, and state terrorism.

By the mid-1950s, the National Housing Commission (CNV) detected 101 illegal settlements with 125,000 inhabitants, about 2% of the population living in the Buenos Aires metropolitan area (CNV, 1957). The Slum Eradication Plan (Plan de Erradicación de Villas, PEVE) aimed to manage the definitive eradication of the popular settlements known in Argentina as "villas de emergencia" or "villas miseria" (misery and emergency slums). As I reviewed in Chapter 3, in the 1960s, eradicating or eliminating "illegal" settlements was a well-regarded practice in the international arena, promoted by organizations such as UN-Habitat and multilateral lending banks. In this context, the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) supported financially and technically Illia's eradication and housing policy along with a broad portfolio of subsidized loans, land concessions, and public works to address social sectors with minimal or no saving capacity. Nevertheless, the military *junta* that usurped Illia's administration in 1966 --and ruled the country until 1973-- redesigned, developed, and implemented the PEVE almost entirely. They transformed the policy into a tool for "cleaning slums" and displacing the lower-income classes to the periphery and social surveillance. As a consequence, the PEVE is seen today as the iconic housing policy of the dictatorship period.

The de facto government of President Lieutenant General Onganía reviewed the original policy in 1967. In its re-launching (Law 17,605), the PEVE underwent significant modifications in its guidelines and implementation. Military governments viewed the city's "slums" not only as a housing or socio-economic problem but also a political challenge (Yujnovsky, 1984). Since slums were the epicenter of social demands, organized workers' movements, and the humanitarian actions of the Movement of Priests for the Third World, they also represented a threat to the antidemocratically imposed social order (Fernández Wagner, 2018). Therefore, slums and their inhabitants were placed in the public eye as a threat to the city's progress (Larrivera, 2019). As Oszlak (1991) points out, in this context, the slums were for the military a moral, aesthetic, and hygienic problem that affected urban life as a whole. The slum population

was seen as a different social class, who carried "benefits and privileges" not enjoyed by other inhabitants of the city, such as not paying taxes or services, operating clandestine businesses, or being part of "organized mafias" (Oszlak, 1991). For instance, the head of the Municipal Housing Commission (CMV) of the city of Buenos Aires, Guillermo del Cioppo, declared in 1967:

> It is necessary to do an effective job to improve the habitat, health, and hygiene conditions [of the slums]. Concretely: living in Buenos Aires is not for just anyone, but for those who deserve it, for those who accept the guidelines of pleasant and efficient community life. We must have a better city for better people (Quoted in Russo, 2001).

Within this ideological context, the de facto government put the PEVE into operation in 1967. The first objective aimed at providing an immediate response to the victims of the flooding of the Reconquista and Matanza-Riachuelo rivers. Most of the victims were people living in spontaneous settlements on the riverbanks, close to downtown areas of the city. Soon after, the PEVE was extended to various areas of the country, mainly the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires (Yujnovsky, 1984). The Housing Secretariat executed the plan with the support of the National Mortgage Bank and agencies, such as the Secretariat of Public Health, the governments of the Federal Capital City and the Province of Buenos Aires, the Secretariat of Social Security, and the Directorate of Migration (Larrivera, 2019). The PEVE implied the forced relocation of hundreds of families, primarily Argentinian rural migrants, to the outskirts of the cities. The eradication also included the expulsion of foreign migrants to their countries of origin (Bolivia, Chile, and Paraguay; Ramea and Canali, 2011).

Once the public unhealthiness of the "villa de emergencia" was declared, the government relocated the families and demolished their houses. Everything that the inhabitants could not take with them was burned and crushed by bulldozers (Tella et al., 2017). The officials declared the slums' land of public utility and, in case they belonged to private individuals, the national State expropriated them (Gaite, 2005). The following notification exemplifies the *modus operandi* of the PEVE (extracted from the archives of the Center for Legal and Social Studies, CELS):

Municipal Housing Commission, Internal Oversight Department
LAST NOTICE INTIMATION
Slum: 1-11-14
House N°: 222
Sector 1.
The occupant of the house is hereby summoned to make himself present (with census card and identity card) on the 4th of the current month, from 2 to 7 p.m. at the office of the Eradication Commission, located at 1950 Varela St., Capital Federal. Failure to assist the appointment within the deadline will result in the demolition of the dwelling.
Buenos Aires, June 4, 1979.

As part of the relocation process, the PEVE initially contemplated the work of social workers to motivate the slum dwellers to leave their homes behind voluntarily. However, after the military took over the government in 1966, the policy met with much resistance from the families, and its methods quickly changed to massive use of bulldozers and mechanical shovels to destroy the houses without any consent from the residents (Blaustein, 2001). The violent

procedures also included the fumigation of people and belongings to "enter their new homes clean." One of the children of an old neighbor of Presidente Sarmiento recalls her mother's eradication:

> My mother came to Buenos Aires from Santa Fe province when she was twelve years old, with her parents and eight younger siblings. My grandfather sold everything he had and built a tiny house made of sheet metal and cardboard in Los Patitos neighborhood. It was a small neighborhood of 26 or 27 families. My mother remembered how sad she was when the military truck took her to Presidente Sarmiento. She saw the bulldozer passing in front of their eyes.

Between August 1968 and October 1969, the military government eradicated six inner city's slums with 35,691 people, of whom 25,052 ended up living in temporary housing assigned by the State (Yujnovsky, 1984). This attitude towards slums marked the beginning of a policy trend that peaked in 1976, when the PEVE scaled up all around the country.

Figure 4. PEVE trucks taking belongings and people to the NHT housing

Source: Russo, 2001

The PEVE planned two programs of simultaneous execution: the Transitory Housing Nuclei (NHT) and the Definitive Housing Nuclei (NHD). The plan transferred the eradicated families to a first "transitory house" before moving them to permanent housing. As expressed in the policy formulation, the transitional units would provide the inhabitants with protection from possible evictions, the guarantee of living in non-flood-prone land, houses with materials that cover fire risks, and water and sewage systems. Also, the individual plots of land had enough

vacant space for a vegetable garden or recreation area. However, the NHT modules had minimal proportions: about 22.5 m2 covered and 33.75 m2 of green space. The PEVE goals were more than protection and guarantees. The NHT fulfilled two roles: to provide a shelter solution to relocated families while the housing complexes were under construction, and to serve as a space for "adjustment" from "slum life" to "urban life." Concretely, the government intended to correct the "vices of slum life" by inducing "social behavior, civility, culture, and morality" in the "adaptation homes" (Oszlak, 1991) before transferring families to their new homes as "civilized people" (Piccini, 2015). For example, NHTs proposed "home intimacy" due to sound insulation, the availability of a private lot, and the separation of specific spaces for domestic tasks such as cooking, washing, and sleeping (Gomes, 2017). The construction of the NHT houses was precarious and dismountable. There is a specific reference to this decision linked to the PEVE's moral objectives in the policy documents. The government expected families to experience discomfort product of the temporal precariousness of the houses rather than comfort. They assumed that this discomfort would "awake" the desire to "make an effort" to obtain the definitive housing, corresponding to the second phase of the housing program, the permanent units (Gomes, 2017; Guaia, 1968). The program estimated that these modules would stay in the temporary houses for a maximum of seven years and then families would move to the permanent functional units within the NHD (Piccini, 2015). After the moving, the government would dismantle the NHT and continue with second phases of NHD.
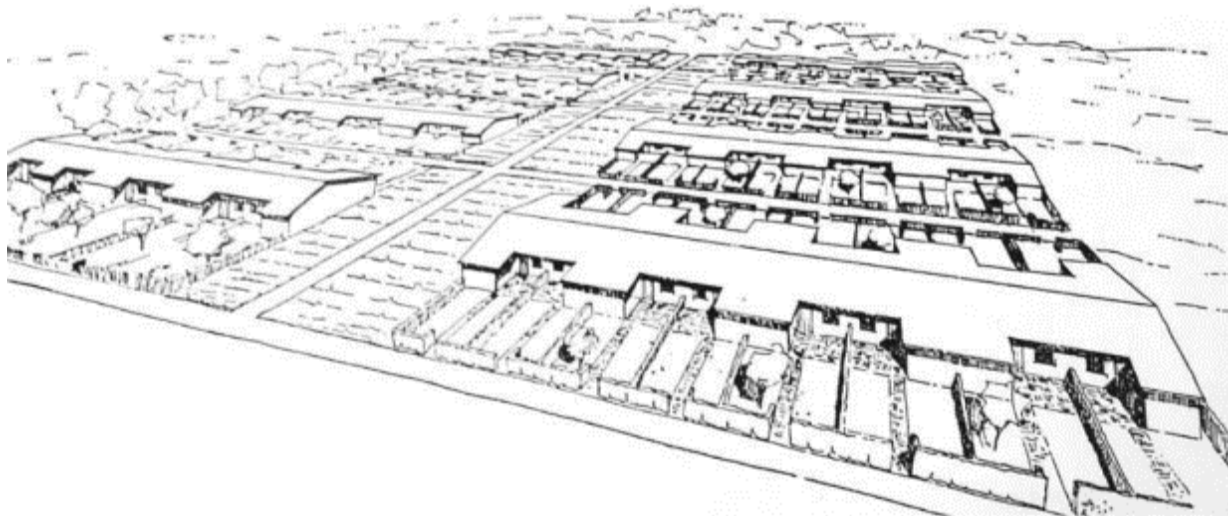
Source: Ministerio De Bienestar Social in Gomes, 2017.

Figure 6. Model plans for NHT houses. The typical house only included on bedroom, a living room (drawings show single beds arranged in L-shape suggesting the "living room should be also used as a second bedroom), a kitchen with a sink and no other appliance, and bathroom just

with a latrine. Doors, outdoors flooring, and fence appear in the drawings, but they were not delivered. Street is pedestrian and has 1.30 meters wide.
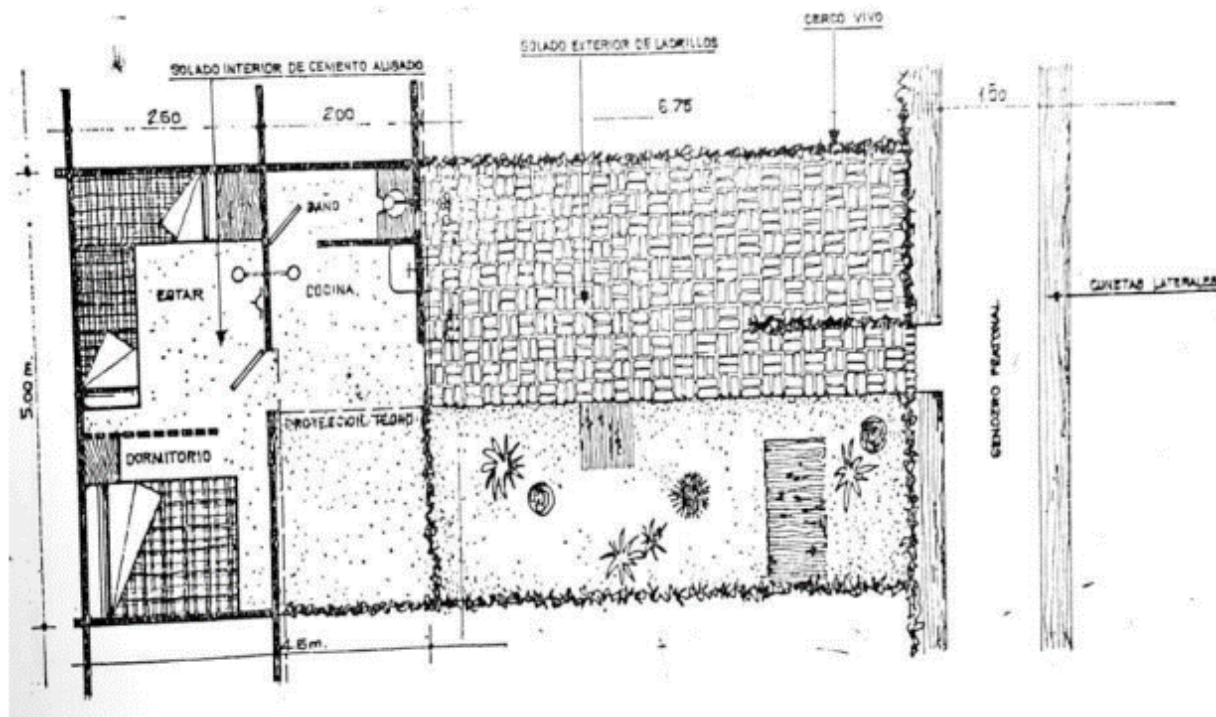
Source: Ministerio De Bienestar Social in Gomes 2017.

Based on my interviews and secondary sources (Rodrigo, 2005), the first families began to move into the temporary houses of Presidente Sarmiento in 1966. The "*casitas*" (tiny houses) - as the neighbors call the NHT - covered forty blocks, with about 16 families each (Ramea and Canali, 2011). The prefabricated modules had minimum proportions and precarious construction materials separated by corridors of less than five feet. The construction consisted of ceramic panels assembled on prefabricated concrete columns and a roof of fiber cement sheets. Given its transitory nature, the policy did not foresee the expansion and improvement of the unit; the government and the institutions participating in the PEVE believed that families should place their effort on obtaining their permanent housing based on savings and mortgage loans rather than developing incremental construction (Blaustein, 2001; Larrivera, 2019). However, after moving into the *casitas*, the neighbors consolidated their dwellings (changed the construction materials and did the finishing). Nevertheless, this consolidation of the transitional dwellings was never complete. The residents, already displaced families who were not formally owners and knew the uncertain future of their temporary dwellings, renovated and consolidated their homes only to provide an immediate response to temporary needs for the seven-year transition period rather than to achieve a sweat equity investment.

Figure 7. NHT built houses in 1967, showing the construction material quality and finishing.

Source: Ministerio De Bienestar Social in Gomes, 2017.

STAFF and its Megaprojects

The second PEVE program, which included the Definitive Housing Nuclei (NHD), was executed through Large Housing Complexes (GCH). These were large-scale modernist projects, with apartment units nucleated in strips of high-density buildings (*monoblocks*), shared spaces, community facilities, and streets for public use.

The development of large-scale social housing complexes was already a common practice in Argentina during the sixties, even before creating the PEVE. This model implied the public acquisition of large land areas in peripheral locations due to the high incidence of land rent (Fernández, 1996; Bekinschtein et al., 2013). Even as this kind of housing developments came under criticism in the United States and Europe, epitomized by the implosion of Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis in 1972, Latin American governments adopted these same strategies in response to the massive housing demand of urbanization (Vale and Wainer, 2018; Larrivera, 2019). However, unlike in Europe or the US, where the State owned most of these complexes for affordable rental, in Argentina, the policies transferred the ownership of the apartments to individuals, creating large condos with single administrations. To do so, the national State instituted the GCHs under the Horizontal Property (PH) regime established in Art. 2 of Law 13.512 (1948). The PH law determines that each owner is the exclusive owner of the apartment and co-owner of the land and all the shared spaces of the building. According to the law, the consortium represents a board of owner-directors and the administrator, and it must agree and draft containing rules of coexistence among the condominium owners. While the PH was created for traditional developments in the inner city with consortiums usually ranging from two to fifty owners, the law was utilized by the national government to create an alternative urban management model for the large-scale housing complexes.

Under this legal framework, large plots of land were registered in the provincial cadaster as single private parcels with several large buildings organized in only one consortium of thousands of people. As the government registered the entire piece of land (with its buildings, streets, lanes, and parks) as a single private parcel, they transferred the responsibility of maintaining public spaces to the owners, that is, the low-income beneficiaries of the public housing policy. This transfer of responsibility also included the maintenance of the main infrastructure networks and pipelines, and the management of any service within the complex (i.e., garbage collection public system only reaches the border streets of the complex's site).

In Argentina, the State built 691 GCHs under this urban-legal scheme, comprising 235,000 housing units and one million inhabitants (Beckinstein, 2017). Eighty are located within the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, of which fifteen were built under the PEVE Plan. The rest were built under other plans such as Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda (FONAVI), which did not necessarily imply slum eradication (Bekinschtein et al., 2012). The STAFF Studio (architects Ángela Bielus, Jorge Goldemberg, and Olga Wainstein- Krasuk), founded in 1960, designed nine PEVE - GCH housing complexes. The Presidente Sarmiento housing complex was the first of the PEVE competitions of the Núcleos Habitacionales Definitivos (NHD) the STAFF studio won through public competition. The Project was coordinated by the Secretaría de Vivienda de la Nación and operated by the Banco Hipotecario Nacional. The NHTs and NHDs created in Morón by the PEVE are located on land assigned by the Hospital de Agudos Posadas, near the Acceso Oeste highway, which connects the site with the CBD in only thirty minutes. At the time of construction, the hospital served the growing population of the sub-central areas of the

metropolitan area and the urban periphery. Initially, this land belonged to the Martínez de Hoz family, one of the most powerful families in Argentina and close ties to the de facto governments. The construction company was Seidman Bonder, which built 51,600 m2 of social housing for 4,500 inhabitants on 113,000 m2 of land (Rodrigo, 2005).

Figure 8. Buenos Aires metro area showing socioeconomic index NBI and informal settlements
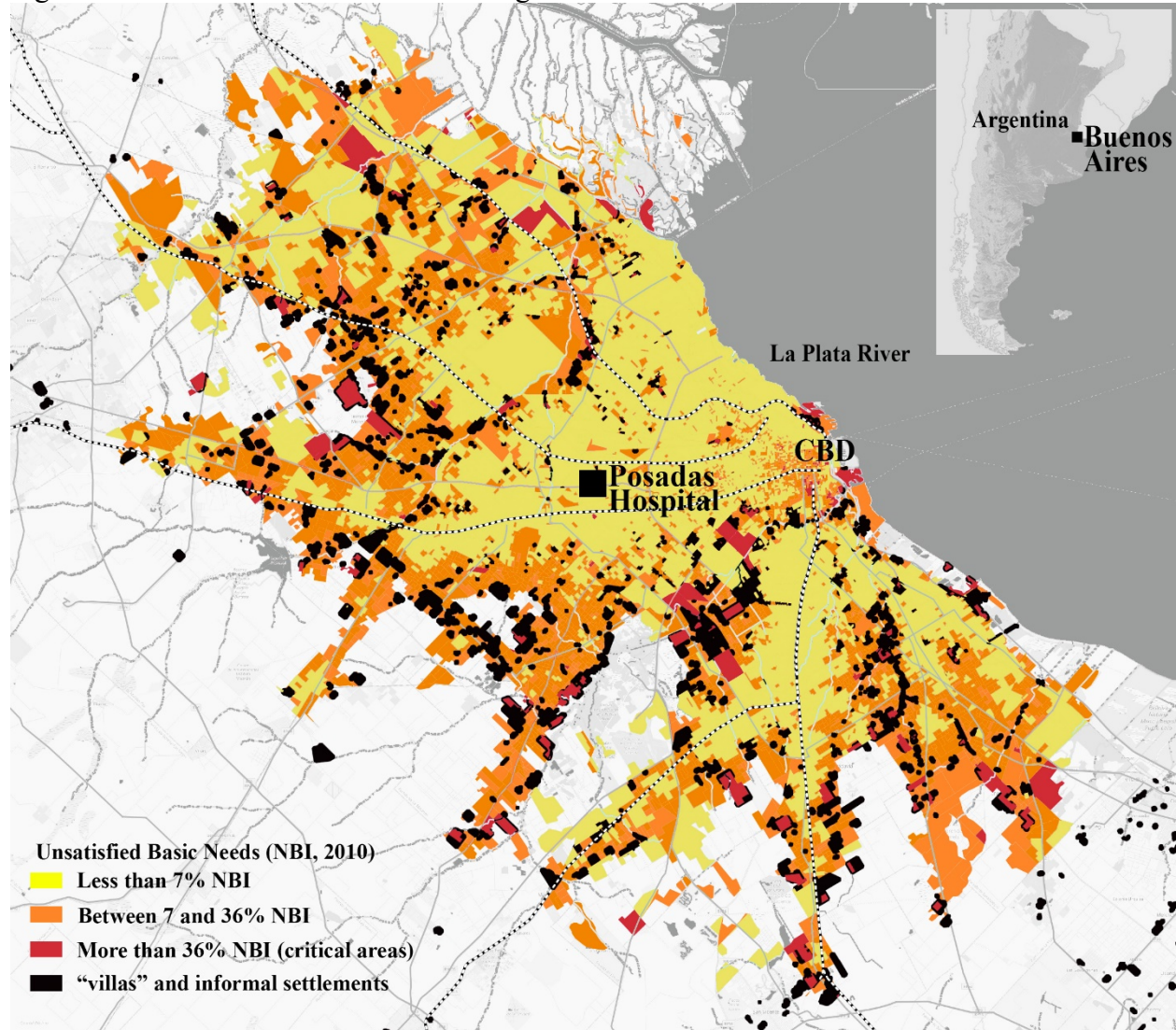
Source: Own elaboration using data of Subsecretaría de Urbanismo y Vivienda de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (2010)

Figure 9. Presidente Sarmiento Housing Complex, showing Hospital Posadas on the top left

Source: Unidad de Coordinación de Infraestructura Barrial (UCIBa) - Ministerio de Infraestructura (MISP)

Through building housing projects in the periphery, the STAFF studio proposed a model for city-making committed to a social agenda. Their professional aim was to reposition the architect's figure far from detached aestheticism and closer to a technical-political actor with a social purpose. According to Olga Wainstein herself, STAFF built more than two million square meters through publics bids. As she points out, the PEVE bids made the studio grown very quickly, representing a new way of building social housing in the urban peripheries. STAFF wanted to materialize their conceptual approach into a distinctive material outcome, different from the traditional GCH of the time--modern "soviet-like" architecture with no elaborated design, and buildings implanted in green fields with almost no hierarchy.

> When we started doing these public contests, we systematically lost each of them. In the bidding documents, they [government] established parameters such as the [maximum] height of the buildings, the number of apartments, the [population] density to build shoeboxes. We said "no!" to those ideas. We were young enough to believe that we could change the world, but we were losing because our proposals were different. Until we won the first one, and [after that] it was like [winning??] thirty contests in a row. We were not ready for that growth.

This prolific production mediated by the social purpose was driven by the joint work of teams of professionals from different disciplines --sociology, economics, designers-- who worked together at STAFF to the detriment of an "author's architecture" (Liernur & Aliata, 2004). The very name of the studio referred to the spirit of teamwork, connoting the interdisciplinary actions of its members, who proposed building a new, open professional field

merging sociology, urbanism, and architecture. The principal architect, Jorge Goldemberg, also a sociologist and urban planner, studied numerous "working-class neighborhoods, shantytowns, and rancheríos" in the 1960s. In a 1981 architecture journal article in SUMMA Magazine, he argues that he conceived his projects as the most appropriate solution to integrate marginalized groups into the "big city." He thought that urban environments would induce an "urban mentality" capable of integrating marginalized populations into society. Goldenberg was a member of the Organization of Modern Architecture (OAM), a group of architects created in 1957, who wished for a new perspective of thought and action to develop cities in Argentina. They aimed at translating "the abstract field of the social sciences" into the physical world through the interdisciplinary work involved in urban planning and a new design method elaborated on multidisciplinary procedures (Liernur & Aliata, 2004; Goldenberg, 1973).

In practice, the architecture-urbanism of STAFF focused on creating public and community spaces to increase the random possibilities of social contacts to encourage urban lifestyle (Liernur & Aliata, 2004). STAFF's design search focused on the materialization of urban environments in differentiated scales (the dwelling, the street, the meeting of streets, the notion of the complex) and to individualize the dwelling in the totality of the project, creating varied situations and articulating the big housing complex through mainly pedestrian circulations (Waisman, 1981; Liernur & Aliata, 2004). As we read in the project's descriptive report,

> The modern criterion for the formation of urban systems poses the simultaneous and ambivalent situation of constructively "massifying" the complex, that is, grouping the population around one or more themes and at the same time "individualizing" the housing as much as possible.

The projects were inspired in the typological paradigm that resembles the French "grand ensembles" and the models promoted by the French architecture firm Team X during this same era. These were conceived as self-sufficient urban units of higher density than their surroundings, provided with large-scale community facilities and public spaces of different scales (Ballent, 2004; Kullok & Murillo, n/d). This approach to social housing intended to overcome the limitations of "rationalist urbanism," fleeing from its supposed "anomic" consequences generated by the aridity and monotony of its architecture (Ballent, 2004).

Figure 9. Team X (left) and STAFF (right) projects. (From left top corner to bottom) An aerial view of the Bellefontaine section of Le Mirail, France)1972, Mushrooms shaped houses Via: Antonio Di Campli (The Metabolist City) and Metalocus; Georges Candilis and Shadrach Woodsdesigned in Casablanca, all members of by Team X. (From right top corner to bottom) Villa Soldati and Presidente Sarmiento project drawings and pictures by STAFF.
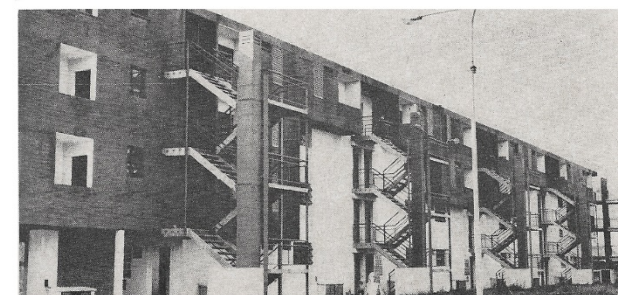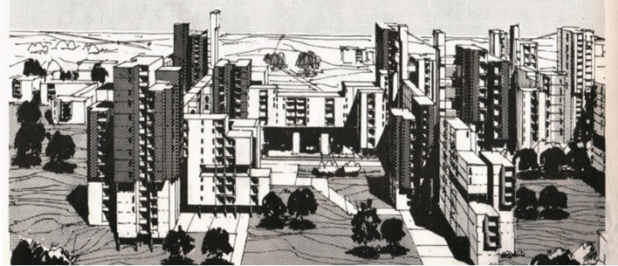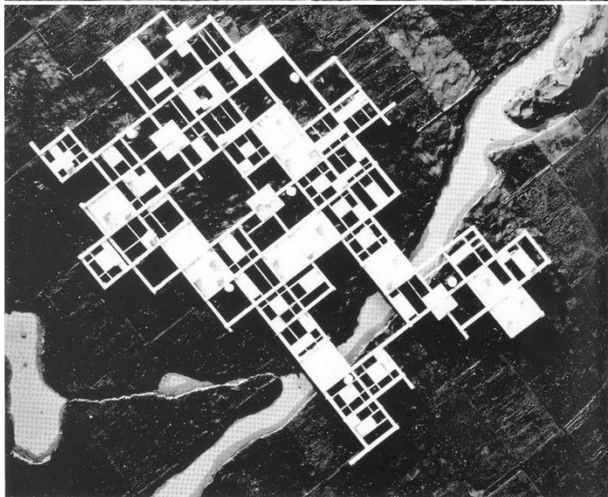
Source: 1972 SETOMIP, SUMMA 65/66, team10online.org

Under this conceptual framework and references, STAFF conceived the Presidente Sarmiento complex as a "total unit" capable of both materializing an urban-social vision and addressing the practical needs of the family dwellers. They structured the project in three large subsets of buildings or communal areas often referred to as "sectors," organizing fifty buildings, twenty-five corridors and 104 building access. The architects designed each subset in an architectural *claustrum*, orthogonal arrangements of four-story, large apartment buildings, often called "monoblocks," organized around a central courtyard. Each *claustrum* forms a green, central courtyard area for public use that residents now call "the lungs." The apartments feature three-bedroom (40%), four-bedroom (32%), two-bedroom (23%) and five-bedroom (5%) units arranged in double-bay strips, paired by vertical circulation cores that link the first floor to the three upper levels through a system of eighty-one staircases and bridges. The kitchen and dining rooms are ventilated towards the twenty-five corridors while the bedrooms and bathrooms face the *lungs.* The dimensions of the rooms, kitchens, and bedrooms of the apartments are less than the minimum standards imposed by the building codes of the province of Buenos Aires.

Figure 10. Presidente Sarmiento Original project with NHT and NHD. The three claustrum areas (light red) with their own central courtyard areas (dark orange), organized around the vehicular street and the central public space (orange)

Source: SUMMA Magazine 64/65 (1973)

Figure 11. Presidente Sarmiento original project, showing first phase with NHT temporary houses (above) and expansion of NHD building over NHT area
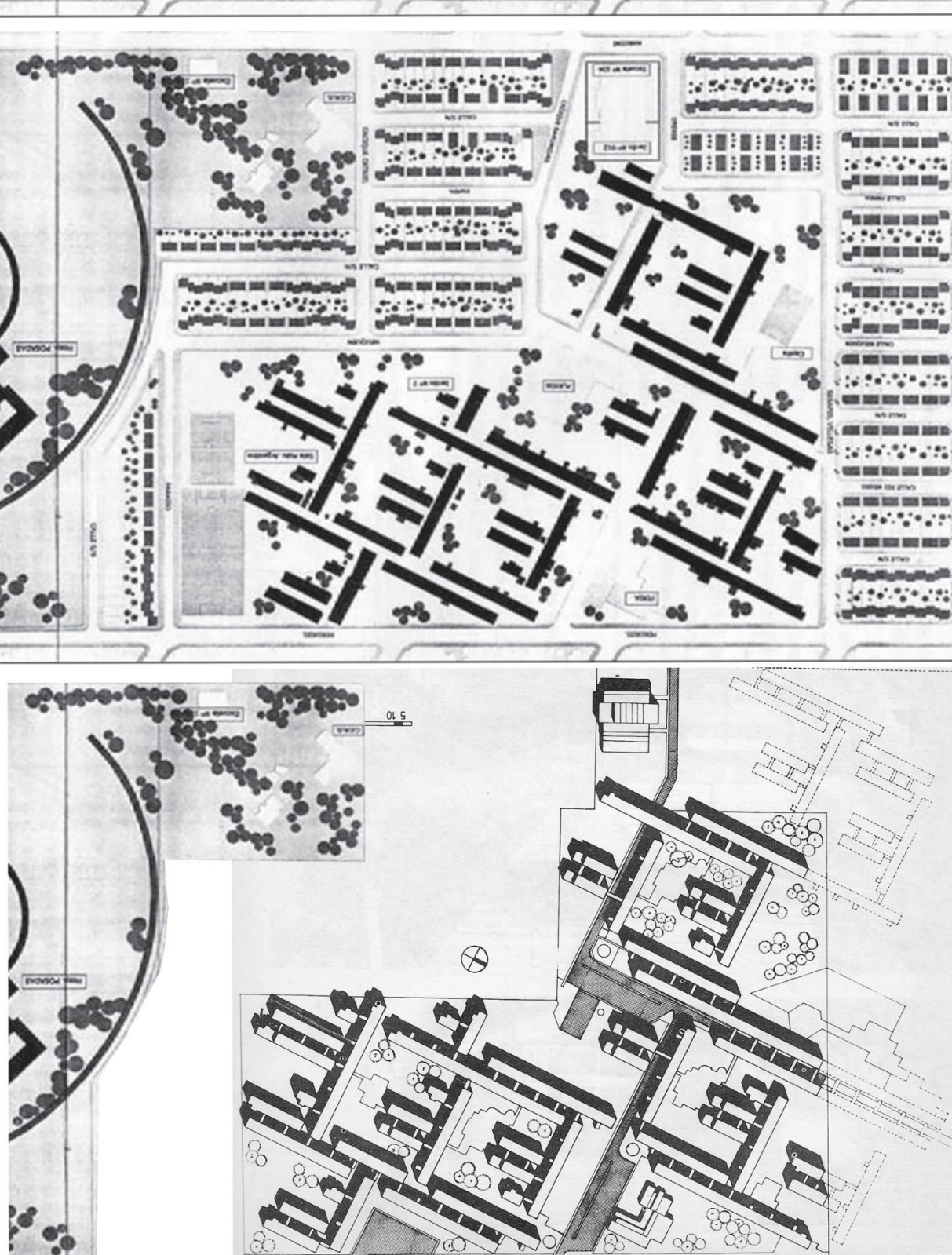
The architects rotated the *monoblocks* 45 degrees from the border streets and surrounding urban fabric, including that of the NHT *casitas*. Oral records of my interviews affirm that this orientation was part of the bidding document regulations, but I could not find documentation confirming this statement. In the descriptive memory of the project, the architects claim that they oriented apartment strips towards the cardinal points to ensure that no room faces the south --and darkest-- side (SUMMA 64, 1964). Also, the architects emphasize that by opposing the traditional "checkerboard" urban grid, they promoted the use of interior open spaces as new alternatives for living and neighborhood socialization. Although the urban surroundings of the complex were not yet consolidated at the time of construction, there existed already a plot structure that continued the orthogonal grid, typical of the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. As a result, the site's perimeter became a border, delimiting the edges between the traditional urban fabric and the housing complex layout. The physical limit also became social, while the rupture with the surrounding urban fabric created a distant relationship with the neighboring city. Consequently, there is a strong feeling of being "inside" and "outside" the barrio since the early years.

"Inside" Presidente Sarmiento, the buildings and open spaces articulate through a single internal vehicular street that runs from east to west and connects the neighborhood's edges, the daycare center, and the public school. Although the architects aspired to create a "total unit," that is to say, a single big complex designed for a single social group, the bidding specifications were strict: the sub-sectors of the project could not link to each other through a vehicular network. Marisa Waisman (1981) says that this imposition --to divide the building sectors physically-- already implied in itself an urbanistic criterion against the architects' vision, who thought that a project like should have been treated as a single physical-demographic entity, with no internal subdivisions. Giving this restriction, the architects designed a single, sinuous street to make vehicular traffic as slow as possible to reduce the division between the three buildings subsets and the impact on the pedestrian life of the community. The street is highly inefficient since it does not provide a straightforward way from one part of the project to another. It is easier to drive around the border streets than taking the internal one, emphasizing the intramural logic of the complex that discards the connections with the surroundings. In addition to the vehicular street, the project has a pedestrian circulation system called corridors, through which the architects organize the access to the apartment units. The parking lots are in the accessible "free space" at the open-plan ground floors of the building strips, which also work as pedestrian lanes between the "lungs" of the "monoblocks" and the pedestrian corridors.

Figure 12. Monoblocks, staircases, bridges and free-plan ground floors while families moving to the apartments

Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

Figure 13. Monoblocks, staircases, bridges and free-plan ground floors
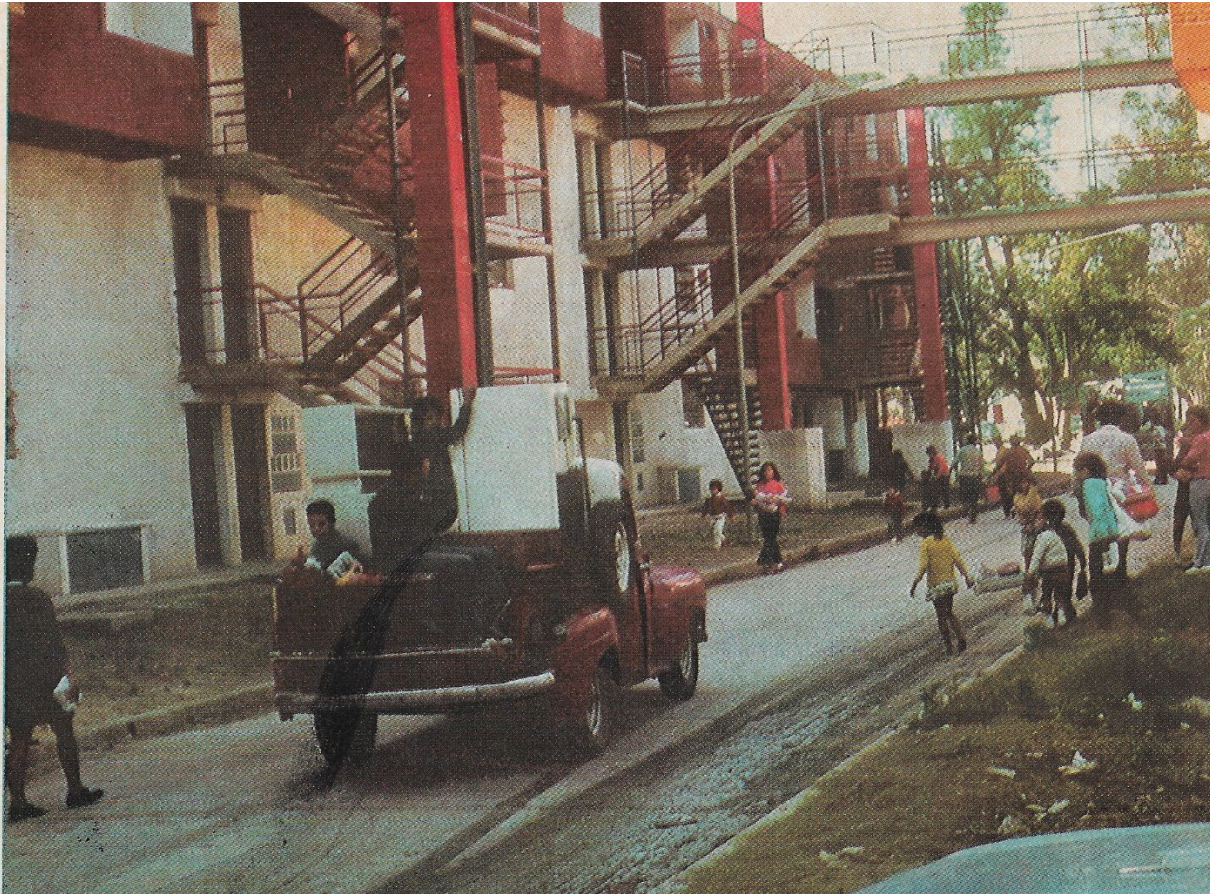
Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

The corridors, stairs, and bridges take pedestrians to the upper floor dwellings. Due to their complexity and links to a social transformation hypothesis, the design of the stairs and bridges deserves a separate explanation. The architects intercalated the access to the apartments using levels, staircases, and bridges. Detailed in Figure 13, the staircase 1 connects directly to apartments A and B on the second floor. Apartments B in the opposite building are accessed through the staircase and a bridge that crosses over the corridor. The stairs number 2 staircase connects apartments C. With this design resolution, the staircase is solved with a single flight, reducing the staircase area in the corridors and allowing for broader pedestrian circulation. The architects also halved the number of staircases: each core serves two apartments in one building, and through the bridge, two apartments in the building opposite. As a result, sections of different buildings connect through the bridges.

Figure 14. Staircases and bridges

Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

STAFF studio used this designed solution recurrently in the housing complexes to save construction and operational costs. The reduction of vertical cores significantly reduced the structural costs of the buildings, including the installation and maintenance of mechanical elevators in higher density projects. However, this design resolution also entailed a particular social goal related to community building, neighbor bonding, and small-scale common spaces. According to Olga Wainstein, Goldenberg always insisted on neighbors' communication and social life, and he designed the "staircases and bridges" with those ideas in mind. The idea is for people to circulate through space, communicate from one place to another, and use the bridges as balconies, as meeting spaces for a community in the making. The architect reflects on a somewhat naïve view of bridges as a social project:

> I remember that when we finished Soldati [the second PEVE of the STAFF studio], people from the United States came to visit the Soldati project. We were becoming very famous internationally, and it was fashionable to come to Latin America. All the US architects said the same thing: "We do not understand how you dare to build these bridges for people; kids will be assaulted; women will be raped here!" We replied that nothing like that happened here. Of course, other things were happening. The militiamen could kill you there. [...] Then it started happening due to lack of maintenance. Everything public [in the projects] became a total disaster. Nowadays [date of the interview: June 2020], those

spaces are occupied by certain guys who come and even ask you for a toll to get on the elevator.

The complex circulation network of stairs and bridges illustrates the architects' search for morphological and programmatic complexity. STAFF believed that complexity expressed in the design resolution of stair cores, bridges, and pedestrian streets, facades and volumes, represented a new, innovative look at social housing in opposition to the traditional architecture of social housing projects in Argentina. So, while these sets standardized the units and design responses, they also sought to produce difference and compositional complexity to solve social problems. In a sense, the STAFF approach represented a new wave of architect's commitment to their social work and professional ethics. However, while Goldenberg himself criticized the concept of architectural typology reduced to formal aspects and claimed that architects should focus on making their architecture a social reality (Waismann, 1981), STAFF clearly made significant efforts into finding a new aesthetic language of their own. The "staircases and bridges" design resolution became a signature feature of their projects. Although STAFF positioned its practice in an intimate relationship with urban sociology, the theoretical discourse of social practices relegating, from a discursive point of view, urban/architectural design to the background, their practical work reveals a design model based on morphological exploration. Plots, strips, clusters, bridges, and staircases, which repeat in all their PEVE projects, demonstrate how the studio gave in practice a greater relevance to formal exploration and determination. Those features, which the office reproduced in the Morón, Ciudadela, La Matanza, Florencio Varela, and Soldati PEVE complexes in the periphery of Buenos Aires, resemble the configuration of an alternative city that resembles images of the global disciplinary field. In this sense, the housing projects of the studio represent an antagonism between theoretical discourses and the studio's production (Longoni, 2017). Indeed, the similarities in the design of many PEVE housing projects reveal the same (almost indistinguishable) design solutions used in different contexts, opening a question mark on the viability of Goldenberg's sociological considerations. Rather than a contextual, diverse, and multidisciplinary response to a social agenda, STAFF replicated the same typologies probably fueled by the multiplication of the winning contests in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

This ambitious social/conceptual/morphological search was restricted by the substantial limitations imposed by the bidding terms of the housing policy. The IDB funded the policy with a mortgage-based cost recovery architecture, restricting the financial schemes to housing and nothing else (i.e., no green spaces, commerce, community services). Although the studio planned and designed green areas and public equipment, these never went to construction bids or any project's official documentation. Public spaces remained empty and underused with no apparent purpose. The relationship with the construction companies also represented operational challenges for implementing STAFF's conceptual vision of the STAFF studio. The PEVE established a complex relationship between architects and construction companies, where they shared responsibility for construction management under two opposing logics, that of reducing costs versus that of creating an urban vision. The size of the complexes meant that only a small group of large companies could carry out the construction works and that not even the Housing Secretariat nor the provincial housing institutes had the number of trained personnel necessary to control the works (Bekinschtein et al., 2012). According to Goldenberg (1981), these challenges added to the need to respond systemically to an expanding demand that exceeded the productive capacity of the studio itself.

Figure 15. Public spaces in Presidente Sarmiento in 1973

Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

The first years: community building and usurpations (1968- 1975)

According to historians and long-term residents, the first population in Presidente Sarmiento was working-class, with generally at least one employed member in the family. The women worked in cleaning service in private homes, and the men worked in construction and metal and textile factories in the area (Ramea and Canali, 2011). During the early years, there was a great deal of neighbors' participation in different initiatives that formed community ties, such as the Neighborhood Commission, a Literacy School supported by the Morón municipality, and the Mothers' Club, a non-governmental entity with support of the Ministry of Social Development of the province. The Posadas Hospital was not only a health center but also a community center for the neighborhood. An old-time neighbor recalls:

> The hospital was open to us, there was no wall dividing the neighborhood and the [hospital] building. On Saturdays and Sundays, people went for a picnic at the hospital park... it was like a public square rather than a hospital park.

The PEVE defined the construction of the permanent *monoblock*s buildings in stages to be completed depending on the progress of the construction works and the social management of the NHT-NHD resettlement processes. However, the Plan's development took place in a challenging context: a land shortage for the construction of permanent houses; an intensification of slum eradication policies; highly complex and bureaucratic public bidding processes; and a national agenda with changing targets. The first phase of Presidente Sarmiento's *monoblock*s was finished within the Alborada Housing Plan during the return of democracy in 1972. Due to the slow adjudication processes linked to the change in government administration, the delivery of the apartments suffered significant delays. The new government only delivered the permanent units of the first phase in 1973, a year after these were complete. As planned, many of the inhabitants of the NHT *casitas* moved to the *monoblock*s. However, the complete relocation process was interrupted due to both bureaucratic circuits and illegal usurpations of the vacant apartments. Outsiders who did not benefit from the PEVE occupied many vacant apartments in a confusing process full of dualisms. Some witnesses address the usurpations to "the empire of violence": organized groups that forced occupations taking advantage of inefficient bureaucratic procedures and delays (Waismann, 1981). Interviewees affirm off-the-record that those apartments were delivered during construction by the de facto government to politicians, union leaders, and militaries. Architect Olga Wainstein relates during our interview how she thinks occupations impacted the sociability and maintenance of the buildings:

> In the early years, I saw how the same resident women painted and maintained the iron stairs. Later, when the 'invasion came,' and when they [the government] started to bring in outside people from the unions, the military, and other groups... that's when the problem began.

But other testimonies say that the *monoblock*s were occupied as part of unattended historical claims and needs. As a neighborhood referent relates:

> There were three attempts of takeovers; in the first one, we were kicked out by the Army. We decided to wait [the return to democracy], and we took the *monoblock*s in August '73. We were in a Peronist government, which 'allowed us' to occupy the apartments. But we didn't want to be intruders, illegals. So, we organized a neighborhood commission (one representative per staircase and one delegate per *monoblock*), and we went to the Banco Hipotecario Nacional to demand the regularization of the units. We wanted to pay for them.

The usurpations of the apartment impacted the planning of the project's phases, hindering Stage II, which required the release of the NHT's surface territory after the families' relocation. This meant that not all the NHT neighbors could move to permanent residences. The precariousness of the transitional housing was aggravated by the materials and construction systems which quickly felt the effects of deterioration (Yujnovsky, 1984). The neighbors replaced the ceramic panels with metal sheets in several of the houses. Also, the population growth accentuated physical changes. Many families stayed at the *casitas*, and new families arrived, making them their permanent homes. As a neighbor remembers:

> The NHT where we lived was a long lot with two bathrooms and many rooms. They all looked out onto a veranda, an open-air but sheltered place for when it rained where I played with my brothers. When we moved into the apartments,

they [people from outside] took the house and subdivided it into three little houses.

The demographic growth of those years presented worrying indicators since the population had tripled by 1973 when the families were supposed to move to the new apartments. By the end of the sixties, the NHT had an estimated population of 3,500 people, and by 1973 it had 9,000 inhabitants (Saez & Birocco, 2010). The original project was no longer sufficient to absorb that demand, and the housing issue was in check, manifesting a new quantitative deficit (Larivera, 2019). This is how the *casitas* were transformed into the Villa Carlos Gardel (Carlos Gardel Slum), named after popular songwriter, composer and actor, and the most prominent figure in the history of tango.

Figure 16. NHT casitas in 2003 before re-urbanization

Source: Archive of Municipio de Morón

Figure 17. Sketches published in 1973 after the project won a national award. The design journal called Presidente Sarmiento "Conjunto Morón Haedo" meaning Morón Haedo Housing project.

Premio Eugenio Diez SA, División Equipamiento de Empresas

Conjunto Morón, Haedo, Buenos Aires

Obra premiada en los concursos de erradicación de villas de emergencia de la Secretaría de Vivienda

Bielus, Goldemberg, Wainstein-Krasuk, arquitectos

Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

The Militarization of the Neighborhood (1976-1982)

A few years after the Peronist government (1973-1976) delivered the apartments, the neighborhood came into contact with the violent practices of the last military dictatorship. The National Reorganization Process (Proceso de Reorganización Nacional, often known as "El Proceso," the Process) ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1983. The Argentine military seized political power during the March of 1976 coup over the presidency of Isabel Perón, widow of former President Juan Domingo Perón. In 1976 a time of state terrorism against civilians started, including practices of torture, extrajudicial murder, and systematic forced disappearances.

The armed forces advanced on the Villa Carlos Gardel and Presidente Sarmiento *monoblocks*, as they did on so many other middle and working-class neighborhoods in Argentina. After the military coup, the social organization was dismantled, including the neighbors' association and the mothers' organization. The neighborhoods got militarized with intimidation and control operations. Several residents, militants of different political tendencies, were kidnapped and disappeared. Parallel to the repression in the neighborhood, the military also arrested workers, doctors, and personnel of the Posadas Hospital, who were tortured and disappeared. During the dictatorship, the military used the hospital grounds as a clandestine detention center, known as "El Chalet" (Russo, 2001). The militarization of the site transformed the daily life of the neighborhood. Demobilization of the population became evident while the military and paramilitary co-opted the public spaces. As architect Olga Wainstein illustrates:

> There was always an armed guy on the bridges who was pointing down [with his gun] ... they were the police forces or the militia, or I don't know what. I think my partner [Teresa Bielus] I were very naïve in taking pictures of the armed men walking through the neighborhood.

The military deployed eviction operations for the families living in the temporary shacks and for those residents who were in arrears with their rent payments. The forced eviction of people began to be a repeated pattern in the dictatorship's intimidation methods. In a press conference given by Pirez Apolonia in April 1979 and reproduced by the newspaper Clarín, this mayor stated that "in one or two more years we can reach the total eradication of the fifty shantytowns and precarious settlements located in different areas of the of Morón municipality [….] Those who have their own land or houses must go and occupy them. No more free living" (Saez and Birocco, 2010). In July 1979, the municipal Social Welfare Secretariat informed 640 families of the Carlos Gardel neighborhood that they had to leave their homes within 90 days. The eviction report published in August 1979 in the newspaper Clarín, argues that the procedure used information from an investigation carried out by the social service of the Morón municipality. The report says to detect "intruders, people of bad living, social misfits, prostitution, vagrancy, lack of cooperation and community collaboration, apathy, lack of work habits and lack of desire for progress and self-improvement." Of the 640 housing units registered by the local authorities, the military evicted 400 and demolished a dozen. A sector in the neighborhood became an uninhabited space, which was only reoccupied with the arrival of democracy in 1983.

Discussion: Utopia as a mandate

The regulatory frameworks and urban policies developed by the military dictatorships resulted in the expulsion of low-income groups from the city center and worked as the foundations of an exclusionary and peripheral territorialization of the popular classes. As I will show in the following sections, that pattern deepened in the 1990s and remains today. Systematic kidnapping, torture, and extermination of the population had a strong correlation --both physically and symbolically-- with urban space for surveillance and control, whether through the distribution of clandestine centers, the eradication of popular neighborhoods, and the construction of magnanimous housing complexes. As a result, during the PEVE period (1964-1979) only seven percent of the population living in slums in the central city managed to remain in their neighborhoods and were not eradicated (Oszlak, 1991).

In this context, Presidente Sarmiento was not a simple housing project. Policymakers and architects conceived it as an idea of modernity –and civility-- in the city. As architect Alfredo Garay points out in my interviews, these housing complexes represented the possibility of constructing the utopia of the modern city as a form of social control. All the design decisions embedded in Presidente Sarmiento (the communal spaces, the *lungs*, the staircases and bridges, the corridors) reflect the idea that society can be reshaped and reordered "from scratch" with space. In particular, the architects and policymakers thought that all the social practices, conflicts, cultural networks, political movements, and any other form of sociability could be "urbanized" as a "civilizing" enterprise (Tella et al., 2017). To do so, Presidente Sarmiento represented a new urban morphology and envisioned a management model different from the traditional city. The transfer of full ownership of the site to the beneficiaries of the public policy as owners of public and private spaces was a way of relieving the State of the responsibility of managing the urban territory of the poor. This compulsive privatization of urban space in the hands of people without the financial or technical capacity to carry it out is what for many is the beginning of the failure of this type of housing policy.

Within this framework, academic and professionals treat Presidente Sarmiento as an "urban ghetto" and relates the deterioration of the built environment with the informality that emerged in it. Both informality and decay, seen as a single process, are often attributed to the residents who modify, extend, and renovate their property with no clear rules under the prolonged absence of state policies (Bekinschtein et al., 2012; Dunowicz & Hasse, 2005; Waisntein-Krasuk & Gerscovich, 2005). From the mass media, the symbolic construction of Presidente Sarmiento builds an unbridgeable distance that mediates between a zone of rights and a zone of exception. Mass media portrays Presidente Sarmiento today as not different than the image of slums built by the military in the 70s. It is the place where " [...] the State is non-existent, where ambulances do not enter, where teachers attend classes in isolation, shopkeepers do not pay taxes, and girls quickly become pregnant." (Gioffré, 2021)

With the years, the future of these housing complexes became worrisome for the State that faced a new dilemma: to demolish as previewed in Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis (USA, 1972), Robin Hood Gardens (UK, 2017), Toulouse Gardens (UK, 2017), or to reconvert the buildings to assume transformations in line with the demands of the inhabitants, such are the cases in Saint Nazaire (Bordeaux, 2014-16) and Tour Bois-le-Prête (Paris, 2011). In Presidente Sarmiento, neither of these two options has yet been in operation. As we will see in the following analysis section, the State (at its multiple levels) has carried out minor building maintenance works,

without taking a clear stand on the social and physical reality in the site. Meanwhile, as time goes by, aspiring for a solution becomes more and more unattainable, and Presidente Sarmiento is increasingly stigmatized. As we read from journalist Gioffré's opinion piece referring to Presidente Sarmiento:

> To think of integrating it as it is now, is like wanting to put an appliance to work through tiny surgical hollows in its packaging instead of taking it out of the box. The only porosity, the only miscegenation there is between the outside and the inside is when the police organize [with gangs] "mixed" [authorship] robberies and look for available "labor" among the inhabitants of the slum.

This chapter continues to investigate the cause of informalization through additional interviews, interviews with residents and observation in the field to understand if the reality lived in this housing complex really has no solution, if there is only failure or if, on the contrary, it is in the daily practices of the residents that we can find the key to understand Presidente Sarmiento as a city-making culture marking the future of contemporary urbanism.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The origins of informalization

The first features of informality in the area occurred in the transitional housing NHT or the *casitas* during the late 70s. Although the NHT units had sewers and essential services, the PEVE did not build them to last over an extended time. In the early 1970s, temporary residents adapted the units to their permanent needs, transforming the *casitas* into an informal settlement. Although the street layout was maintained, residents built new buildings, and the neighborhood grew - in physical and demographic terms - very rapidly. During the early 1980s, the NHT sector became known as Villa Carlos Gardel. However, this process did not have a specific impact on the informalization of the *monoblock*s. Although family and friends may live in one or the other, all residents point to the two neighborhoods (Presidente Sarmiento and Carlos Gardel) as separate entities in terms of their dwelling logics. The residents understand that the *casitas* were temporary and inadequate housing for families, and it was legitimate to adapt the units to the permanent needs of the family. Other residents allege that after the original families moved into the *monoblock*s, the *casitas* were invaded and modified by new families migrating to Carlos Gardel.

One of the main objectives of my research on Presidente Sarmiento is to understand when and why the neighborhood began to become informal. Both policymakers and academics associate the emergence of informality with building decay resulting from poor design decisions and the high costs of maintaining infrastructure (Bekinschtein et al., 2012; Bekinschtein, 2019; Dunowicz & Hasse, 2005). Academics attribute the high degree of deterioration to modifications or extensions produced by the residents with no clear rules, a "status quo" based on disorder and absence of the State (Bekinschtein et al., 2012; Wainstein-Krasuk and Gerscovich, 2005). Although historians on Presidente Sarmiento note that by the early 1980s, the *monoblock*s were

beginning to suffer the consequences of decay, I have not determined that this decay has led to a process of informalization or vice versa. In other words, although these two processes may be associated in time, they are not the same, and there is no causality between them.

According to Larrivera (2019), the deterioration of the material conditions in Presidente Sarmiento relates to the failures in the STAFF's project principles and deficiencies in the design of the PEVE housing policy. She also points to a relationship between lack of tenure and maintenance, which is supported by other scholarly work in the Buenos Aires metro area. A study by Galiani and Schargrodsky (2010) shows that having property titles in an informal settlement improves the quality of housing and increases the number of years that the owners' children remain in school, with a greater probability of finishing high school. It also reduces the number of inhabitants in the house, on average, from six to five. Since many of the residents in Presidente Sarmiento do not have property deeds, either for having usurped the apartments or not having received the title deed from PEVE, academics think they never engaged in the periodic maintenance of the buildings and shared spaces. Following Larivera's arguments, as of 2019, only 110 from 1.494 households had legal property titles (Larrivera, 2019; Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales, 2018). However, there is no empirical evidence on the impact of titling in GCH social housing complexes instead of informal settlements.

This irregular condition is not unique to Presidente Sarmiento; almost 20 percent of the social housing in the City of Buenos Aires does not have title deeds (Sohr, 2018). What may seem like a simple formality is, in reality, the sign of an unfinished process in which the State prematurely disengages. In GCHs, where the average number of people with titles is only 19 percent, the proportion of households with Uncovered Basic Needs averages 17 percent.[8] However, in those with the most deeded apartments (exceeding 76 percent), the proportion drops to 7 percent on average. The number of people with a high school education also increases in complexes with more legal owners: people with a high school education rose from 61 percent to 68 percent (Sohr, 2018). Once a person has the security of tenure over their property, they can invest more in improving and caring for their home, and when the housing issue is solved, you can also invest in other things, such as more education, affirms Cynthia Goytía, director of the Center for Research in Urban Policy and Housing at Di Tella university. In Presidente Sarmiento, people invested in their homes without formal property titles, which may indicate that tenure security is guaranteed through alternative channels to deeds and regularization. The few interviewed residents living in the *monoblock*s who had property titles claimed that they deliberately took the responsibility of obtaining the deeds and made special requests to the Housing Institute of the Province of Buenos Aires. While it is true that most of the residents of Presidente Sarmiento did not make claims for deeds, the PEVE assumed titling as a consummating event in the delivery of the housing units to the beneficiaries of the policy. In addition, the same State did not even facilitate this kind of complex administrative procedure for people living under multiple vulnerabilities (social, economic, educational). As a resident points out:

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[8] The concept of unsatisfied basic needs (NBI) allows the delimitation of structural poverty groups and represents an alternative to the identification of poverty considered only as insufficient income. This approach identifies dimensions of absolute deprivation and approaches poverty as the result of an accumulation of essential material deprivations: housing conditions, access to education, access to clean water, overcrowding (National Institute of Statistics and Census of Argentina, 2010)

It's from both sides. Those from here don't go [to the public offices], and those from the government don't come [to the barrio]

According to my interviews and observations, the building decay is not necessarily related to tenure status but to the dissolution of the administration of the consortium of owners. The neighbors I interviewed agree that the consortium existed for approximately ten years, until the late 80s. Each sub-sector of *monoblock*s had its sub-administration, which responded to the central consortium and charged expenses for maintaining the buildings and shared spaces. The central consortium, which had the municipality's support, "diluted, disappeared" in the early 90s. A resident explains:

We used to pay municipal taxes and services here, and there was a consortium administration that lasted until [19]89 or so. It was a privately managed administration with the intervention of the municipality. The administration dissolved because people stopped paying in the [economic] crisis and the administration itself [mismanagement of the resources]. Since the 90's nothing is paid here. I say that 80% of the people want to pay because they value what they can get [by doing so]. But the rest do not have the culture of progress. Others don't pay because they can't [they do not have money].

Although all the old-timers who have lived in the neighborhood for more than 40 years remember that the administration once existed, there is no clear oral or archival record of who was in charge of the administration, whether it had people's participation, or how it functioned on a day-to-day basis. Nor could I record a specific event that ended up with the institution. Lack of payment and performance causes are qualified by a generalized perception that is difficult to verify with certainty. A third of my interviewees asserts that they would pay taxes and services, but many other residents would not. They attribute the dissolution of the consortium and subsequent decay to a lack of interest in the neighborhood's progress. One resident alleges:

I want to pay; I always say that in the neighbors' meetings. Because otherwise we are hanging from the sky; they don't give you credit, nothing. But not everyone here wants to pay, so we will never get out of it.

At the same time, in the 1990s, the local government stopped maintaining public spaces (or private spaces for public use) and introduced privatized services companies, such as waste recollection, which suddenly changed their attitude towards the barrio. For example, the garbage trucks stopped collecting garbage located at the perimeter streets. The lack of maintenance and absence of the local State led to decades of abandonment, precipitating critical environmental situations: gas leaks and power cuts, polluted water, structures at risk, and lack of waste collection, among others.

Figure 18. Building decay in the *monoblock*s

Source: Laura Wainer, Cecilia Larivera

To this day, apartment maintenance is a costly process due to the overall poor condition of the buildings and infrastructures. A quarter of my interviewees said that it is challenging to keep the indoors of their apartments in good shape while the overall building condition has deteriorated so much. For example, painting the indoor walls is a worthless investment because of water leaks. Also, many neighbors moved the kitchen within the unit because of leaks in the sewage pipes. Even though the layout of the original units was the same, today, each is different. Kitchens moved to living rooms; bathrooms replaced bedrooms, and terraces and balconies transformed into dining rooms. The neighbors on the first floors have many dirty water problems, and those upstairs have problems with gas pipes and rainwater leaks from the terraces. Most of the neighbors fix and maintain their apartments individually, entailing significant investments of money and time. I also identified various forms of association to join efforts, agree on repairs that affect more than one owner, and solve problems related to infrastructure and shared spaces. These associations are temporary, short, and focused on particular problems, such as a sewage pipe, a gas leak, and a wheelchair access ramp. All those who were part of an agreement with their neighbors for maintenance or repair admit that their collective experience has not been simple or virtuous. Not all the neighbors affected by the problems to be solved agree on the kind of repairs and costs, sometimes because they do not want to invest and often because they cannot afford the shared costs. These differences generate much tension between those who can and cannot get actively involved in maintaining the buildings.

In my interviews, I also noted a great diversity on what residents consider repairs and modifications. *Repairs* are the interventions I just mentioned, primarily related to the maintenance of the apartments and buildings. *Modifications* are radical actions that change the uses, layout and surface area of the unit, such as transforming the dining room into a store or adding an extra bedroom to the apartment. These are a prime object of my research, that is, those that necessarily change the status, distribution and management of land in Presidente Sarmiento. Mere *repairs* do not interfere with the spatial politics of land: they do not modify the limits between public and private, do not significantly change the site's morphology, and do not seem to bring changing sociability community as *modifications* do. I argue that only modifications forge a city-making culture. In fact, in the traditional city, most families repair their houses within the limits of their private property, often without legal authorization. The important thing about the phenomenon of informality in Presidente Sarmiento is that it goes beyond the limits of private property, reconfiguring the spatial distribution of the territory. None of my interviewees said they had modified their apartments in the *monoblock*s due to repairs or maintenance. The causes of modifications are straightforward: a household's expansion and livelihoods expressed in a second generation of families that grows within the neighborhood and faces worsening socioeconomic conditions than their parents.

Population growth of both Presidente Sarmiento and Carlos Gardel took place within the advance of the economic crisis that shaken the national economy in the post-dictatorship decades. The consequences of high unemployment, social impoverishment, and a pronounced increase in poverty and indigence (an official denomination for the poor and the very poor) substantially impacted the neighborhood.[9] The economic and monetary stabilization policies recommended by the Washington Consensus marked the impoverishment of the middle and working-class, which gave rise to the massive expansion of economic and residential informality throughout the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. The commercial, economic opening that led to the closure of numerous industries, with the consequent loss of employment and increases in unemployment, job insecurity, and fall in real wages, merged with the privatization of urban public services and a boom in the construction market and the purchase of materials for self-construction by those sectors with sufficient income (Cravino, 2009). Presidente Sarmiento began to experience a process of informalization within this context. Married children living with their parents found it impossible to access new housing and ended up living all together in the same apartment, in some cases, with three households at the time (Larivera, 2019). However, social impoverishment and the increase in poverty during the 1990s affected more than just Presidente Sarmiento's buildings. In addition, delinquency worsened: "gangs" of young boys formed and confronted each other. The residents themselves recognize that coexistence with violence and crime worsened the social situation within the neighborhoods and generated the prejudice "from the outside." The image of the "outsiders" full of realities and prejudices of a violent neighborhood that led the denomination of "Villa Carlos Gardel" (including Presidente Sarmiento and Carlos Gardel) as one of the most violent neighborhoods in Argentina. Groups

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[9] The concepts of poverty and indigence used by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC) are based on the idea of a bottom "line". "Indigence Line" (LI) seeks to establish whether households have sufficient income to cover a Basic Food Basket (BFB) capable of satisfying a minimum threshold of needs. Households whose income surveyed by the Permanent Household Survey (EPH) does not exceed this threshold or line are considered indigent. The components of the BFB are surveyed by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) four times in the year. Likewise, the "Poverty Line" (PL) extends the threshold to include minimum food consumption and other essential non-food consumption. The sum of the two makes up the Total Basic Basket (INDEC, 2016).

related to robbery and drug trafficking took over the common spaces (Macha, 2009). Taking advantage of the spatiality of the project, which made it difficult for the security forces to enter, part of the neighborhood was transformed into a car junkyard and a hangout for delinquents. As a neighborhood referent points out:

> The peak of insecurity was in 1990-2001. There the public space was so insecure that people could not even go out to walk to take the bus to work early in the morning or come back at night. There always was and always will be insecurity. [However] I do not find a relationship between occupations and insecurity. There has always been gang rivalry between different areas of the *monoblock*s that seek territoriality [referring to territorial control].

The decline of the neighborhood's internal organizations during the dictatorship and the proliferation of mafia networks contributed to the free operation of these groups (Ramea and Canali 2011; Vio, 2013). As a consequence, physically securing the property and ensuring more safe private space for family living became an important need for the residents. As I will analyze below, there is a relationship between the value of occupying common space, territorial control by different constellations of actors, violence, and the process of informalization in the neighborhood.

One of the main findings during my interviews is that, although there is a clear and convincing narrative about when physical and social transformations began to take place in the neighborhood, residents do not treat these physical and social transformations as a homogeneous process, divergent from the "natural" evolution of the original project. During my interviews, residents and merchants do not talk about "informalization," "the transformation of Presidente Sarmiento into a villa," or "irregular/illegal buildings," as the public officials and experts do. This does not mean that residents are not able to problematize physical or social phenomena that happened in a singular way in the neighborhood, as intrinsic characteristics of the neighborhood. Nor does it mean that residents do not conceptualize diverse phenomena around "big issues." Other powerful topics such as building decay and violence that cross many events, experiences, and problems reinforce the lack of acknowledgment of informalization as a coherent and unique phenomenon affecting the neighborhood. In other terms, whether it is maintenance challenges, the risk of infrastructures failures, or construction defects, decay is a common topic among the neighbors. The role of youth in violence, related by residents to the arrival of new families and the enlargement of existing ones, is also present in everyday conversations. Both represent "what has changed in the barrio." Either because it does not carry structural social conflict or because residents cannot distinguish what is formal from what it is not, informalization is not part of a recurrent demand as some kind of discernably unique, linear, and continuous reality. After working and studying for several years in the neighborhood as a technical assistant in the Social and Urban Integration Project carried by the Province of Buenos Aires, Pablo Peirano reflects on the residents' understanding of formal and informal:

> Because of our training (as architects), we distinguish a building from a self-construction. To us, there is a material difference. However, it is uncertain if that is a clear limit for the residents for whom both the physical and the legal are blurred: there are informal occupations within the formal constructions.

When I asked about the physical transformation and modifications of the buildings, residents refer to multiple and different practices involved in the neighborhood's evolution: the occupation of the free-plan ground floor, the expansions of the first-floor apartments, the invasions of the "green area" and the vertical growth (categories I will explain in the next sections) of the informal occupations themselves. All these typologies are distinctive and carry different logics. Understanding each one separately and their interrelation is essential to understand the physical-social rationalities of Presidente Sarmiento. In the following, I analyze these practices, presented in chronological order according to their appearance. I analyze their emergence, how they affect the physicality and sociability of the barrio, and the multiple perspectives on understanding them in the evolution of Presidente Sarmiento.

Figure 19. Presidente Sarmiento Housing Complex with informal expansion and autonomous encroachments.

Source: own elaboration based on OPISU 2018

Occupancy of "hollow" spaces

The combination of population growth, job insecurity, and monetary stability created a new way of living in the city which had resonance in the neighborhood. Towards the end of the 1980s, residents began changing Presidente Sarmiento's physiognomy; overcrowding became evident with the arrival of new settlers and the growth of the original families. This process is related to what Cravino (2009) identifies as the prototypical type of overcrowding in metropolitan Buenos Aires, where impoverished middle or lower-middle sectors tend to postpone as long as possible their move to irregular forms of tenure because housing is usually the asset that families try to preserve. Therefore, in many cases, the lack of capacity for extended families to acquire a new house is solved by two generations living in the same dwelling

(Cravino, 2009). In Presidente Sarmiento, the growing demand for space led to the emergence of an informal rental market. Apartments were subdivided into rooms, rented for entire families. In my interviews with neighbors, all identify the 80's as a turning point in the physiognomy of the barrio. In particular, interviewees say that during the 1880s, residents started a gradual occupation of "the hollows," those open space-plan ground floors designed for vehicle parking, neighbors' meeting places, and the passage from the corridors to the *lungs* (green spaces) of each subsector. The *hollows,* as the residents named these spaces, were originally designed for community-oriented uses and parking. As I mentioned in the previous section, STAFF intended to generate, open, small-scale spaces for the residents to meet and establish community relations. Following the principles and design ideas of modernism (one of Le Corbusier's cinq points de l'architecture moderne), STAFF followed the principles of a flexible floor plant, easily adaptable to different activities.

Figure 20. "Free" ground floor plan for community use
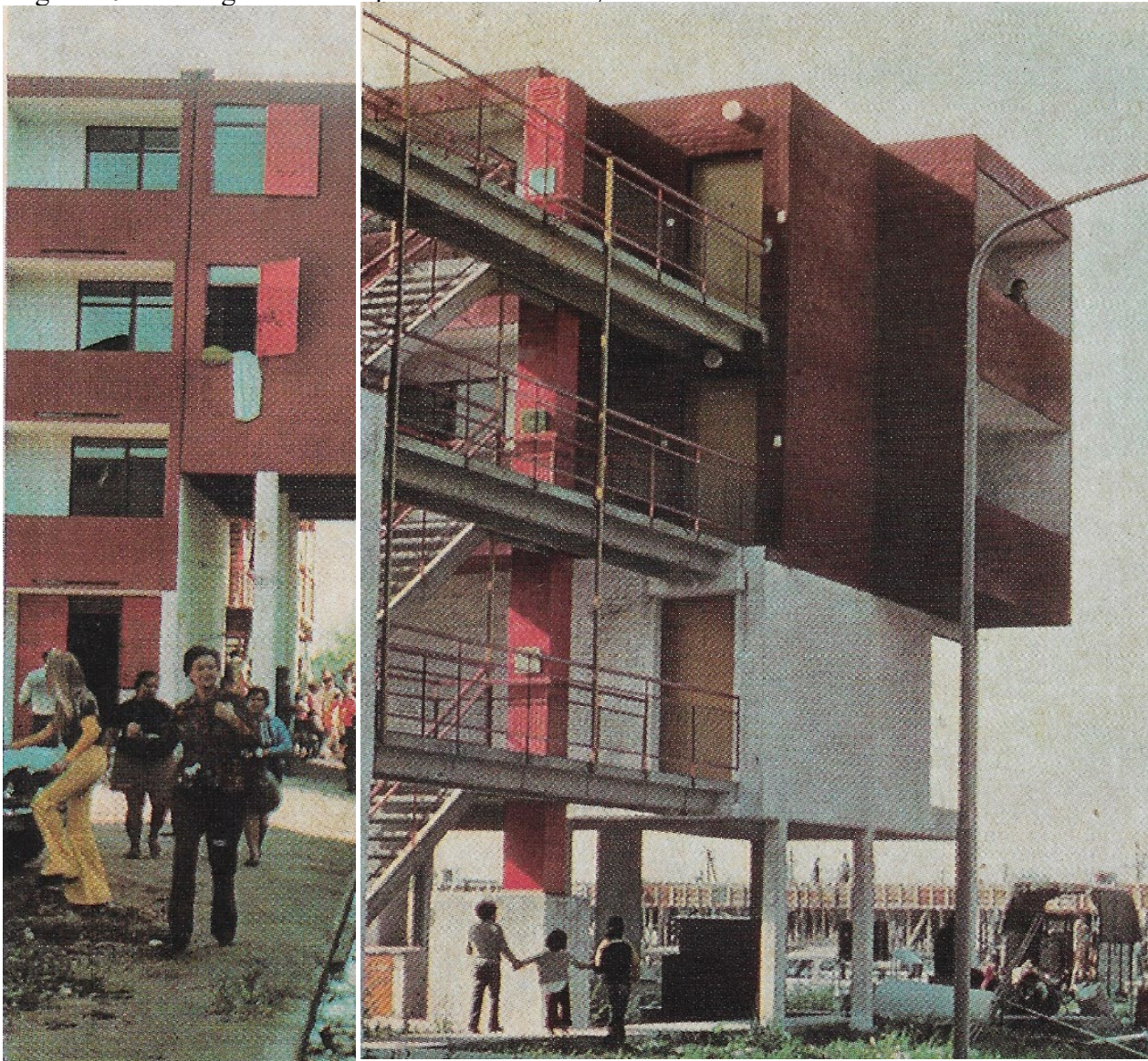
Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

Figure 21. Free-plan ground floors in the original project. In red, the open, ground floor "hollows." They were located in the building corners as well as in the central area of the blocks.

Source: Revista SUMMA 64/65 1973

Although population growth and the extension of the original families are the leading causes for the systematic occupation of the "hollows" at the free-plan ground floors, the very first occupations were not carried out by individual families but by organized neighbors responding to community demands. Long-term neighbors remember the need to incorporate uses in the barrio that had not been planned, such as the first-aid room and the offices of the complex's administration. Along with a daycare center, these two were the first *hollow* spaces that neighbors occupied. These occupations happened with no conflict; even more, they had the approval and support of the local government. Shortly after the neighbors built them, these organizations received institutional and financial support from the municipality. Even though they did not have the corresponding building authorization, they were later "formalized" as

public institutions. Also, in an apartment on the first floor of *monoblock* 17, the residents created the Comedor Comunitario del 17 (Community Dining Room of the 17), which still offers free meals to the people who cannot afford their own and receives State food aid. The "Comedor," like most of the self-organized dining halls in the neighborhood called "ollas populares" are located in places intended for housing, lacking the necessary infrastructure to prepare large quantities of food and physical space to house the beneficiaries (Rodrigo, 2005). The most singular case is the daycare center. STAFF designed and built a daycare center which turned to be a small shopping mall, and the daycare ended up operating in an informal space built on the garage area of the residential buildings. As a neighbor who has lived near since 1973 relates:

> The daycare center operated for a short time in that place (original space). In the beginning, the market was in one of the *lungs*. It was like an open-air market with stalls. But in 1974 or so, it rained a lot. The fair could not function with so much water. So, the municipality moved them to the nursery temporarily… and they stayed there. There are a couple of people who kept several stalls and monopolized the management of the space. They did business.

Figure 22. Municipal daycare in Monoblock 17

Source: Laura Wainer

Due to this move, the neighbors created an alternative daycare center on the first floor of *monoblock* 17, in the south area of the complex, which today is the Municipal Nursery School No. 7 "Mi Lugar." The municipality not only "let it be done" but also used this space for public

meetings. Then, the municipality itself built the first-aid room in a similar location. As a social worker who has been working in Presidente Sarmiento since the 1990s relates:

> For example, the first-aid room was staffed by municipal professionals. It worked under a *monoblock*. In other words, it worked within what should not have been taken because it was a common space. So was the childcare center. We used to meet there, we had inter-institutional gatherings as well, and they were workspaces for the social workers.

These occupations set a precedent in the barrio, where residents also had their individual or family needs. These needs were not only for residential but also economic space. Older neighbors acknowledge that before the first-floor occupations, businesses already existed within the apartments. Over the years, and in a context of growing unemployment, numerous small businesses also appeared in the *hollows* of the *monoblocks* and in the first-floor apartments where dwellers converted one or more rooms into shops. These were commerce for daily needs, such as groceries, vegetables, and bakeries.

Figure 23. Informal shops in the hollows

Source: Lawrence Vale, Laura Wainer, Cecilia Larivera

Social conflict around the occupations only appears when the occupiers make significant modifications to the building's structure. I could record only a single case of social conflict around the "hollows" occupation: the childcare center, which location on the first floor of the *monoblock* 17 in a space intended for housing generates a series of conflicts. The building's neighbors alleged that the childcare modified the building's resistant structure to build its classrooms and playgrounds, endangering the building's stability. Conflicts also arose from sharing of services (water, sewage) with no residential uses not planned for the building. The childcare authorities do not ignore these problems, as they also assume the inadequacy of the facilities for children's use. For instance, the recreation under the balconies and windows of the building expose kids to the danger of falling objects and flowerpots sitting in upper floor balconies.

Except for particular cases, such as the childcare center, the occupation of the *hollows* does not represent a particular conflict among neighbors. For the most part, these are spaces occupied by the residents who have adjacent or above apartment to the *hollows*. The physical proximity to the empty space sets the right for occupation. In my questions about ground floor ownership, some neighbors claimed to be the owners of the second floors, alleging an implicit right to occupy "their" lower space. Some neighbors perceive that occupying the *hollows* is a legitimate act since these spaces were "given" by the project. "These hollows were already here to be built;" or "they had been left ready to build like this" are common arguments among shop owners. Other retailers said they bought an apartment with a shop next to the premises, and only a few admit to renting the premises and not living in the neighborhood. The shops, which grow or shrink, multiply or close according to the economic context, represent a limited range of services for the neighborhood: food stores, greengrocers, butchers, drugstores, a few hairdressers, electronic payment services, and some clothing retail. As a shop owner resident points out, the range of businesses is wide and varies according to each family's context and possibilities. She inherited her grandmother's business, and her family manages business in the *barrio* for more than twenty years. As she recalls:

> Here in the neighborhood, there is a lot of commerce, especially in times of crisis when people don't have work and need an income. But there are a lot of businesses that open and close. We have stability because we understand the business. Being a retailer is a commitment; we have the responsibility to invest, to maintain the store, to open as many hours as necessary.

The retailers emphasize their capacity to organize themselves to ensure that each has a loyal clientele. Each stable business has its customers, who are also their neighbors and, in many cases, their friends with whom they build a network of contacts to establish opening hours, delivery service, special orders, among others. In the digitalization of commerce, young people have played a significant role, and traders recognize a higher degree of involvement in the family business. The logic of solidarity crosses the commercial logic, and together, almost all the stable businesses have survived the quarantine and economic crisis caused by COVID-19. During the quarantine period, some traders mention that they used the WhatsApp application to solve orders and customer service and organized the open hours in shorter turns. As another neighboring trader mentions:

> You will see that there are many repeated stores, such as drugstores. We share a logic of schedules and contacts that makes the offer work. For example, some

shops only open in the mornings, others during nighttime, and so on... If you go out at two in the morning looking for a bar of chocolate, you get it here.

These stores coexist with workshops inside apartments where people work in sewing and shoe and product assembly. Many people sewed for some contractors near the neighborhood. This fact correlates with the studies of Marcela Vio (2013), who argues that people living in the metropolitan area near to disaffected industries are a supplier of informal labor for the inner city of Buenos Aires. According to Vio, who also conducted a socio-economic study in President Sarmiento in 2013, working from home has to do with the deterioration of the labor conditions of the working classes. In the Buenos Aires Metro area, there is an intimate correlation between growth in informal labor and a growing informalization of the habitat that replicates in Presidente Sarmiento.

Figure 24. Informal shops in the hollows

Source: Lawrence Vale, Laura Wainer, Cecilia Larivera

Today, the level of occupation of the "hollows" on the open-plan ground floors, is almost total. It is difficult to recognize the traces of the original project: the parking lots, the overhangs, the passageways between buildings to connect one point of the neighborhood with another and produce casual social encounters between neighbors-- all of that no longer exists. "The housing complex starts on the second floor and up; the first floor is another fabric," says Marcela Vio. Only two free spaces under buildings remained unbuilt, one occupied by a drinks bar retailer, a commercial space with a pool table, tables, and chairs that serve next door bar. The only space in its original state is an under-building passage of approximately ten meters long. When I asked why no one occupied this space, the neighbors answered that some people committed to keeping it free because it was a strategic passage from the northern sector of the project to the first-aid

room. In the '90s some neighbors organized themselves and took care of it so that nobody would occupy it. When I met those neighbors, they told me that keeping the space unoccupied is a daily job that requires personal and physical presence. They made investments: a few concrete chairs and benches, public lighting for the nighttime, and cleaning. "So, it resists with care and work from the owners," mentions one of the neighbors.

Figure 25. Hollow space occupied by the pool bar

While the occupation of the first floors does not present a conflict between neighbors, it does represent a significant conflict for the repair of the buildings' infrastructures, in particular, the service networks and pipelines designed to pass underneath the open corridors. When the provincial government launched a neighborhood improvement program in 2018 (Social and Urban Integration Project), technicians and public officials agreed that they needed to clear out all the ground floor informal constructions to make major repairs in the deteriorated water and sewage network system. According to the technicians, the technical documents for the bidding process established that the ground floor businesses should be resettled in other areas of the complex because the informal retailers built on top of the infrastructure corridor, and the shops obstruct gas trunks, electricity boxes, or water mains. Against this action, the neighboring retailers jointly resisted the works. As one of the technicians points out:

> When the works began, the retailers unified. They agglutinated as a great power in the neighborhood and confronted the public officers and construction companies. We had some very tough meetings where they said they were not going to move; they were not going to receive any type of compensation, or they only accepted a multimillion-dollar compensation. The idea was not evicting them from the neighborhood, but to relocate them somewhere else within it.

According to all my interviewed experts, public officials, and academics, STAFF's decision to leave the open, free space on the ground floors below the buildings serving as spaces for community sociability purpose is a major flaw that must be "somehow reversed." In other words, they believe that the assumption that designers made about the potential communal use of free ground floor space was utopian rather than realistic regarding the needs and practices of the relocated families of the PEVE. Because the occupations of the "hollows" affects the capacity of the State in repairing and maintaining the service provision infrastructure, the technicians suggest that liberating these spaces from occupation –at least temporally- is necessary. Meanwhile, in the 2018 bidding process, the local government and the implementation agency did not want to sustain an open conflict with residents and retailers of the neighborhood, so the technicians had to rethink the project to do as much as possible the current conditions. They created an alternative project where they circumvent the occupations and fix only parts of the service infrastructure. However, as they affirm, this strategy is only a partial fix and as long as the old pipes are not disaffected and repair... living in Presidente Sarmiento "is dangerous."

Expansions and invasions on the "green"

According to the residents, until the end of the 1980s, new [informal] constructions only occurred occupying the *hollows*, those open-plan ground floor spaces under the *monoblocks*. "I came to the neighborhood in the 1990s, and there were not many buildings; in fact, there were many green spaces." says a neighbor. To the residents, the occupation of the *hollows* does not imply privatizing the shared spaces of the project. Instead, they see these constructions as the completion of an empty morphology within the building's structure. As I presented in the design analysis of the original project, the open internal, "green" areas of the complex aspired to generate a community "lung" for each sub-sector of *monoblocks*. In these community areas, STAFF sought to create relationships between the residents of different buildings of a sub-sector. They worked as communal backyards shared by hundreds of families. As the architect Olga

Wainstein points out, the STAFF studio provided the PEVE authorities responsible for implementing the project with a landscape design for the *lungs*. However, this design did not materialize because the government only assigned funding to relocation, housing, and infrastructure (streets, networks, and services). The *lung* areas and the central public spaces of the neighborhood remained unequipped, and residents modified their use as soccer fields. Nevertheless, most of these areas became neglected land, often used as a garbage dump or a deposit for stolen cars. As a consequence, they degraded over time. In this context, many neighbors living in first-floor apartments began to expand their homes into the *lungs*.

Figure 27. Expansions of first floor apartment

Source: Laura Wainer and OPISU

The first interventions were enclosures and fencing of the space adjacent to the first-floor apartments, that is to say, the area next to the bedrooms of the apartments. In the original project, the designers chose these bedrooms to have a door-window venting into the shared space (the *lungs*), which also functioned as rear access to the apartment. This design decision created a high level of exposure in terms of privacy and very unsafe access. Thus, people chose to close these accesses for both privacy and security reasons and create a small private garden. These interventions represented an initial appropriation of land, which later materialized with housing expansions in the early 90s. Neighbors agree that the horizontal extension of first-floor apartments towards "green areas" or *lungs* started in the mid-90s and consolidated in scale with the arrival of the 2000s. As a neighborhood referent points out:

> Construction started before 2001. Many families grew and had nowhere to go. The first thing we saw were the expansions of the first floors, made by the same owners of the apartments, especially by expanding the families themselves. So, to me, the issue is a demographic matter. But the trigger was the crisis of the '90s.

The reference to the year 2001 as a turning point is not accidental. In December of that year, there was an outbreak of social unrest in the country whose origin is related to the social and political conditions prevailing during the nineties and the neo-liberalization of the economy. The 2001 outbreak generated extreme need in the neighborhoods, with most families living in poverty (Ramea and Canalli, 2010). Both the *monoblock*s and NHT residents were suffering similar challenges: unemployment, job insecurity, impoverishment, low school enrollment, among others. The macro-policies of the 1990s impoverished the population. Therefore, what used to be a diverse community (some industrial workers, public servants, and entrepreneurs) turned out to be a large mass of unemployed residents living in monetary scarcity. The neighborhood leaders attribute the phenomenon of housing expansions to population growth within this critical economic context. Although there I found no particular reference to the age of the members of the households at the time of initial occupancy, by the early 2000s, families were already experiencing the passage of their children into adulthood and the arrival of grandchildren. However, these new families could rarely afford to buy or rent a new home. The only alternative was to stay. For those who lived in first-floor apartments, expanding the unit became a solution to overcrowded conditions, so the option was to expand the house. All the families with expanded first floors that I interviewed said they did it for the same reason. Either by adding more rooms to the original unit or creating independent *casitas* in the space adjacent to the house, the expansions are mostly linked to the family's growth. Many families also expanded to regain the lost residential space when they opened the shops inside the apartments. Residents often take the original dining room of the unit and convert them into shops. As a neighbor on the first floor relates:

> The business was already owned by my father-in-law. This [unit] was their house. When they moved out, they left us the apartment. About ten years ago, I started modifying the house. In the beginning, we were fine because the children were small. The shop was already occupying the dining room. We had a dining room and a kitchen all together there (kitchen space). When the kids grew, we added a living room, two rooms, a bathroom, and a backyard that we also used

as a parking lot. Now each of my children has a room. And my grandchildren
have the patio where they play safely all day long.

Former public officers say that migration from nearby neighborhoods, particularly a
nearby slum called "Villa de los Paraguayos" increased the barrio's population. By the mid-
2000s, these migrants sought moving from the "Villa" to Presidente Sarmiento looking for better
access to infrastructure and services (Rodrigo, 2005). They gained access to the neighborhood
through the informal rental of apartments or tiny houses, however I could not find official or
unofficial records of the scale and impact of this migration. Although residents point out that
"many new people came to the neighborhood in the last years," I could not either find an oral
record of the migration from "Villa de los Paraguayos" during my interviews. According to
Costa (2009), the emergence of an informal rental (and sales) market in Presidente Sarmiento
occurred after long periods of precarious tenure of the units due to lack of deeds, when many
neighbors sold or rented their apartments with unpaid or non-existent deeds. According to
residents and social workers, there is almost no vacant apartment in Presidente Sarmiento due to
the barrios' central location: proximity to the Posadas Hospital, public transportation, and only
thirty minutes up to the CDB.

In this context, in 2004, the local government carried out a census that found 8,000
people living in the *monoblocks* and 482 households in the NHT sector. By 2005 the critical
conditions in the NHT area were such that the government decided to implement its Program for
Urbanization of Villas and Precarious Settlements. This program entailed demolishing the
existing fabric, acquiring more land from the hospital, and building 540 single-family houses for
the original population. The Urbanization of Villas and Precarious Settlements as part of a
national housing policy --Federal Housing Program-- proposed to reactivate the economy
through public works, with the double objective of fostering the local market and generating
employment in the construction of new housing. The Subprogram for the Urbanization of
Shantytowns and Precarious Settlements proposed a closer relationship between the national
government and the municipalities, where the local government designs the project, prepares the
specifications, calls for public bids and awards the work, hires the company, certifies the
progress, manages and administers the resources, and prepares the list of beneficiaries, among
other tasks. The formulation of the subprogram includes urban and social inclusion criteria:
"improvement of housing conditions" and "integration with the surrounding city" to be achieved
through the opening and continuity of streets, provision of services and infrastructure, and
location of facilities that cover and articulate large sectors.

The in-situ resettlement of Carlos Gardel took place by introducing a private company
that built finished housing units in the neighborhood (Bettatis, 2009). The new urbanization
included the installation of water, natural gas, sewage networks, public lighting, electric power,
and the opening of streets, repair of fences, and new trees (Garber and Tabbush, 2008). At the
same time, the Municipality created the Socio-Urban Promotion Plan for the Carlos Gardel and
Presidente Sarmiento Neighborhoods, and for its implementation constituted the Management
Board formed by various areas under the Municipality and the Civil Association Madre Tierra,
specialized in participatory methodologies in popular habitat projects (Campano, 2013).
Although numerous conflicts arose, the participatory processes had positive results in the design
of housing (occupancy density and typology), in the allocation of housing, and the choice of the
nomenclature of the new streets. The national government cataloged the Villa Carlos Gardel

Urbanization project as a model example in implementing the Federal Plan in Argentina. It also became the subject of much local academic research, which illustrated it as a good practice of the local implementation of national-scale policies.

Figure 28. Expansions of first floor apartments into the *lungs* area

Source: Laura Wainer, Lawrence Vale

However, the policy did not benefit the *monoblocks*, which remained at environmental and social risk. By 2005, when the NHT urbanization plan began to take shape, the demographic and commercial growth of Presidente Sarmiento had already taken over a large part of the first floors of the buildings and began to expand on the free land, i.e., the *lungs* and open public spaces of the complex. The morphological evolution in the historical satellite images from the 1990s to 2020 shows a clear turning point in the spatiality of Carlos Gardel and Presidente Sarmiento in 2004. Google's satellite images between 2000 and 2020 are eloquent (Figure 24). The ground floor expansions are gradually growing on the land, and in 2005, independent occupations of the public space began to be detected, i.e., autonomous houses built from scratch

on the shared space. On the one hand, the Villa Carlos Gardel began to relocate, and on the other hand, the expansion of the first floors over the green *lungs* multiplied. The expansion enclosures already evidenced since the late 90's begin to fill with construction, and the expansion surfaces themselves begin to advance even more on the green area of the *lungs*. Although the most straightforward explanation for the encroachment of green areas is that some families already fulfilled "hollows", but they still needed extra space, some residents identify a relationship between this process and the urbanization carried out by the municipal government.

Figure 29. Informal occupations in the shared space. Occupations (in black) took 38% of public space. Remaining unoccupied public space is at 72% of its full capacity

Source: own elaboration based on OPISU 2018

Figure 30. Satellite Image sequence from 2005 to 2020 showing the urbanization of *las casitas* after 2005, the emergence of informal occupations in green spaces after 2005 and the spread of the occupations after 2010

Source: Google Earth Pro

The relationship between urbanization and occupations has two explanations. On the one hand, the urbanization process triggered a more significant housing shortage and an immediate response. Neighbors say that, in the first stage of the relocation and urbanization of the NHTs, several families were living in a single house or *casita* in Villa Carlos Gardel, families that had

joined together or families whose children had grown up and created their own family. The families had already modified the structure of the original "temporary" house to add more rooms and stores. However, the program was only committed to providing housing for the original family nucleus, meaning that extended families or people who rented had to find an alternative solution. In this context, some families decided to move in with their other family members living in the *monoblocks*, build their small houses, or even invade public space to build their independent dwellings. As one interviewee indicates:

> When the government urbanized the villa [Carlos Gardel] in 2003, many families who were living together separated. The program only considered [as beneficiaries] the original residents. Thus, many families did not receive a new house. Then, some new families started to occupy the spaces in the *lungs* to make their independent little houses.

Figure 31. Expansions and invasions in Presidente Sarmiento

Source: Buenos Aires Province archive

In this context, the social workers discovered that many NHTs were occupied by families who rented the *casitas* from the original families. That is, those families who had been initially located in the NHTs and then transferred to the apartments were still holding the NHTs and renting them to other new families in the neighborhood. Although the social workers tried to include as many families as possible in the list of beneficiaries of the redevelopment, not all of the tenant families could obtain a house in the new neighborhood. Before the census, many of the owner families "kicked out" their tenants to be included in the census and receive housing. These families took land from the green area of the project and began to build their houses there.

The second explanation for the explosion of expansions and invasions is the synergy between the formalization of the casitas and a change in the residents' perception of their

neighborhood. The re-urbanization policy improved the overall living conditions of Carlos Gardel and the image of the built environment in the area. The NHT *casitas* sector, which looked like an informal settlement, after 2005 became a brand-new *barrio*. The municipality built houses, paved streets, and green public spaces with playgrounds and furniture, inducing the valorization of the neighborhood, not only in monetary but also in symbolic terms: Carlos Gardel had ceased to be a slum. This valorization was fostered by physical improvements and a radical change in the local government's relationship with the residents. The government of Mayor Martin Sabbatella, who took office for the first time in 1999 and governed the municipality until 2009, marked a different territorial presence. The mayor, who was distinguished locally and internationally for his work in public administration, built a relationship with the *barrio*'s residents based on a progressive political agenda. He promoted the protection of housing rights and rejected past policies, such as evictions and militarization of public spaces. According to public officials of the time, Carlos Gardel and Presidente Sarmiento went from being a neglected territory to become the principal target of Morón's municipality for several years. As they express in a very Argentinean metaphor: "Morón put all the meat on the grill," referring to Morón went all out in Carlos Gardel. As the neighborhood gained prominence in the local political agenda with support from the national government, the expectations about Presidente Sarmiento becoming a better place to live rapidly grew. Sabbatella not only favored those expectations but also explicitly committed to no more displacements. This commitment offered the informal tenants a safety network, guaranteeing that they would not be displaced from their neighborhood even if they took the *lungs* land.

In this context, the local government's stance towards the informalization of the *monoblocks* was moderately ambivalent but never punitive. As a social worker of the time points out, while the census was registering the families in the *casitas*, many expanded families living in overcrowded *monoblocks* came to them asking for housing. During the new housing construction, the demand increased, and people also began to arrive asking for construction materials to expand their homes, such as bricks and metal sheets. The social worker indicates that during the sixteen years of Sabbatella's government, there were periods in which they delivered materials, and in others, they did not, claiming that they could not encourage this type of construction. This solid but confusing municipal presence in the *barrio* marked a different approach to the territory and a change in the inhabitants' expectations about their future. Pablo Peirano reflects on how the re-urbanization undoubtedly generated the possibility of feeling closer to formal housing. He argues that when the NHTs were demolished and the new houses were built, the residents began to see an improvement for the first time. This improvement made room for the informality to grow again. Rather than eliminating it, the re-urbanization created the space and the conditions for the site to "reabsorb" informality triggered by increasing expectations of the *barrio*'s future.

Figure 32. Expansions on the lungs area showing a new street line created by informal buildings. The municipality recognized this new face *frontis* as legitimate and paved a pedestrian way which ends up in the main plaza, now occupied by temporary municipal and social services tents

Source: Laura Wainer

Figure 33. Barrio Carlos Gardel. View from a rooftop. The hospital is visible in the back; the housing with its deteriorating buildings and informal encroachments is in the foreground.

Source: Archive of Municipio de Morón

Although the invasions on shared areas that took place shortly after the first-floor expansions and their development were almost simultaneous, the residents clearly distinguish differences between them. As Morón's Director of Habitat and Housing Daniel D'Alessandro recounts, when it comes to invasions, neighbors admit to "build on the green," suggesting an understanding that there is an act of appropriation of a public area or shared space. I confirmed this argument during my fieldwork. "Where do you live?" I asked. The residents answered: "Greenspace diagonal to *monoblock* 15." When talking about expansions, encroaching to the original units means that families believe that they have the right to take over the adjacent area to their apartments. The legitimacy between expansions and invasions differs. Those neighbors who expanded their homes did so gradually, first fencing off the land, delimiting a territory under private control, and then building incrementally according to their needs. Rarely did the dilemma of whether or not taking land for expansion is legitimate come up in the interviews. The overall understanding is that STAFF's original design made it obvious to grow and expand towards the open area next to the transparent window doors, a sort of natural growth of the project. Without any protection, the neighbors argue that the enclosures were built to provide privacy and security. Later, they used that enclosed surface to build according to their needs. The same neighbors argue that the green spaces were "no man's land," that is, vacant areas with no use. The idea of "no man's land" is reinforced by the historical absence of the local State managing and controlling the public space. This absence is since the municipality never was --and it is not supposed to be-- in charge of the regulation and maintenance of the shared spaces of the condominium. Although these areas belong to the consortium, I often heard references such as: " I built because this [area] was no man's land and I owned the ground-floor [apartment]. I needed so," or " […] here we built because this was no man's land."

These quotations show a strong relationship between the type of urban fabric that these modernist megaprojects created and the emergence of informalization. The combo [morphology/uses/legal system] of the GCHs induced encroachments and occupations because they created spaces more likely to be occupied. For example, free-plan ground floors led the neighbors to think that the *hollows* could be "filled" to use the space better. Even public institutions --in the absence of space for facilities-- transformed garages into kindergartens. Also, the window doors, usually used in back gardens or patios, facing the public space show that the *lungs* working as shared back gardens by the community reflect the architects' utopian expectations of safety, community living and family sharing rather than on a sensitive reading of the beneficiaries' reality. Not even middle-class areas in metropolitan Buenos Aires had such level of exposure to public space. These are mostly one-story, single-family houses with private front and back gardens that ensure intimacy and protection. The blurry lines between the private and the public, the shared and the individual shared, are taken as "no man's land." For Ana Tafuro, an architect who participated in the urbanization plan of Villa Carlos Gardel, one of the main challenges in Presidente Sarmiento is to build awareness about the existence of public space when the [morphology/uses/legal system] dictates that shared areas are –in practice-- nobody's space. She continues affirming that the dissolution of the consortium stopped buildings' maintenance and diluted the representation of everyone's space in the mindset of the neighbors. In the context of "no man's land," proximity equals the legitimate right to appropriate common land. In other words, proximity is an essential main tacit rule among neighbors. Domingo Risso, an academic who studies the evolution of modernist housing developments in Argentina, also refers to the rule of proximity as an unspoken or tacit rule of expansions, asserting that, in those

neighborhoods where informality emerged, housing expands to its side, where people think that they have "their land."

While those who live on the first floor have a marked advantage in referring to the upper-level neighbors to enlarge their homes, I did not find generalized social conflict around this unequal distribution of benefits. The neighbors who live on higher floors accept this disadvantage since they would have done the same. They also consider that living in a first-floor apartment can be very unfavorable due to the severe problems with the sewage pipes, which often cause the apartments to flood with dirty water or rainwater. I have only detected some specific conflicts derived from this, which neighbors solve among themselves. Some examples are:

> I had a conflict with a neighbor whose balcony drain was falling right on my patio because I expanded towards the green. What used to fall on the ground now was falling on my property. Since I couldn't get the neighbor to fix his drainage, I went to the social services office in the neighborhood. They proposed to provide the labor and my neighbor the materials. But he didn't want to do that. He preferred not to use that drain anymore. That is how it was resolved.

> I would build upwards if I could, but I built a slab that doesn't support the extra weight. If I could, I would build far from the building, so I don't bother the second-floor neighbor. I think of him, although that neighbor used to go out to my slab and barbecue there. It was not easy, but in the end, he got it and stopped using the slab as a terrace.

Although there is no generalized conflict around expansions, I only found a few joint or shared/teamed-up expansions performed between residents of the first floor and the second floor that benefit people on both levels. These collaborations seem easy to manage. For instance, a neighbor who needed to expand her first-floor apartment agreed with her neighbor a joint expansion. That is, they shared costs, and both enjoyed the benefits. The lower floor resident got a new room, and the upper floor neighbor got a terrace. She said, "let's go half and half; it's convenient for both," and so they did. However, these initiatives do not proliferate.

Unlike expansions, encroachments –or invasions-- on common space to construct independent buildings is not a practice widely accepted by all the neighbors. Invasions emerged later than expansions and have a different level of legitimacy. Residents and "outsiders" encroach their buildings in invaded shared areas for diverse uses (commercial, garages). Most of the invasions took place in the empty spaces surrounding the complex, a sort of triangular remnant spaces that originated when the rotated grid of the *monoblocks* met the orthogonal city (and that of the NHT temporary houses as well) and in the remnant spaces of the *lungs*. The invasions involve a different process: instead of being gradual, people build them as fast as they can. Extended families who need to solve their housing problems but cannot expand their units also choose to take land and build an autonomous construction. Those neighbors who admit to having invaded green areas justify their actions. They say invasions compensate their rights to more space with those rights given to first-floor neighbors who expand their units.

> Here, everyone took their piece of land. What was occupied first were the hollows. That happened during the 80s. By the 1990s, the hollows were all

occupied, and people started to expand. Now there is almost no free land left. Some people do go up, but they are the fewest. If you made a slab, you could go up, but it doesn't happen much. In the neighborhood, most people build outside on the land they have. If they are lucky enough to be on the first floor, they expand on their land. I don't live on a first floor, but I took a lot anyway, wired it up, and reserved it for when my daughter grows up.

The tensions around invasions increase with the increase in remoteness from the original unit. Remoteness blurs the legitimate right to occupy green space. For example, a neighbor taking a piece of land close to the apartment has greater legitimacy than "outsiders" [non-residents] who invade the land in the *lungs*. People solve lack of proximity with resistance. that is, the capacity of the invaders to resist tensions during the process of invasion, and the social conflict that it may entail within the neighborhood is what guarantees a successful invasion process. As a neighbor who also works building in the neighborhood points out:

For example, the guy who built here across the street had a conflict because that piece of land did not correspond to him. He lives in *monoblock* 18, over there, far away, and he came to build here. In the beginning, he had a conflict with the neighbors, but after resisting for a while, it was over.

"It was over" means that at some point of the conflict, tensions dissipated, that the neighbors and the local government accepted the new construction in the barrio, and that the dynamics of the barrio resumed their typical path. Often the turning point arrives when the building's structures and walls are finished. The legitimacy of the invasion was not a given; that is, residents do not see this practice as the natural evolution of the barrio. The invaders' legitimacy was only acquired when the conflict diminished, and the neighbors accepted that the finished building was there to stay. This logic of resistance and tensions establishes that only those who have the capacity to sustain the conflict around invasion (by force, by political connections, by leadership) are those who can invade shared areas. For Domingo Risso, extensive land encroachments can only be performed by those who have enough power to impose their will over others. In the landscape of "the law of the strongest," real estate mafias coexist with "community appropriations" (clubs, sports fields, churches, neighborhood associations). As pointed out by a neighbor who owns an apartment on the second floor and a business on the first floor (formerly a *hollow*):

Here, the strength is the business. Whoever builds has to stand with an iron (gun) on the ground and start from there.

When I asked who opposed the invasions, I found varied answers: a neighbor who feels negatively impacted by the construction, the government, and drug dealing groups that found in the (informal) real estate business a way to invest "dirty" money. Without clear information of who the mafia members are, I found a few stories about the informal land market of invasions. Such is the case of a neighbor in her 40s who lived in a rented room in an NHT *casita* until 2005. As she was not the owner or the "original" tenant of the house, the urbanization of Villa Carlos Gardel displaced her and her family. Like so many other Villa's inhabitants, the local government did not benefit her with a new house. Without enough resources to move out of the barrio, she bought a room built in a "green space" between the *monoblock*s in installments. Little by little, and after eight years of saving, she started enlarging the room. She still hoped that the

government would give her a house. In 2018, the municipality said it will undertake a census of those families living in "green spaces" to relocate them to new houses. However, she and her family are still waiting, and the government has no clear plan for relocation. In the meanwhile, she plans to continue expanding the rooms gradually and adding others if her savings allow.

Beyond real estate actors, other neighbors also allege that the "chorros" (referring to crime-related gangs) often oppose invasions and expansions of the "green areas." These interviewees alleged that the individual construction on the shared space takes away space and territorial power from the gangs. That is, as the green area builds up and individuals control land individually, the gangs have less space to commit crimes, gather to consume alcohol or drugs, dump stolen cars, or even hide. As a long-term neighbor told me:

> Construction is not good for the chorros because these are the places where they hide, smoke, take drugs and steal. That's why I think that construction is good for the neighborhood. It takes those places away from the thieves.

Apart from proximity, the construction destination (or use) is a critical source of legitimacy among neighbors and even more among municipal officials. The latter believe that it is more legitimate when residents build invasions or expansions to satisfy a family's basic need, such as adding an extra room for kids, than when they create renting rooms, garages, or large-scale shops. The use of the new construction divides the waters between what officials consider a solution to a vulnerability and what they consider advantageous, such as commercial or rental space. As two policymakers point out:

> There are different types of occupations. I always say that some [encroachments] are healthy, like the little garden that separates the window from the passage of people. If they appropriate their own space and take care of it, those are healthy occupations. Then you have the other occupations, which are problematic. They are the housing extensions on common spaces, extensions already under construction. We have a lot of those, and we have never been able to deal with them, but they always bring us problems.

> We separate what is the one who builds a local to have a business and who goes for the third local or the second, or maybe it is the first, but he had his business in his house. We must differentiate those who build a room and a bathroom because they have nowhere else to live and open a shop because they are trying to work. I think that criteria should not rely on the type of building, but on the use and the need.

A third unspoken rule is pre-existent objects, shapes, and physical limits. For example, constructions in *hollows* are limited by the building envelope, and expansions of first-floor apartments follow the imaginary projection of the dividing walls between units. No one expands into the adjacent, neighboring space taken or not by their neighbors. Certain green areas are "protected," such as trees, soccer fields, and playgrounds. Informal interventions also set precedents. When neighbors expand their apartment, they establish a facade limit that their adjacent neighbors seeking to expand will also follow, recreating a new street line and a continuous building front. Also, building heights are similar, rarely residents make openings or windows facing the neighboring lot. However, while some limits established by the original

project and by the neighbors tend to be respected, the current public policy interventions create new opportunities to expand the building footprint, even if those policies were intended to do the opposite. As indicated by a former provincial official, the improvement and upgrading project initiated in 2018 planned to pave some spontaneous streets, configured by informal invasions of the green space. Within days of paving, the neighbors expanded their already expanded units on the paved streets and used the pavement as a subfloor for new constructions. This type of action makes the officials think that there is an anarchic use of the shared space.

Both expansions and occupations represent similar problems for public policy. They entail regularization, relocation, habilitation, and new standards. However, expansions represent a more significant challenge than invasions because there is greater acceptance of their legitimacy among residents, and they are not a hundred percent informal. For instance, the expansions are connected to the formal infrastructure of the original units, pressuring the existing systems (already decayed). Local public officials accept that invasions could be solved under a similar model to the urbanization of Carlos Gardel. However, this time, there is no vacant land where to relocate the people in-situ. The expansions demand a more sophisticated procedure, one that implies establishing new rules and compensations with upper floor homeowners. What uses should be allowed? How far should units expand? Which standards should rule expansions? How to regularize the appropriated land? The difficulty lies in determining clear rules and understanding how they overlap with the existing rules that have legal power.

Figure 34. (Above) original monoblock building layout (section) showcasing four-bedroom apartments. (Below) same four-bedroom unit showing informal residents' modifications including hollow "fillings" and expansions over lungs areas

Ground floor plan as proposed by STAFF's original project

Corridors

"Hollow" free lay-out ground floor

Lungs

Ground floor plan modified by the residents

Construction materials shop in rental space

Pharmacy shop with stock storage room. Counter is fenced.

Groceries, veggies and fruits in a rented shop space

Small drugstore shop. Counter is fenced

the kitchen is cancelled due to sewage leaks and moved to another part of the apartment

New Kitchen area

Bathroom used by room tenants

Shower room turned into second bathroom

Sublet Rooms

Bedroom is transformed in a workshop

Groceries shop. Counter is fenced

Expansion area over the lungs

supermarket with cash register, freezers with sale of frozen foods, and various food and household cleaning products

covered garage space for two cars and storage room in the back

Corral for pigs

Garden area

New kitchen and dinning room in and expanded area

New bathroom in a second house built in the expanded area over the "lungs"

New kitchen in a second house built in the expanded area over the "lungs"

New bedrooms built in a second house

Covered, private, garage space

New backyard in the former "lungs" area

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Figure 35. (Left) original three-bedroom apartment unit. (Right) same unit showing informal residents' modifications including hollow "fillings" and expansions over lungs areas

Lungs

customer's area in the shop. Front desk is fenced

Retail area: grocery and food shop

New covered indoors garage

Industrial Kitchen and Laundry area

New dinning area

Expansion area over the lungs

Inner patio on expanded area over lungs

New bathroom

Covered terrace

Bedroom 1   Bedroom 2

Living-room

Bedroom 3

Entrance

Bathroom comes with finishing and appliances

kitchen comes with no appliances

Indoors laundry area

Bathroom remains at original spot

kitchen open to new dinning

New bedroom

New entrance to the apartment

Corridors

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Figure 36. (Left) original three-bedroom apartment unit. (Right) same unit showing informal residents' modifications including hollow "fillings" and expansions over lungs areas

Lungs

covered, open garage area

Expansion over lungs area: private outdoors with barbecue and play toys for grandchild

Expansion area over the lungs

New access to private outdoor area

Expansion over lungs area: new bedroom

Expansion over lungs area: new bedroom

Exit to lungs

Bedroom 1   Bedroom 2

Living-room

Entrance

Bathroom comes with finishing, and appliances

kitchen with no appliances

Wardrobe space

Covered terrace area
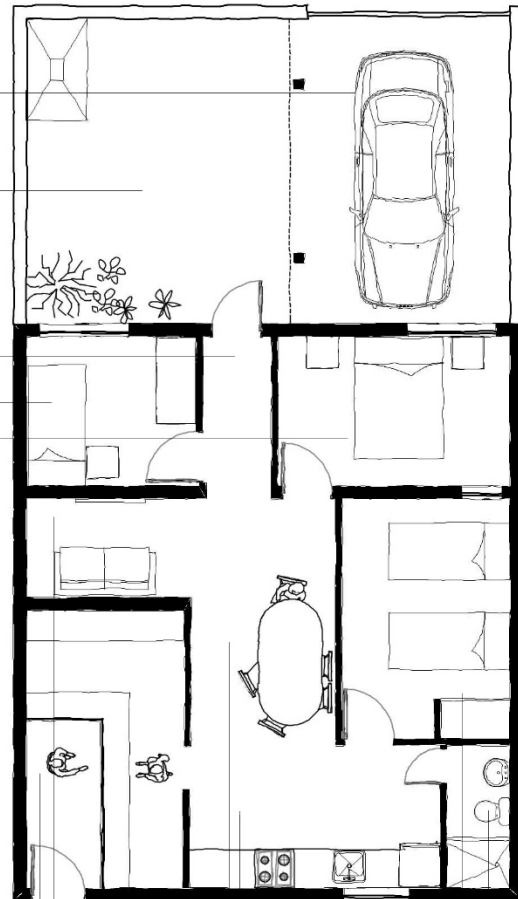
new TV room in previous outdoor terrace

new retail shop in former living area. Front Desk is fenced

old bedroom with blocked windows by new bedroom

bathroom remains original state

kitchen opens to dinning and circulation

new dinning area in previous bedroom area

Corridors

Source: Author's elaboration based on fieldwork observations

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Expanding Vertically

"Now all the *lungs* are taken," say the neighbors interviewed. There are businesses; there is housing; there are also rooms, garages, and commercial space for rent. The dynamics of growth continue to pressure the individualization of shared space as population growth increases and vacant space decreases. Also, the growth of commercial activity and other ground floor uses displaces residential use, putting even more pressure on the housing shortage. The neighborhood's constructive growth has taken on such a strong dynamic that changes can be glimpsed week by week, day by day. As an architect who surveyed informal occupations in 2018 points out:

> I spent a month surveying all the informal occupations in the neighborhood. In the process, every time I went in and passed by places I had already surveyed, I saw changes. I saw people continuing to move forward with constructions, and I also saw new things. Growth is like a continuum.

Figure 37. Vertical expansion showing partnership between first and second floor neighbors. The first-floor expansion using a supporting slab allowed the upper floor residents to expand as well.

Source: Laura Wainer

In this context of such dynamic growth, some neighbors began to expand vertically in numerous ways. They build on the slab of the neighbor below (though an agreement between them), build the second floor on their own informal construction (i.e., on the horizontal air space of the neighbor above that block their windows), build high on the informal independent buildings, and the terraces of the *monoblocks*. Despite the variety, there are only a few cases of these experiences, about 20 in a universe of hundreds. As a longstanding resident of the neighborhood relates:

> Now there is no more expansion because there is no more room, so people started to expand upwards. Some agree with the neighbor below to expand on their slab. Others expand to a second floor without asking, generating a lot of conflict with their upstairs neighbors.

Vertical expansions build up quickly. Residents want to avoid conflict with neighbors and prevent the municipality from obstructing their work. Unlike horizontal expansions, vertical expansions represent a reservoir of conflict among neighbors. Conflict arises when the new construction invades the view, ventilation, and access of second-floor apartments and their dwellers. It is also very problematic in the few cases when third-floor residents build on top of their terraces because the labs were not designed to support such a weight, and the municipality fears a structural collapse. The municipality has taken a particularly active role concerning those neighbors who build on the *monoblocks*' terraces, but the tools of public managers are minimal to act in time. Municipal officers can rarely intervene with legal procedures in constructing the new buildings before the fait accompli. In my conversations with the director of habitat and housing, he mentioned a recent conflict that illustrates the complexity of the challenge. In December 2021, a neighbor living on the second floor of a *monoblock* came to the offices of the Director of Habitat and Housing of the Municipality of Morón. She wanted to file a complaint against her neighbor living on the first floor, who had already expanded his house horizontally and was now building in height, facing her windows. Beyond a visual problem, she was concerned about the safety of her apartment. The new construction would make it easier to access her apartment from the balcony. The director, concerned about the neighbor's vulnerability (she is also a single mother and household head) could do little. He has limited options to prevent the construction through existing bureaucratic mechanisms. Given the management model of the consortium, the first-floor neighbor, as well as all other neighbors who expand and invade the land, do so on privately shared but not public spaces. These spaces, supposedly managed and controlled by the consortium, do not fall within the legal competence of the municipality, as if they were under a traditional regime of public spaces. The only way to intervene in the conflict is to denounce illegal work in the municipal building permit office. He and the neighbor knew that the public proceedings of this office were much slower than the pace of the neighbor's construction. In a few weeks, he would complete the work, and with the fait accompli, her complaint file would lose its validity. They would have to file another complaint of unauthorized construction, and a lawsuit with the neighbor could take up to five years. Under this legal scenario, officials try to conciliate and negotiate with neighbors before spending time in endless administrative procedures. They go to the barrio and talk with them, trying to reverse their actions. Some cases are more successful than others. In general, residents stop their construction works when officials and structural technicians warn of the risk of collapse, as in the case of constructions on top of

the *monoblock* terraces. However, the failures and successes depend on an experience-built case by case and not on a systemic approach to the problem.

Figure 38. Vertical expansions showing partial blockages of second floor apartments' windows

Source: Laura Wainer

An official of the Ejército Los Andes, another GCH built by PEVE and STAFF that deals with similar situations, came up with an intervention protocol for the constructions in progress. The protocol is based on an agreement with the municipal building permit office and the housing secretariat of the city of Buenos Aires. Still, the protocol relies on stopping the construction works based on the lack of construction permits rather than on the illegal appropriation of public space, a much more severe legal disobedience. This paradox frustrates the officials who lead with this kind of conflict daily. As the officer of Ejercito Los Andes says: "The two works that we stopped, we stopped them because they did not have a construction sign, do you understand?" marking the ridiculousness of the situation where the State cannot enforce the regulations in force because the PH status. And he continues:

> If everything worked as it should, the injured neighbor should go to the head of the central consortium, and that person should file a complaint... It is such a gray area that they are building on public space, but a complaint about the invasion of public space is not possible but a complaint about illegal construction in private space. But we have no way to intervene. We are the State, the institution that is in the neighborhood. It doesn't have much way because it doesn't have police power. Likewise, I wouldn't do it either, let's say, being in the neighborhood, I wouldn't be the one to go.

Figure 39. Multiple vertical expansions up to three story level, agreed between neighbors

Source: Laura Wainer

Figure 40. Vertical expansions coordinated between ground floor and second story units

Source: Laura Wainer

Currently, the director of Housing and Habitat of Morón is extremely concerned about finding possible tools from the local administration to defend the neighbors' rights through a comprehensive intervention in the neighborhood. I had these conversations towards the end of January 2021. In less than a month, the construction was already finished and inhabited. Acting on the fait accompli is exceptionally problematic for public institutions, which always try to reach a consensus with the neighbors, that is to say, that they agree that they cannot continue building in the way they are doing, mainly for safety reasons. The officials' frustration reflects the impossibility of controlling the vertical expansion using legal tools.

> A neighbor of the third floor in *monoblock* 1 started building a fence [in a distant area from his apartment building], and when we finished the improvement project, he was already building the second story on the top of his expansion. I understand that there is a need, but all that was detrimental to the neighborhood, in the sense that you are affecting everyone's infrastructure, they are reducing the spaces, absorbing the common spaces.

Municipal officers express the duality between being the representative of the government and the "public good," and the understanding that all families living in the neighborhood are vulnerable families. This dilemma is heightened when public officials are also community leaders, and residents in Presidente Sarmiento. As a former resident, now working in the municipality, points out:

> We now receive a lot of complaints [of vertical expansions]. Only last year, the local government began to identify (the cases). It is one thing if you send a notice saying that you cannot build when the foundations are being built, but when the top floor is being built, and you only have to roof it, and... it is hard for you. Also, I know I can be the person in need in the future. I care about my fellows. It is hard for us; it (high-rise construction) has grown a lot in the last few years.

This quote illustrates the complex role of municipal officers from both an institutional and a personal point of view. Those officials who work in the territory must intermediate between the law and the new pragmatic rules generated in the neighborhood over the years, representing conflicting rationalities. The legitimacy of the practices is defined by a fine line between necessity and advantage. Beyond the use and necessity, high-rise construction generates a complex scenario where the pressure on the building conditions of the original project puts people's lives at risk.

The productive process: unorganized self-management

During my field visits, I had the opportunity to meet and interview four people who work in informal construction within the neighborhood. That is, fellow residents with experience in the construction industry who work in repairing, modifying, and renovating apartments in building expansions and invasions. From these interviews with them, I gained some insights that speak to both the limitations and opportunities of the informalization process in Presidente Sarmiento.

One of the most interesting conclusions is that informal construction is more significant in physical terms than in economic terms. Although the neighborhood seems very "informalized"

and transformed regarding the original project and officials see the physical changes as a continuous and unstoppable, informal construction in productive terms has a minor impact. As a neighborhood's community leader says: "Yes, we have much construction, but I don't think it is something that moves much of the economy in the neighborhood." Alejo Rearte, who has worked for decades in the slums of the southern part of the city, points out that the low level of productive activity characteristic of Presidente Sarmiento is very different from other high-density informal environments, such as the slums of the city center and nearby areas. Although these share similar densities and locations with Presidente Sarmiento, they have much more active and vital informal construction markets. I argue that this difference has multiple explanations. First, the important physical limitations imposed by the original modernist project and the consequent inability to acquire "scale" in the physical transformation. The modifications occur in Presidente Sarmiento in an urban acupuncture fashion between the original forms of the project and the vacant spaces. In the informal settlements, there no such limitation and the renewal of the built stock happens in a more dynamic way. The physical limitations do not only refer to the built stock but also the distribution of land. Even though they often have an irregular or "organic" urban layout, the villas share a similar pattern of public and private spaces to the traditional city. In the private parcels, any (informal) owner has the relative power to intervene as they want, following the tacti rules of the community. In Presidente Sarmiento, the limits between public and private are more diffuse. The modifications often involve some level of social conflict related to the appropriation of shared land or vertical growth that may discourage building densification.

I also attribute the lack of productive scale to socioeconomic factors, in particular, an impoverished population, less population turnover (although the families expand, they are the same social group), and a less sophisticated informal real estate market. As Marcela Vio points out in my interviews, the population of Presidente Sarmiento is poorer than the population in the villas of Buenos Aires. Poverty in the villas is usually associated with poor living and environmental conditions, such as lack of access to sewage and water infrastructure; however, not necessarily all households living in villas are poor from a monetary point of view. As I have noted, the invisible barriers of formality express more than capacity to pay, and it also includes lack of legal guarantees for migrants and informal workers. In sum, while the habitat conditions explain the structural poverty of the villas, poverty in Presidente Sarmiento is marked by the habitat conditions and income levels. *[I'm looking for comparative numbers to support this assessment]*

With these considerations in mind and based on my fieldwork interviews, I realized that the scale of the construction process is related to survival rather than to a local economy. Even more, the economy around Presidente Sarmiento's city-making process is small, fluctuating, and unstable. For instance, of my four interviewees in the construction trade, three had an alternative job. Two interviewees had an informal business on the ground floor *hollows* and a third interviewee worked in the municipal crew cleaning public spaces in the neighborhood. When I asked these interviewees why they did not work full time in construction, they answered that the flow of work was not continuous, that it came in bursts, and that they needed a second activity as an income backup for their families. Only one interviewee who had managed to set up a micro-business and managed to employ a construction crew, expanded its client portfolio outside the neighborhood. Not all families can outsource the construction of their homes. In general, families

deploy mixed modalities; they hire builders for particular tasks and self-build others. As one neighbor points out:

> I devised the renovation [of the unit]. I imagined the project in my head, and we did it little by little. We hired a bricklayer from the neighborhood to do the essential parts of the walls, plumbing, and ceilings, and my brother-in-law and I did the interiors. [...] I got the ideas because, after so much renovation, I gained knowledge. I would stay up nights thinking about how we could live more comfortably. To build, we sacrificed our Christmas bonuses, vacations, 15th birthdays... continuously investing in the house.

Other neighbors said that they could build, expand, and improve only at certain times because of their marginal savings. For instance, unemployment benefits meant an essential inflow of money invested in hiring masons and buying materials. But having enough cash to outsource modifications was a one or two time in the life opportunity for many of the residents. All those neighbors who have hired masons say they have chosen local people because they are trustworthy. Masons guide the families with their technical expertise in a lifetime investment. The builders are also technical advisors for the project and design, so their responsibility generally goes beyond mere construction. Thus, trusted references are precious.

Although several self-builders work in cardboard and recyclables picking, I only found one person who had made renovations with recycled materials. Recycling only minimally exists as a technical culture, for example, using used metal sheets for roofing or enclosures. With the exception of this case, self-builders rarely re-signify and re-utilize materials for construction. Both builders and self-builders interviewees buy materials at a "corralon" (small scale construction materials supplier) next to the neighborhood, on Marconi Avenue. Many interviews mention that this retailer has benefited from the (informal) growth of Presidente Sarmiento. They even point out that he has a monopoly on the construction of Presidente Sarmiento: "I think there is only one beneficiary, and that is the *corralon* of Marconi; of course, he became a millionaire," says one self-builder. The monopoly of Marconi's *corralon* seems to be undisputed. I did not find building materials businesses inside the neighborhood except for a recently opened store selling damp-proof sheets. This retailer is a resident who, looking for a solution to the water leaks suffered by the buildings due to the collapse of the infrastructures, tried this system, found it successful, and decided to open a store to offer the same solution to other owners with the same problem.

The mixed modalities express through hiring local masons and self-construction and through different relationships with the local government at different times in the neighborhood. At intermittent periods, the municipality has delivered construction materials and labor. Since 2018, if residents need to make a fix due to an infrastructure or building structure problem, the municipality offers to provide the labor if the owner provides the materials. The labor provided by the municipality is channeled through contractors in the neighborhood, including my interviewees. However, even under this program masons do not have job continuity. Another example of mixed modalities occurred during the urbanization of Villa Carlos Gardel, when the municipality obliged the construction company to hire local people. Although this hiring was adequate, some participants indicated that it was "a lost opportunity" to offer fundamental training. The companies put most of the employees in surveillance and minor tasks, such as hauling, instead of training them in construction. Also, some neighbors indicate that

construction companies do not want to hire local and trained people because they tend to denounce the lack of quality control and the bad practices, they implement to save costs. As revealed by the neighbor who modified his apartment using recycled materials:

> I worked in the construction of the urbanization program in 2005. However, I quit because they called me "watchman." I knew about construction and perceived that the companies employed many people with no experience. I complained about the quality of the construction and the mistakes, and they fired me.

Collaborations with the State are not always "formal" or intentional. By "letting do," the municipality collaborates both with neighbors who want to expand and with those who work in informal construction. As one of the builders points out:

> At one time the people of the casita improved with Mejor Vivir [microcredits for home improvement] but in general people who refurbish or expand their houses do not have government help. They don't bother either, they let them do it. Sometimes when there is a tragedy, like a fire, they intervene, but if not, they do not.

The relationship with the municipality also occurs in a tangential but active way beyond *laissez-faire*. Municipal employees often facilitate work or are even participants in encroachments on "green spaces." As indicated by a participant in the improvement program initiated in 2018 who asked to remain anonymous:

> From the crews that work on cleaning up the neighborhood, the municipal employees themselves carry out the clandestine [utility] connections. One of them even appropriated a piece of land and built himself a two-story house.

The productive perspective of informalization helps to understand the social and economic rationality of this city-making culture. The process of Presidente Sarmiento differs from a classic model of urban growth led by the market and self-management in its most classic terms. It is a hybrid between being oriented to satisfy specific social needs and a productive activity capable to "move" the local economy. Even if Presidente Sarmiento keeps growing in significant scale, the economy of the city-making remains at a survival level. Also, although self-management represents spheres of sociability relatively more autonomous than dependence on a developer, it does not offer an option to overcome capitalist social relations.

CONCLUSIONS

Hanging from the sky

As a result of these new urban interventions, both the original layout of Presidente Sarmiento and the internal structure of the apartments have mutated in the two last decades, thereby also transforming the public spaces between the buildings and the control over the shared

space. New construction and house expansions have encroached into formerly vacant areas, shared spaces, and "green areas" as well. A survey of 2018 carried by the Province of Buenos Aires acknowledges 580 new constructions, of which 62 are independent buildings (invasions) and 518 are encroachments (expansions). Within this total, about 72 new functional units are wholly autonomous, that is, they are free perimeter buildings in the common areas. Some 379 informal buildings serve as homes; 47 are storage spaces and garages; 67 are shops; and 25 are other uses, such as churches, community halls, and childcare centers. As these transformations accumulate and spread, the old formal logic of the housing project becomes much harder to read. In addition, the current state of the original housing units suffered significantly from the lack of maintenance and modifications of the interior premises. Obsolescence of infrastructure networks in the bathrooms and kitchens, lack of ventilation, and uncertainty about structural quality of the buildings are only a few problems that may put the residents at risk.

In 2010 the *monoblock*s area was formally incorporated in the "Programa Federal De Villas Y Asentamientos Precarios" (Federal Program for Slums and Informal Settlements) for upgrading purposes. However, the implementation of improvement works in public spaces and buildings at scale only began in 2018 and suffered a long disruption during the pandemic (from March 2020 to January 2021). So far, the provincial government directed actions towards attending to the most urgent structural and infrastructural problems, such as columns and slab repairs, staircases replacement, and drainage in public spaces. As the Program Implementation Director emphasizes, today, these infrastructure works minimally improve the housing conditions of formality. The construction work biddings were designed for the corridors and the buildings of the original project. In the definition of the program, the government did not include the encroachments neither proposed a concrete approach to the challenges presented by the informalization of Presidente Sarmiento. Consequently, the public works implemented since 2018 include neither the housing extensions nor the autonomous housing located within the property. While informality continues to be "invisible" to the public actions of the State, the same public works accelerate the expansions and invasions, a similar process to what happened during the urbanization of Villa Carlos Gardel in 2005. When the improvement program public works began in 2018, not only did the occupations continue to appear, but they also took advantage of the interventions to grow, using the paving of streets as new subfloors for the second extension of the dwellings. That is, improvements and upgrading make room for more informality to flourish.

It remains highly uncertain what kind of actions the current program will take concerning the high degree of physical and economic informality encroached upon, and even overtaking, the old formal modernism of Presidente Sarmiento. The challenges are many: the fair redistribution of available land, the creation of new norms and standards, the official approval of new uses, new roads, and more. These challenges clarify that upgrading Presidente Sarmiento is not only a technical or logistical matter and requires a more sophisticated collective response from many actors. People who worked in the neighborhood at diverse levels and positions of the public sector identify three lines of possible intervention. Some think that the solution includes returning to the "original state" by deeding the project's original apartments and then "get out" of the neighborhood as soon as possible and finally detach the government's responsibility from the private action of the residents. This group of officials –primarily lawyers, clerks, and politicians-- believes that the State should focus its efforts on regulating the ownership of the apartments, i.e., handing over the property titles never delivered by the PEVE housing policy to the original

families. They believe that after legal regularization, the State can support the re-establishment of the consortium of owners. This group believes that the legal situation of the GCHs, the "gray" area defined by owners without property titles, leads the State to assume responsibilities that are, in fact, legal responsibilities of the owners. Since the creation of the complex and intermittent periods, the State has assumed responsibility for maintaining public spaces' cleanliness and repairing building structures and service networks. Regularizing property titles means releasing these responsibilities, such as maintaining the common spaces, that in a hypothetical regular situation (all tenants having their legal deeds) would fall to the consortium of owners. This group adheres to the theories that once people obtain their property titles, they will invest in maintenance and improvement of housing conditions since the security of tenure guarantees their permanence in the site (Galiani and Schargrodsky, 2010).

Figure 41. Informal occupations by use and typology. The survey does not include occupations of hollow spaces.
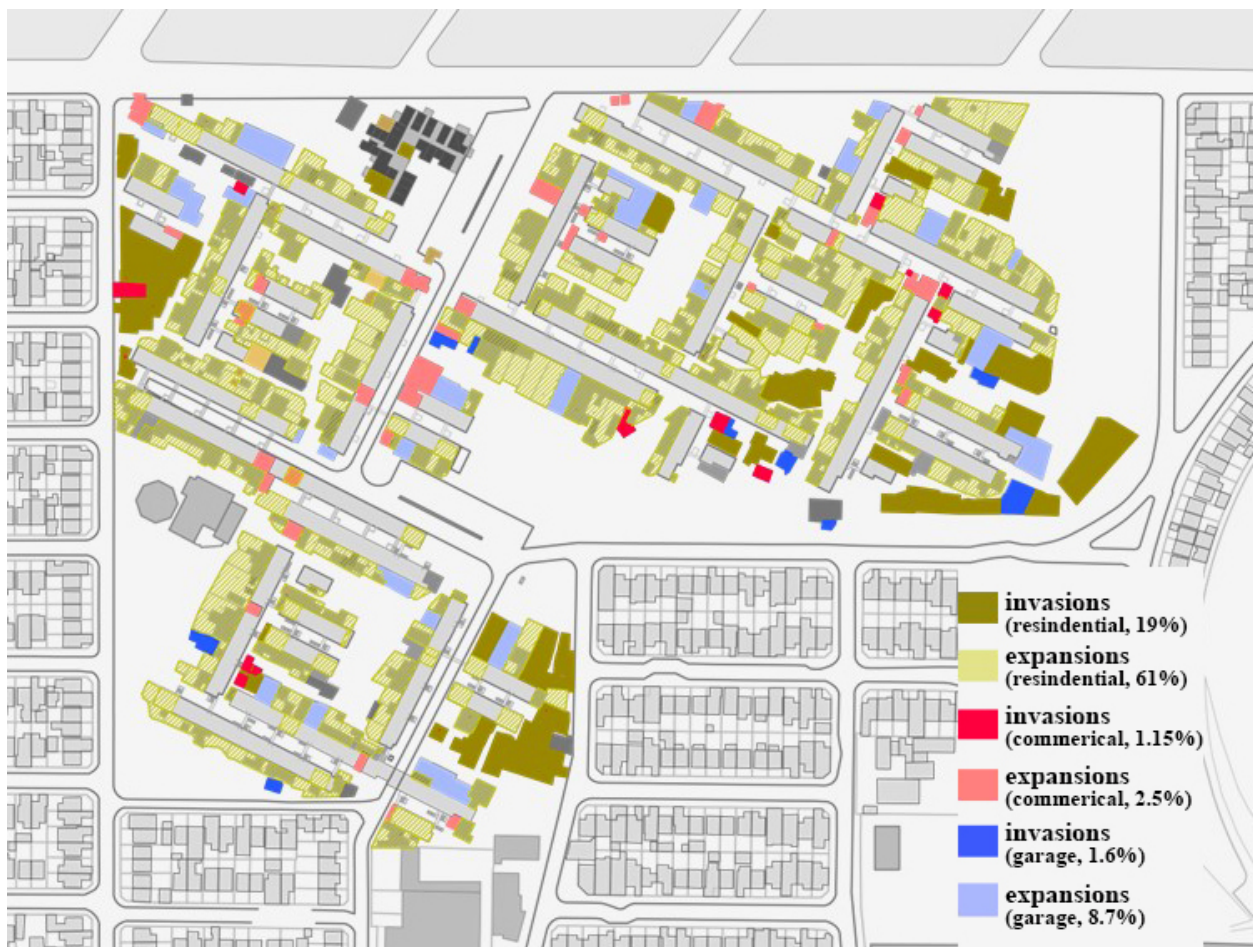
Source: own elaboration based on OPISU 2018

Another line of officials –local public officers, architects, and social workers-- understands that informalization is an inescapable reality and that occupations, expansions, and invasions do not necessarily represent something damaging to the project. They believe that informality is the basis of the local economy, family investments, and the identity of the neighbors. For them, the solution implies an "integral" approach. Although it is not clear what

such "integral approach" would imply in operational terms, these officials believe that the solution should be part of a multidisciplinary program capable of working on a physical, economic, social, and institutional transformation. Some officials believe that solving the invasions on the shared space will be technically and politically easier than solving the formal buildings' expansions and "hollows" occupation. The "hybrid" character of the latter implies finding alternative solutions to in-situ relocation, more arduous negotiations with the apartment owners, and new use and construction standards. The third line of officials says, "under the table," that the only solution is to "tear everything down."

While it is difficult for local politics to address the problem, the upgrading programs subsidized by the national government (some through multilateral credits from the World Bank) continue to "fix patches" only in certain areas of the complex. The only intervention implemented in the whole neighborhood is the replacement of the old staircases, in the same shape and position than the old ones. As a consequence, in the last two decades, the upgrading interventions divided the neighborhood into two sectors: those areas that have received improvements such as pluvial pipe repairs, roof waterproofing, façade painting (from Marconi to *monoblock* 17), and those *monoblock*s that have not benefited from any upgrading program and present a greater degree of deterioration. When I asked why only half of the neighborhood received all the public works, the answers are simple and straightforward: the bidding documents never establish an order of priority for the public works. Thus, the construction companies decide where to start, and it is always easier to start in the same place (because of accessibility, parking, closeness to principal corridors). As the works are usually interrupted due to political changes in the local and national administration (political periods last four years), delays in the bids, and other bureaucratic problems, the second phase of the works always gets postponed. The area beyond *monoblock* 17 never gets done. As one of the neighborhood referents points out: "You can see the difference. On one side it's Miami, and on the other side it's a slum". Although the physical fragmentation is evident, this unfairness does not generate social fragmentation. The neighbors only show tension with the government since they consider it is public administration malpractice to leave this kind of decision to the construction companies' preference. Despite this discontent, residents rarely show tension among themselves for being benefited or disadvantaged by the public administration negligence.

After much analysis, the architects working on the 2018 upgrading program came up with a solution that they consider optimal from social and physical views. They propose creating a three-dimensional grid attached to the buildings that give the same expansion rights to all units, including the upper levels. This technically equitable solution for the architects, however, is also an "impossible solution to implement" given its high costs. Any solution (regularizing, integral programs, or tearing the buildings down) has very high monetary and political costs for the municipal government, so it depends on the decision making of the national level. It is also hard to address such a big challenge during a four-year administration period. Morón municipality - and the Province of Buenos Aires- deal with many other urgencies, even more so after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Relocating families implies a complex process and officials fear they cannot guarantee how to sustain improved neighborhood conditions in time after the hypothetical regularization of Presidente Sarmiento. If the families that invaded the shared space are relocated in situ, who can guarantee that others will not reoccupy the green spaces? The desired scenarios, such as building a tridimensional grid, are unlikely and cannot stop what is established as a city-making culture that already has 40 years of history.

The technical and political bodies of the local State must work within this complex institutional scenario, the resistance of the neighbors, and the electoral times. These challenges become flesh when the political-institutional dilemmas intersect with the ethical dilemmas of the professionals and social workers of the neighborhood. Many of them have a professional relationship and personal connection with the neighbors. Others are both municipal representatives and neighbor themselves, thus they stand within the contradiction of interests between politicians, planning, and the residents. As illustrated by an official and former neighbor of Villa Carlos Gardel:

> Last time we [officials] were with a neighbor who is alone, raising her children
> by herself. She was collecting money because she ran out of rent. She told me:
> I am going to build a room here for my kids. What am I supposed to tell her?
> Her neighbor, what is he going to tell her? We told her "That's okay." I know,
> it is double talk...

These double standards represent the tensions at the time of managing the physical and social territory of Presidente Sarmiento, embedded between the logic of the modernist assumptions made both by the PEVE and STAFF, the logic of the inhabitants' needs, and the intermittent rationality of the local government, marked by different political administrations. It is this same tension that leaves the inhabitants of Presidente Sarmiento, in their own words, "hanging from the sky:" owners without deeds responsible for a consortium of owners with no administration, privately responsible for the public space, people with addresses but without services. In this context, residents must assume the burdens and benefits of living in a territory created by opposing socio-spatial logics, that of modernity, that of local politics, and that of necessity. These opposing socio-spatial logics distance the local State from the population, and in turn, also distance the population from the State that represents them.

Building an idea of the future

Far from a landscape of chaos and destruction, the informalization of Presidente Sarmiento has enhanced its use-value to residents in many dimensions and solved the contradictions between the assumptions of the creators and the needs of the families. In my research, I found that both PEVE policymakers and the STAFF studio conceived the project on the idea of "urbanizing" a family from a "shantytown" into a working-class neighborhood. *Urbanizing* implied a social-behavioral transformation to acquire civility and citizenship. These aspirations of upward mobility were embedded in a new urban lifestyle: high-density, modern architecture, shared public spaces, and private management. Housing was also thought of as a capital asset. The units were subject to a mortgage, aspiring to increase their exchange value through time. The PEVE policymakers did not encourage self-construction, as they expected people to focus on paying their mortgage through their savings. After a time, residents would sell these homes looking for other real estate market opportunities. "Urbanizing" the families also entailed an aspiration to create an "urban community," embedded in the self-management of the complex (consortium) and the shared space. These were supposed to materialize community relations, facilitating sociability. The present reality of Presidente Sarmiento shows a quite different scenario, where families experienced social precariousness instead of upward mobility and they never became legal owners of the apartments. Instead of a capital asset, housing became

a lifelong project (and the project of their descendants), and the individualization of the shared space overcame the idealization of community life. However, I argue that the assumptions' failure does not mean the project's failure, as many professionals and academics believe.

For the families, the readaptation of Presidente Sarmiento to their livelihood needs marked a way of city-making that involves space management, incremental housing, a local economy based on solidarity, and a production capacity around the construction processes. This process can be considered a "mode of urbanization" (Pieterse, 2012), with its actions aimed at satisfying the housing needs of popular classes. It is already clear that a new way of city-making related to principles of adaptation, incrementality, and conditioning has emerged in Presidente Sarmiento. This city-making is not a failure but an alternative physical-social management, with an internal logic based on the continuous resolution of micro-conflicts, the invention of constructive and technical solutions, the creation of temporary rules of the game, and the constant adaptation to a dynamic social landscape. As a city-making process, the self-management of Presidente Sarmiento can be characterized by the individualization of public space, a sociability intersected by the redistribution of land, the replication of houses "for life" that fulfill multiple functions for expanded families, and a management logic created on rules and legitimacy "on the fly" rather than on norms. I believe these three characteristics challenge the assumptions and conventions on which housing policy is created and illuminate us about what housing policy should look like in the future.

The individualization of public space

Urbanist Alfredo Garay says that Presidente Sarmiento represents the "anti-city" ideas of large-scale modernist projects. Rather than part of the city, these projects represent an enclave-type city without parcels and a transparent distribution of private and public spaces. The rupture with the urban surroundings increases the enclave condition. Garay is convinced that Presidente Sarmiento, like other STAFF projects, constitutes both public policy and architectural malpractice. The design decisions, the size of the functional units (consortiums), the materialization of the solution (construction techniques and materials), and the lack of participation add up to a project that has deteriorated rather than improved the quality of people's lives regarding their previous living conditions. Along the same line, Domingo Patrón Risso affirms that the GCHs are "an urban and housing catastrophe" since they were built without respecting any urban concept and conceived with a different logic from that of the traditional city. Patrón Risso says that the large-scale consortium management system –and not just the architectural project-- led to the catastrophe. The administrative PH model created a different territory fragmented from the city that today represents an extra burden for the residents. These have no management capacity but face many more responsibilities than the residents of the traditional city: managing public spaces, maintaining large-scale buildings, sustaining the administration of a consortium of hundreds of families, among others. For Patrón Risso, this type of housing policy is "inconclusive" since the units delivered do not represent a housing solution.

I argue that the informal urban interventions created by the people of Presidente Sarmiento try to resolve this malpractice by transforming the modernist logic into a closer approximation of a "traditional" city. By traditional city, I mean an urban grid with a clear delimitation of public and private spaces, the definition of individual parcels, public streets and sidewalks, a commercial corridor, and a hierarchization of streets and parks. Occupations, expansions, and invasions delimit the division between public and private space, create a street

layout, and produce plots in "no man's land." They also reduce the surface of green areas, transforming useless large extensions of land into more manageable spaces. Occupations, expansions, and invasions also re-define the control and management over the territory. The residents individualized the areas designed to be community spaces that ended up being "no man's land." Through this individualization, private shared land became under private individual control, changing the systems of rights and responsibilities in the territory.

Looking back at the genesis of the STAFF project, their alternative urban vision towards creating a self-managed and maintained community space, where social ties could be created, could not overcome the primary logic of the capitalist city: the clear boundaries between the public and the private where the plot materializes the social and technical relations of city production. The need for physical and programmatic transformation of the original project implied, in turn, the need to create private plots, delimit public spaces, and define streets within the large patch of shared areas. The individualization of common space only occurred due to the underutilization of public areas and the individual need of growing families. It was also deployed as a mechanism to regulate undesired activities and gang's control at "no man's land," such as, control of crime against people, car dismantling depots, sale of narcotics, among others. From this point of view, the individualization of the shared space provided a level of security to the neighborhood and to the families, where large extensions of common spaces became limited areas of meeting points, soccer fields, and circulation spaces. Abstract spaces for sociability became spaces with real uses: community services, stores, churches, kindergartens, hairdressing salons, among others. At the same time, this management proposes an individualized maintenance system that does not depend on the State or the non-existent consortium. Each owner or tenant is responsible for the maintenance of their new plot.

This approach to the traditional city through the individualization of shared space also proposes a dilemma of control. No one would think of building on the sidewalk in a formal city because there is an established system of norms, rules, and penalties. These norms protect the public interest; they keep safe public space from misuse and private interests. In President Sarmiento, space management has no norms but dynamic rules that build up and disappear and change through time and experiences. These dynamic rules function to maintain social order within the neighborhood, conflict resolution, and the relationship with the local State. However, questions remain about how effective this physical-social management system can be while the neighborhood densifies, and the social scale becomes more complex than the homogenous "total demographic unit" projected by STAFF.

The Law of the Strongest

Sociability in the neighborhood is constituted today in a web of relationships, experiences, and expectations that shape the inhabitants' daily lives. I found relationships of reciprocity, dispute, identification, and differentiation, marked by daily life, labor, and the real estate market. One of the most marked types of sociability in Presidente Sarmiento is given by seniority in the neighborhood. Those people or relatives of people who arrived in the neighborhood in the 1970s through PEVE policies and consider themselves "original residents" differentiate from those who arrived later, generally by renting or invading common land. This sociability correlates with tenure types. The old ones tend to be "legal" owners of their apartments, while the new ones are renters or occupy "green areas." In this sense, there is a spatiality of relationships, determined by those who live in the formal or expanded units, those

who live in rented apartments or rooms, and those who built their house by invading public space (or buying invaded space). Often, their interests are antagonistic. Older neighbors believe that tenants do not care about the neighborhood's progress, nor do they care about paying utility bills or improving public space. Paradoxically, one-third of the residents I have interviewed have been tenants in the past before becoming homeowners. Also, there is a pejorative look against new families that invade land and "build anywhere" without respecting "the rules." These interests operate on the processes of land regularization and neighborhood improvement programs. Those residents who occupy shared "green areas" distrust the local government and the improvements and upgrading programs. They fear being displaced by this kind of intervention. Another illustration of this situation recalls the organized resistance of ground floor retailers to the infrastructure improvements proposed by the provincial government in 2018. Within the absence of the consortium and the fluctuant relationship with government authorities, residents create agreements to maintain the buildings and the public space. There are also solidarity ties concerning the sustainability of commercial activity, such as the coordination of sales schedules and micro-territories of customers. Although the informalization of the neighborhood causes occasional conflicts among neighbors, they resolve these in the day-to-day management of daily life; that is, I did not find a pattern of negative responses to a generalized social conflict resulting from occupations, expansions, and invasions in my fieldwork. Conflicts are resolved "on the fly," most of the time between neighbors' agreements and negotiations. In other words, informalization does not constitute a source of structural conflict in Presidente Sarmiento.

Sociability is also intersected by the legitimacy of the informal practices. I could not find explicit norms or a model for city-making, but I did discover implicit rules regarding the legitimacy of occupations, expansions, and invasions. These rules are structured around the proximity or closeness of the construction to the original residential unit, around the intended use of the new construction, and the pre-existences that residents valorize and wish to preserve. New construction is part of the natural evolution of the apartment when it is attached to the original unit. Residents consider invasions less legitimate than expansions. These are even less legitimate when an "outsider" invades green areas and builds an independent structure. The new buildings are more legitimate when there is an "urgent" need, such as a room for a family member, but it becomes less acceptable for a garage or business use. Also, residents respect and keep unoccupied pre-existence, such as trees, other encroachments, playgrounds, and vehicular accesses. Even though informalization does not represent a source of structural conflict in the neighborhood, there has been a recent gradual growth of divergence and dispute around "vertical" encroachments and high-rise construction. The new vertical expansions always represent a source of disagreement among neighbors, and neighbors and the local government. Fearing collapse and tragedies from the pressure of this type of construction on the existing building, the government has a less benevolent attitude towards expanding vertically than with expansions and occupations. This antecedent implies that social conflict and institutional tensions could increase as space becomes scarcer, infrastructure comes under more pressure from demand, informal architectural resolutions become more complex, and population density increases with fewer equipped public spaces under dispute. In this context, the "law of the strongest" takes more prominence and marks a new way of managing the territory, where "rights" --or acquisition of privileges -- are obtained from power. There are several "sources" of power: the very condition of being an owner (concerning their tenants), the imposition of physical force (violence), and political connections. As a neighbor points out, reflecting on the violent usurpation of a friend's apartment:

> Sometimes here reigns the law of the strongest. There are still apartments that "are taken" [usurped] to this day. I have a friend whose mother lived nearby; she passed away. They took her apartment, a family from the neighborhood. We all know who they are; they are linked to politics. What are we supposed with someone who usurps the apartment in that way?

Actions of collective resistance, antagonism between owners and tenants, or association around maintenance, coordination, and repair tasks determine that the barrio's sociability is intersected by the non-normative management of the territory. The complexification of the urban form and the increasing scarcity of opportunities (space, structures, infrastructures) may imply decreasing effectiveness of the "on the fly" resolutions and empowerment of the use of privileges and violence.

The "mirror house" is for life

As I mentioned before, the notion of informality as a coherent, homogeneous and continuous process does not exist for the inhabitants of Presidente Sarmiento. They perceive some interventions such as the occupation of the "hollows" and ground floor expansions as the project's natural evolution. Rather than relating it to decay, the neighbors have a favorable view of the possibility of changing use, expanding, enlarging, modifying the apartment, a comparative advantage over other neighbors in the Buenos Aires suburbs. As illustrated by a resident who has been remodeling her house-business little by little and according to her needs:

> Unlike other neighborhoods, here you can build, improve your house. If you go to Ramos [Ramos Mejia, Morón's municipality central area], you buy an apartment, and you keep that for the rest of your life. To build is the benefit of living here as opposed to other places.

This quote reflects another important finding of my research in Buenos Aires: in Presidente Sarmiento, the house in Presidente Sarmiento is for life and the life of successive generations, and therefore, the ability to transform it is a comparative advantage over other neighborhoods in the city. The great majority of my interviewees are first, second, or third-generation members of the same family who moved to Presidente Sarmiento in the 1970s/80s. Whether by direct family or by having formed a family with residents, I could trace a family history linked to the place that dates back multiple generations. Families created multiple dwellings within the same dwelling, what residents call "mirror houses" in the same parcels, referring to the duplication of the unit in the same plot.

The idea of a house for life contradicts the original objectives of the PEVE policy and the STAFF project, which assumed that the families would benefit from upward social mobility, that children would become professionals and employees, and that beneficiaries would be able to put the apartment unit in the real estate market. As Pablo Peirano points out, both the technicians and the architects made a flawed reading of the reality at the time, a reality that even worsened with the impoverishment of the working class in the last 50 years in Argentina. Presidente Sarmiento was designed with a different future in mind for the popular classes, one of full employment and formal salaried work in the industrial area of the Buenos Aires metro area. This idea about the future began to disarticulate with the military dictatorship of the '70s, the economic crisis of the '80s, and the neo-liberalization of the economy in the '90s. As Alejo Rearte points out, "I always

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say that what happened here are the 90's and the 2001... beyond the architecture and the project and the lack of presence of the State, what happened here is the economic crisis of neoliberalism". In other words, the PEVE policy was designed for an upwardly mobile population, not a downwardly mobile one, as it turned out to be. The disarticulation of a working and salaried social class, the dismantling of a social mobility project, and the growing problem of urban housing affordability marked a different role in housing. The house should fit the residential needs of multiple families and their reproductive needs (in economic terms) for the entire period of "a life."

The "no exit" from the neighborhood, that is to say, the permanence of families and their descendants, is a consequence of lack of capacity and choice. The unaffordability of housing with similar location conditions in the city, added to the lack of formal work, the macroeconomic instability, and the non-existence of credit systems for the popular classes, make housing a place where the needs of the current and future generations must be resolved. The materialization of an extended house or a mirror house, a house within a house, shows that popular neighborhoods need to densify, become more complex, and include non-residential activities. However, since PEVE and STAFF conceived Presidente Sarmiento as a high-density residential project, the morphology of the neighborhood never admitted a densification process. Presidente Sarmiento has a static urban fabric. The idea of a static piece of the city, with a rigid and controlled morphology, is contested by the demographic growth and the reconfiguration of underutilized free spaces under a centralized administration. In other words, morphology cannot control "natural" urban processes in each city.

One of the most exciting findings around the idea of a mirror house for life is the issue of territorial anchoring. "No exit from the neighborhood" is a metaphor for the permanence of extended families living in extended houses as a conscious choice related to the importance of territorial belonging for the popular classes. The popular territory is also a space of access to resources and income for the reproduction of life. This reflection is in line with Jose Luis Coraggio's (1999) and Marcela Vio's (2018) work. They have researched the geographical importance of popular economy linked to the phenomenon of barter fairs, domestic work, and the valorization of urban solid waste as a source of labor in Argentina post-neo-liberalization of the economy in the 1990s. In my interviews, Vio argues that such territorial specialization is framed in both the informal economy and the access to social plans, State subsidies, and, for example, quotas in cooperatives organized by social policies such as Argentina Trabaja. Popular classes often access these resources through a neighborhood leader. The territory ends up defining the possibilities of accessing pensions-based income and a source of job, working in "changas" (informal workdays) within the community, opening local informal businesses that operate with the solidarity of the neighbors, and also to access State resources and help from NGOs. As Vio points out, there is a specific popular culture in these neighborhoods where the resources coming from the State are always mediated for their access, in general by community referents, who are also part of other political structures. For example, the social movements, Movimiento Evita, Corriente Clasista Combativa, Barrios de Pie have an important presence in the neighborhoods of the suburbs and built a relationship with the inhabitants as many local politicians do not have. Although it is not in the official word of the programs, when the national government implements social assistance programs such as Argentina Trabaja, the same State structures (national or municipal) use these movements as channels to "land onto the neighborhoods."

In Presidente Sarmiento, I found a high percentage of interviewees who say they receive a social plan or some kind of assistance. I also found a significant percentage of retirees incorporated into the public retirement system with the nationalization of pensions in the 2000s. These findings coincide with demographic data surveyed by the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies in 2018, which indicates that almost two-thirds of households count on contributory family allowances and AUH. Both the "planeros" as some interviewees derogatorily call those who receive social assistance, and those who do not benefit from any plan often work within the informal spectrum, depending on family and neighborhood relationships to sustain a circle of family care - work - and reproduction of life. Therefore, proximity represents a source of economic security, which requires territorial belonging. Therefore, new generations and expanded families need to resolve housing needs in the same neighborhood despite not being designed to change. Consequently, according to the same census sample, 33 percent of the households are extended or composite households, without counting those who sublet rooms or houses within single-family homes, which represents 10 percent of the population of Presidente Sarmiento. With this definition, the popular economy cannot be understood outside its territorial inscription; therefore, the popular habitat always locates in a specific spatial and geographical arrangement considering this spatialized territorialization. To leave the neighborhood behind implies, probably, the loss of income and resources that come with it. Territorialized social ties (families, neighbors, neighborhood referents) "tie" the new families to the neighborhood and are the anchor that marks the reproduction of mirror houses that are for life and the life of their descendants. Under these dynamics, the residents build an idea of a future in Presidente Sarmiento. As a city making culture, the built space must accommodate the changing needs of its inhabitants since the territorial anchorage of the popular sectors indicates that belonging to a neighborhood refers to a question of identity and a question of life reproduction.

CHAPTER 5: JOE SLOVO
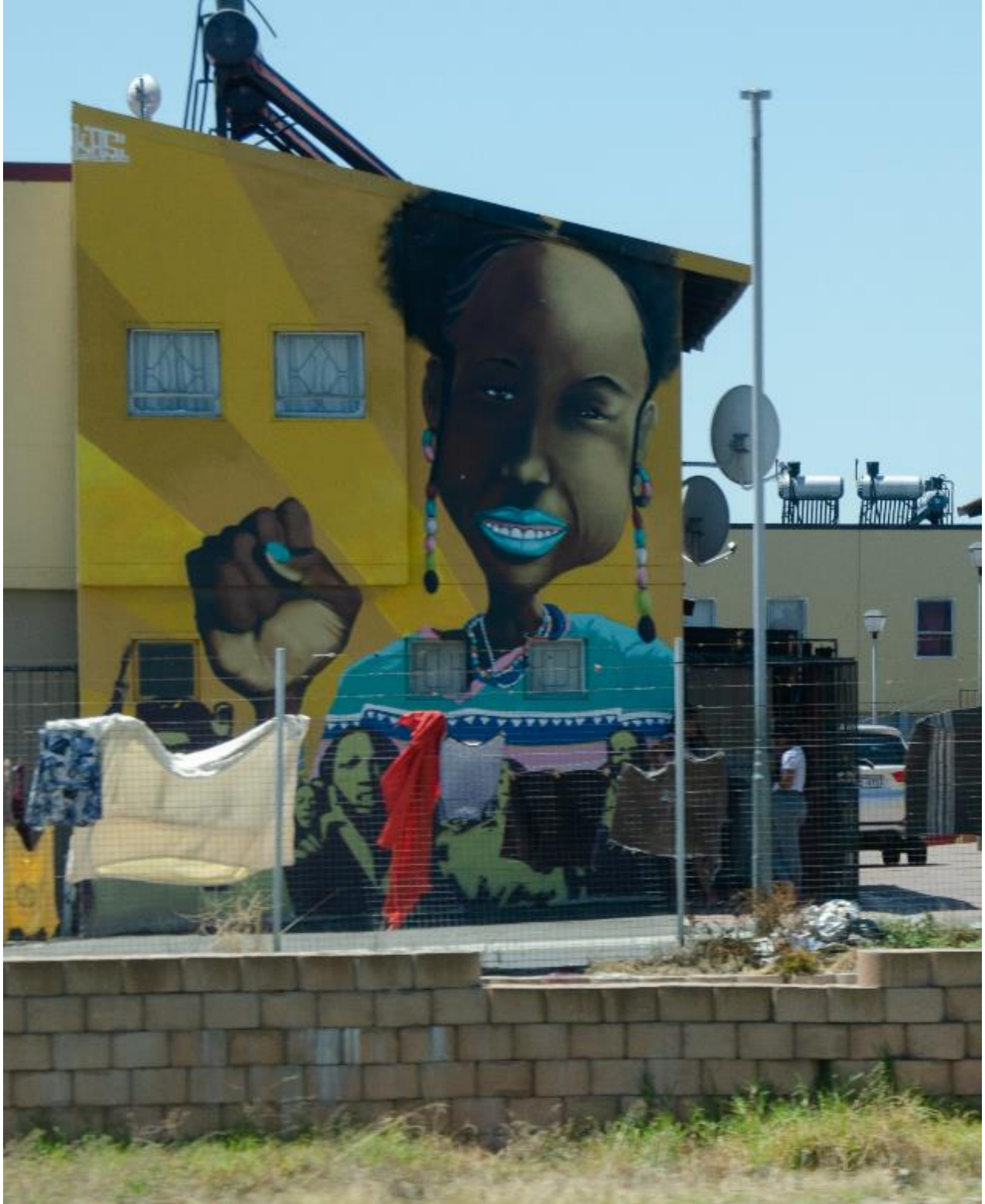
Figure 42. Art-wall by artist Breeze Yoko in Joe Slovo Phase 3, 2021 Source: Nico van Blerk

INTRODUCTION

"Joe Slovo Phase 3 is a national flagship housing project of the Department of Human Settlements (DoHS), showcasing a new approach to sustainable housing delivery in the country under the Integrated Reconstruction and Development Programme (IRDP) initiative." (Sustainable Energy Africa)

"This project [Joe Slovo Phase 1] was supposed to be a pilot project, but I think it didn't end being what they hope it should be. The problem is that the project was conceived OK but there is a lot of corruption." (Resident)

"Many consider it [Joe Slovo Phases 1, 2, and 3] a laboratory of ideas; you drive by on the freeway and see all these different buildings and wonder, which city model works best?" (Government official)

"Joe Slovo [Phases 1, 2, and 3] is not a 'catalyst' but a good learning example of what to do and what not to do in a large scale." (Government official and NGO leader)

"In Joe Slovo [Phase 1] we focused on housing at the expense of livelihoods." (Government official)

"I like my new home, my new neighborhood [Phase 3], but we had to fight for it." (Residents)

"This project [Phase 3] is my life." (Community Leader)

"Joe Slovo [Phases 1, 2, and 3] is a clear example on how the Breaking New Ground [housing policy] is obsessed with making the poor look like middle class. Classes by houses" (Political Activist)

"Why are you so interested in Joe Slovo? If a housing project has been under construction for more than ten years, it's a failure [Phases 1, 2, and 3]" (NGO leader)

"There is so much written on Joe Slovo already, you may want to re-think your choice [Phases 1, 2, and 3]" (Academic)

All of these intermingled, contradictory quotes illustrate some truth about Joe Slovo's phased housing redevelopment.

The first impressions I remember of Joe Slovo date back to my first trip to Cape Town, when from the international airport I rode in a cab to the city center along the N2-gateway. I remember seeing the dozens of aluminum water tanks and sunscreens on the roofs of those pastel-painted houses shimmering in the sunny daylight. With my eyes already sharpened on social housing projects, those individual but densely distributed houses caught my attention. I told myself I should pass by again sometime in the next three months of my stay in the city and check whether I could take some valuable lessons back home in Latin America. I immediately visualized a small, gated community next to the tiny houses with water tanks and solar screens. These were also tiny houses, but they seemed to recreate the so-typical suburban, bourgeois homes spread worldwide, from Buenos Aires to Los Angeles and Cape Town.

When I still was not fully understanding those reduced-size bourgeois houses surrounded by a fence, I saw tens of three-story buildings flats. All these flats were of white, hyper-austere modernism, forming monotonous rows without any architectural grace. They did not look old but were very poorly maintained. I remember thinking, "what a strange place with so many dissimilar architectural typologies and so close together." Under the influence of my architect's bias, I wondered if the site was the product of a social housing architecture competition won by three architecture firms with very different design philosophies.

Later I learned that these different "coexisting" housing typologies were not winners of a design contest but the expression of multidirectional design politics between the government, the developers, and the diverse social groups living in Langa former township and Joe Slovo informal settlement. These three very dissimilar city images represented a single housing program created to be a "model example" of housing policy. Designed in three phases by the national government, its goal was to redevelop the Joe Slovo informal settlement located on interstitial vacant lots between Langa and the N2-gateway into formal, mix-income housing. Later I also learned that these three housing typologies did not represent the original phased plans of the redevelopment. Even more, they did not only represent design strategies, but they are also the material image of different ways of exercising and acquiring spatial control over the decision-making process of the territory and its inhabitants.

This chapter focuses in the informalization of the formalization process of Joe Slovo, named after anti-apartheid activist and former Minister of Housing (1994-1995) Yossel Mashel Slovo, emerged during the early 1980s in Cape Town's oldest Black African township, Langa. Its relatively good location with respect to transport and jobs has made it one of the fastest growing informal settlements in the city and the place to implement the first pilot experience of the N2-Gateway housing megaproject, the flagship of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements, informally known as Breaking New Ground (BNG). BNG was created after eight years of strong criticisms of its predecessor Reconstruction Development Program (RDP 1996), questioned for its quantitative emphasis on the delivery of "bricks and mortar" (Charlton and Kihato 2006; Lemanski 2009; Turok 2015); thus, the objective of the N2-Gateway was to inaugurate a new housing model for the country.

Debates over who did and who did not benefit from the N2-Gateway housing project generated great tension among different sectors of Langa township and the Joe Slovo informal settlement—disagreements that still persist. The strong social discontent among local residents was the departure point of a long, complex process that included several actors, massive protests between 2005 and 2007, a Supreme Court trial between 2007 and 2010, institutional reforms of the housing sector in 2009, the re-design of the master plan between 2010 and 2011, and the development of innovative bottom-up design strategies between 2007 and 2011. While the idea of realizing a policy that would embrace the redevelopment of Joe Slovo through the construction of social housing in three phases prospered, these three phases ended up being significantly varied from the original plans of the national and local governments.

There is extensive literature covering the Joe Slovo case, in particular about the role of community participation, contestation and resistance in the implementation of housing megaprojects (Baptist and Bolnick, 2012; Bolnick, 2009; Jacobs et al., 2015; Jordhus-Lier; 2015; Juta et al., 2014), the politics of spatial contestation and governance of place (De Satgé & Watson, 2018; Millstein, 2011). , the role of rights legal action in acquiring housing (Chenwi,

2008; Liebenberg, 2009; McLean, 2010; Ray, 2010), the politics of global events in the urban shaping (Murambadoro and Holloway, 2005; Newton, 2009), and the relationship between informal settlements and informal fire events (Smith, 2005; Pharoah 2012). Yet even this widely studied case misses the story of how informality played a material role in the community's empowerment and the evolution of the project, and that is the central focus of this chapter. This chapter analyzes the housing redevelopment of the Joe Slovo informal settlement to shed light on the role of spatial practices in democracy building and city production. The Joe Slovo redevelopment initially deployed an inclusionary welfare-state policy that resulted in exclusionary housing design practices, causing political contestation among the residents of the informal settlement. The community materialized their struggle for housing and urban rights in creative examples of "design from below." These practices not only re-defined the spatial control over Joe Slovo's territory, but also, by the production of alternative urban space, they challenged institutional spaces, re-defining who plays what role in housing delivery. My findings reveal that the informalization of the housing process created multidirectional and contradictory politics between governments and communities that occur when the State loses control over decision-making processes. The community's right to not be displaced to distant locations was guaranteed by reducing the State's implementation and delivery capacity, exposing the challenges of alternative, informalized management.

For the predominant Capetonian point of view reflected in the media, such as *Daily Maverick* and Al-Jazeera, the fact that the Joe Slovo redevelopment is unfinished, with several areas still to be redeveloped after more than ten years, challenges its validity as a "story of success." However, the goal of this chapter is neither to contradict these opinions nor to position Joe Slovo as a "best practice," but to examine the complexities of a paradigmatic case where communities gain explicit political power over decision making in the city through spatial-praxis in the context of a top-down mega housing project implementation.

Through the Design Politics lens, I explore: Why do the different phases look the way they do? What is being expressed symbolically? What does this say about the role of power exercise and decision making over the housing policy? And what role does spatial-informal practices played in operationalizing political agendas and shaping urban governance in Joe Slovo? My analysis required extensive archive research, six months of in-situ observations while I ran the Cape Town's International Field Program at The New School between 2014 and 2017, and twenty-two in-depth semi-structured interviews with a variety of key informants, including community members, government officials, academics, political and NGO leaders. A detailed description of my methods and fieldwork protocol is described in Appendix 1.

The chapter is constructed in two parts. First, I introduce Joe Slovo in the context of post-apartheid South African housing policy and Cape Town's urban planning policy. Second, I analyze the relationship between power, politics, informality, and design. To do so, I study the evolution of the Joe Slovo housing redevelopment, focusing on how different actors deployed spatial [informal and formal] mechanisms to take control of the project, and identifying the turning points that shifted the initial top-down, monopolistic design into a pluri-political process of city-making. Finally, I draw some conclusions on how more complex matrices of actors and power in spatial decision-making have reshaped the urban and political landscape into an informalized management of the housing redevelopment process and its consequence on urban governance.

CONTEXT

The democratic transition and the RDP housing model

South Africa's industrialization, urbanization, and development levels are the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa and have positioned the country's housing and urban policy as exemplary in the region. The South African case is also of particular interest since housing and land issues are profoundly political and connected to reparative social justice, given their previous centrality in consolidating the apartheid regime. The consolidation of apartheid (1948 -1994) to control and dissuade urbanization during South Africa's industrialization process relied on authoritarian urban planning and enforcement mechanisms to control where and how people should live and work according to their race. The Population Registration Act (PRA, 1950) and the Group Areas Act (GAA, 1950) systematized and expanded previous colonial, white-supremacist urban planning policies such as the Natives Land Act (NLA, 1913), which displaced, marginalized, and destroyed lives and families for more than a hundred years.

It is impossible to understand South Africa's democratic housing policy outside of two contradictory processes. On one hand, the post-apartheid normative visions are linked to reparative justice, land redistribution, and racial integration. On the other hand, bureaucratic and economic power urban structures retain a stubborn permanence. The democratic transition in 1994 implied the inclusion of eighty percent of the population into citizenship, recognizing social, civic, and human rights previously unaddressed. Given the centrality of spatial segregation in the consolidation of apartheid, a great deal about addressing these rights implied a new direction in urban and land policy. In this context, the government of President Nelson Mandela proposed that cities should operate as catalysts of a new social contract, so, in many ways, they became the preferred place to solve inherited social injustices. South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, 1995) expressed clear objectives to eliminate the inherited inequalities and inefficiencies of the spatial economy and develop more "productive and sustainable cities." The foreword to the Urban Development Strategy named Remaking South Africa's Cities and Towns states:

> Urban areas are extremely inequitable and inefficient due to decades of apartheid mismanagement. We need to massively improve the quality of life of our people, through creating jobs and deracialising the cities. By mobilising the resources of urban communities, government and the private sector we can make our cities centres of opportunity for all South Africans, and competitive within the world economy. The success of this will depend on the initiative taken by urban residents to build their local authorities and promote local economic development. (Remaking South Africa's Cities and Towns, 1995 pg.1)

The democratic transition also struggled to overcome the permanence of bureaucratic and economic power structures that led to the perpetuation of old administrative and operational practices in implementing this new democratic vision. The creation of the new housing policy in the 1990s was influenced by the long history of private and state interventions before democracy. In particular, the monopoly of large, private corporations created during the institution of the Urban Foundation in 1977, a response to the critical living conditions in townships aimed at providing homeownership to the Black middle class (De Satgé & Watson, 2018; Haarhoff,

2011). Consequently, while the new policy was radically different in normative terms, it represented the *de facto* extension of the historical policy trajectory of the country and, in operational terms, avoided challenging the fundamentals of the apartheid city.

Within this contradictory context, the national government implemented one of the most prominent housing policies in recent history. RDP's socio-economic development plan included a massive, fast-track delivery of new housing units as both a housing solution and an economic and employment booster. Between 1996 and 2016, the RDP housing policy built about 3.3-million houses, representing more than 25 percent of the country's total housing stock. This is certainly one of the largest housing programs ever implemented by a democratic government (Buckley et al., 2016). However, as Pieterse (2014) notes, the public housing sector has only succeeded in accomplishing its own political, quantitative goals related to units produced and implementation efficiency. Recent scholarship points out that South African cities have remained profoundly segregated and unequal despite –and because of-- the government's efforts to extend development opportunities to the urban poor. Regardless of the RDP's success in quantitative terms, public housing promoted the expansion of the urban footprint and reproduced the apartheid-era planning patterns of low density, satellite cities, and disconnection between jobs and residential areas (Huchzermeyer and Misselwitz, 2016; Lemanski, 2009; Turok, 2016). For example, Charlton and Kihato (2006) argue that RDP housing did not contribute to poverty alleviation, especially among Black Africans. Specifically, the location of the subsidized homes that perpetuated a 'ghettoization' of the poor was one of the biggest concerns. Kihato (2015) also shows that by the late 1990s, scholars and urban practitioners began to question the quantitative emphasis on delivering "bricks and mortar" over other holistic urban approaches.

After ten years of democracy, the Department of Housing admitted that its interventions had not addressed the inequalities and inefficiencies of apartheid's geography, so they presented a restructuring of the national housing policy (Kihato, 2015). The national government invested time and resources in seriously reviewing the RDP housing model with stakeholders from the national, provincial, and local spheres of government. As a result of this extensive consultation process, the experts concluded that a revised version of the national housing policy should offer a proper response to the changing nature of the housing demand, the increasing average annual population growth, the drop in average household size, the local and regional differences, the underdeveloped private residential property market, and the growth in unemployment and housing backlog despite the public efforts of the RDP (Tissington, 2010). Based on 1994's Housing White Paper, which established the normative vision of RDP housing, the document published as "Breaking New Ground: A Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements," often known as BNG—the acronym for Breaking New Ground. The publication of BNG aimed to shift the focus from the number of houses that the government supported into a holistic urban approach pushing towards the accomplishment of UN's Millennium Development Goal Target 11: "making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable" by 2014. This revised approach included the densification of housing projects shifting from a single-family prototype to multistorey buildings, rental housing units developed along with the traditional ownership schemes, neighbourhoods designed for mixed-income groups, a more substantial role for local governments, and in-situ slum upgrading processes while seeking to offer a broader range of choice in terms of settlement location and type of tenure (Huchzermeyer, 2010; Tissington, 2010).

Operatively, the BNG targeted bettering the living conditions of 400,000 families living in informal communities. Improvements typically took the form of the delivery of new fully subsidized units for families earning under US$45 monthly and providing close to a full subsidy for households earning up to US$ 300. In addition, the policy sought to identify well-located urban land on which to provide affordable and higher density rental housing stock for the low-income groups and simultaneously enabling in situ upgrades of informal settlements (Department of Housing, 2004). However, the BNG policy documents left many questions unanswered regarding this last point. As De Satgé & Watson (2018) out, the BNG contained a contradiction embedded in its rhetoric about serving as "a new informal settlement upgrading instrument" and its stated purpose "to support the focused eradication of informal settlements." To do so, it proposed the eradication of slums through "in-situ upgrading in desired locations, coupled to the relocation of households where development is not possible or desirable" (Department of Housing, BNG 2004). However, it did not determine nor classify which informal settlements were feasible for upgrading programs and which areas upgrading was "not possible or desirable." The document also mentions that "progressive relocation" should be implemented in the latter cases without defining what "progressive" meant. In addition, the BNG aims to support more participatory processes to achieve socially responsive housing, and, at the same time, it also encouraged fast-track housing and serviced-land delivery (BNG, 2004).

As a result of this vague and contradictory language, politicians had enough space to interpret the BNG's progressive, normative goals according to their own housing and non-housing agendas. This ambiguity permitted and revealed the State's intolerance towards the continued growth of informal settlements ten years after the democratic transition. This was exemplified by Housing Minister Sisulu's declaration of "a war on shacks" in her 2004 budget speech (Department of Housing 2004) and her ambitious but futile pledge to eradicate them by 2014 (De Satgé & Watson, 2018). Thus, beyond the new normative goals, in practice, the BNG houses also reproduced the typical large-scale, industrial-like, low-income, subsidized housing project, just like those implemented by other national governments in emerging economies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the early 21st century (Buckley et al. 2016).

Cape Town: "global city" or the most unequal in the globe?

Cape Town, the largest city of the Western Cape and the second-most populous city in South Africa after Johannesburg, has metropolitan area of 3,740,026 people (as of the last census in 2011). Established in 1652 as a refueling station for European ships bounds for the East (the Spice Route), the city is often referred to as the "Mother City." A 2008 United Nations report argues that Cape Town remains among the world's spatially most inequitable and inefficient cities. Yet, in 2014, Cape Town won the prestigious title of the World Design Capital and now provides advice to other cities about achieving world-class status. As the disagreements to what has transpired in Cape Town suggest, the idea of inclusiveness is barely reflected in the lives of most of the non-white population. In this sense, the politics of perspective greatly influence whether one finds the city to be the World Design Capital or the most unequal in the world (Wenz, 2015). These contradictory narratives illustrate the socio-spatial scenario of the city, where poverty correlates with race and where the strongest legacies of apartheid have not been overcome (Todes and Harrison, 2015; Wainer, 2015). Studies on urban segregation in the 1990s and 2000s (Christopher, 2005; Donaldson et al., 2013; Selzer and Heller, 2010) show that many

South African cities started experiencing some levels of racial integration from the early 90s, when black African, Coloured and Indian[10] population groups started moving into areas previously reserved for Whites, and the inner-city areas had gone furthest in desegregation--but Cape Town remains an exception.

The lack of racial and social integration is marked by critical living conditions and the lack of proper housing for a large sector of the society. In recent years, Cape Town has been experiencing an upsurge in a housing shortage, especially for Black African and Coloured people. According to a 2014 report of the Human Sciences Research Council, the estimated housing backlog in Cape Town is between 360,000 and 400,000 houses and growing at a rate of 16,000–18,000 units per year (Mongwe, 2015). Moreover, in 2014, 86 percent of Capetonians could not afford a 50 square meters market-priced unit in the inner city of ZAR850,000 (us$ 79,770); 74 percent could not access to what is considered a market affordable house valued in ZAR400,000 (us$37,709); and 47 percent of the people depend on full housing subsidies and social transfers to maintain the basic conditions of their house.[11] Certainly, one of the biggest challenges for Cape Town is to accommodate low-income households along activity corridors and public transport, and how to discourage real estate developments from expanding the city. Turok (2011) shows that low-income populations are dispersed in relatively dense informal settlements and very low-dense public housing projects, both distant from employment areas. Crankshaw's (2012) research on Cape Town also provides evidence that where people live determine access to employment opportunities. Employment growth in the Cape Town has largely been for professionals and managerial classes, while deindustrialization has resulted in job loss among the working classes. Professional and service growth has been associated with an

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[10] In South Africa, racial groups introduced by Apartheid remain as the four defined race groups (black Africans, whites, Coloureds and Indians) used by Statistics South Africa, the government and the society overall. As a foreigner academic scholar researching on housing policy that builds its population targets on this social classification, I will use these categories in the analysis of my study case, not without pointing to the critically important questions of racial identities in South Africa. I find in the reflections of Neville Alexander (2007) pertinent to the discussion this paper, as they trouble the relationship between the policy of affirmative action (in this case, how housing allocation was designed and implemented) and its unintended consequences linked to the perpetuation of problematic racial identities and social realities in post-apartheid South Africa. As Alexander introduces "[…] the perpetuation of racial identities as the irresponsible practice on the part of political, cultural and other role models of referring unproblematically to 'Blacks', 'Coloureds', 'Indians', and 'Whites' in normal public discourse, well knowing that by so doing they are perpetuating the racial categories of apartheid South Africa and wittingly or unwittingly entrenching racial prejudice. This discourse is embedded in the legislation I referred to and in the social practices and inter-group dynamics they give rise to or reinforce" (Alexander, 2007 pg. 94). From a policy perspective, Alexander notes, there is no need in South Africa to use the racial categories of the past in order to undertake affirmative action policies due to the correlation between 'race' and 'class'. Turning to demographics, 79.4 percent of the population are declared themselves to be Black African while 9.2 percent were shown as White, 8.8 percent colored and 2.6 percent Indian or Asian (Census 2011). For Alexander, the failed results of affirmative action and black economic empowerment emerge from the perpetuation of racial identities implicit in the racial conceptualization and the day-to-day expression of the policy in practice, as he points out: "The answers are simple but difficult to put into practice precisely because of the ingrained racial habitus that has disfigured both the construction and the perception of reality by the vast majority of South Africans."
11 Own estimates based on 2011 Census Household Income by Sub-place. Affordability and market prices referenced in McGaffin, Rob, Francois Viruly and Mark Massyn. "The Economic and Financial Issues of Developing Higher Density, Affordable Residential Property in the Inner City of Cape Town." 2012 Department of Construction Economics and Management, University of Cape Town. Finn, Arden, Leibbrandt, Murray and Levinsohn James. "Income Mobility in South Africa: Evidence from the First Two Waves of the National Income Dynamics Study." Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, UCT, 2012.

increasingly racially mixed middle class, and growing racial residential mix in middle class areas, alongside areas of very high unemployment of low-skilled workers.

Figure 43. Density population in Cape Town by Census' race groups, and areas with housing deficit in 2011*
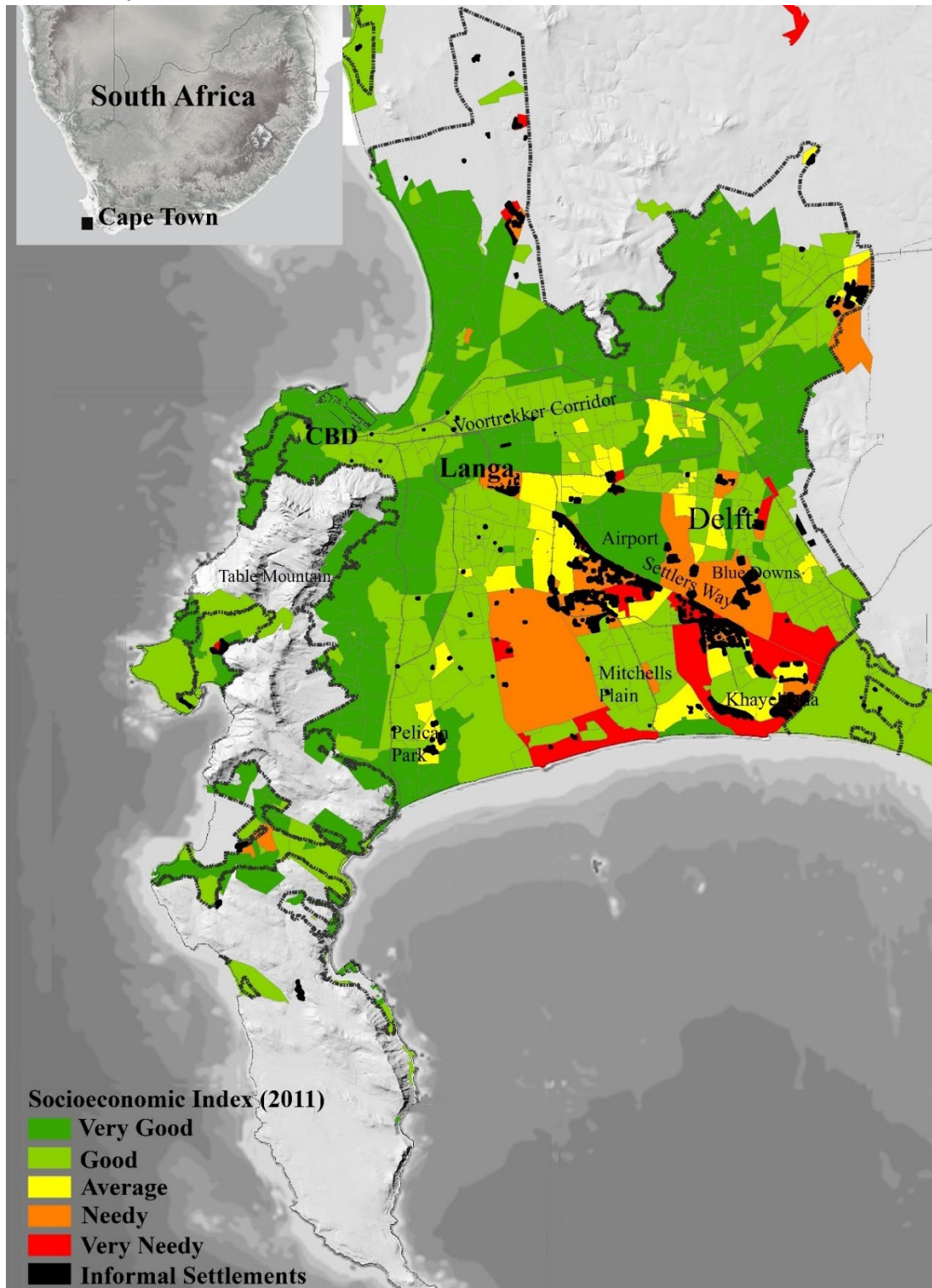
Source: own elaboration based on South Africa's National Census 2001- 2011 and GIS data from the Department of City Maps, Cape Town City Government, and the Geomatics Department of the University of Cape Town.
* The Socio-Economic Index, developed by the Social Development Department, Research, Population and Knowledge Management Directorate of the Western Cape Government. The Census 2011 Socio-Economic Index is calculated using a combination of four separate indexes: The Census 2011 Household Services Index, The Census 2011 Education Index, The Census 2011 Housing Index and The Census 2011 Economic Index. It indicates which sub-places in Cape Town are the most vulnerable and thus have the greatest needs for development purposes. These sub-places are characterized by households living in informal dwellings and overcrowded conditions, a lack of adequate services, high unemployment rates, many households with a very low monthly income and low levels of education.

Recognition of this profound relationship between urban form and social justice has meant that national urban-social narratives to eliminate poverty and reduce segregation put forth increased density and access to well-located land as two critical objectives (Harrison and Todes, 2015). Since 2010, the socio-spatial mismatch has been the focus of urban and housing policy. In Cape Town's government has focused several efforts on establishing a technical framework to cope with the demands that shape its form. It produced over ten technical reports, plans, and strategic papers to improve the city's densities. The city hosted five international events to discuss densification strategies, three Density Syndicates in 2014 and two forums in 2010 and 2012. The City Government also developed a Densification Policy within the Spatial Development Framework approved in 2012 but first proposed in 2005. According to the city's Spatial Development Framework (SDF, 2012), housing should compensate for the existing imbalances in the distribution of different types of residential development, avoid creating new imbalances, and promote a mix of market-driven and subsidized housing developments in as many neighborhoods as possible. It should also increase low-income earners' access to affordable housing located close to the city's economic opportunities. The general criteria to be used to identify land for subsidized housing should consider the importance of containing urban sprawl, protect the Urban Edge to contribute to the development of a more compact city, and maximize the use of existing infrastructure and service capacity. Finally, it should support a mutually beneficial mix of social, residential, recreational, commercial, and employment opportunities and promote a relatively even spread of housing opportunities across the growth corridors within the existing footprint of the city (SDF 2012, 72). In operational terms, the SDF proposes facilitating a range of housing options and delivery approaches to developing new settlements and the upgrade and de-densification of existing informal settlements. It recommends support for a mix of land uses and higher-density residential development in appropriate locations along activity routes and the encouragement of medium to higher-density forms. However, most informal settlements are considered "too dense" to make their upgrade feasible. Specifically, most slums are located upon land considered not "suitable" from an environmental point of view since so many are located below sea level. Thus, the government has chiefly facilitated the relocation of households to alternative sites (SDF 2012, 57).

Cape Town's post-Apartheid government has been constrained in its ability to contribute proactively to spatial transformation processes due to the slow transformation of the land use management system and powerfully entrenched spatial interests that resist densification (Todes and Harrison, 2015). I presented an empirical assessment of this lack of spatial transformation in my masters' thesis that compares estimates of urban population density in recent years with those made by Bertaud and Malpezzi (2003) for the Apartheid regime. Bertaud and Malpezzi (2003 and 2014) showed that the exponential gradient function Apartheid-era Cape Town got denser the farther away from the central city one went--in contrast to almost all of the cities for which

they had comparable estimates. Apartheid planning policies, which excluded Black African and Colored population from the inner city, made Cape Town one of the few places in the world where this commonsense perspective on cities was inverted. Bertaud (2004) also demonstrates that an anomalous population density gradient always increases the inefficiency of cities. For example, commuting distances are always longer and --therefore-- more expensive. My study tested whether Cape Town's anomalous urban form – as measured by the density gradient-- had changed since the end of the Apartheid Regime. That is to say; the assumption is that post-Apartheid Cape Town would follow the pattern obtained in cities around the world and over time, according to which they are denser in the center of the city than they are on the outskirts. It replicates Bertaud and Malpezzi's (2003) estimate for Cape Town in 1990 and shows that Cape Town's democratic government failed to change the Apartheid-induced population's maldistribution. Indeed, it worsened it. The outcomes were exactly the opposite of the results aspired to in the city's plans (see Spatial Development Framework 2012, Cape Town Densification Strategy 2009, Cape Town Densification Policy 2012, Tall Building Policy 2013). It indicates that Cape Town has not densified as the model predicts would occur in a city that overcoming the significant welfare losses of the spatial aspects of Apartheid, as shown by Brueckner (1996) and Rospabe and Seold (2006), a view repeatedly embraced by the city as a development goal.

The N2 Gateway Housing Project in Langa

In the context of the slow transformation of the land use management system and the increasing housing crisis, land availability for well-located, multifamily housing development was positioned as a critical issue in implementing the first BNG housing project in Cape Town. Redeveloping the Joe Slovo informal settlement in Langa represented an opportunity window to operationalize all the BNG normative purposes and show that the new housing model was feasible and effective: mixed-income development, slum eradication, diverse tenure types, and multi-family buildings instead of RDP houses.

Joe Slovo grew as an informal settlement during the 1980s in the city's oldest Black African township, Langa. The settlement was set up by former occupants of Langa hostels and people living in backyard shacks (De Satgé et al., 2009). Located fourteen kilometers from the city center of Cape Town on the Cape Flats railway line, Langa African township was established in the early 1920 as a "model location" for the aspirant black middle class (Musemwa, 1993). Architect Albert John Thompson designed Langa along with Pinelands, a neighboring, white middle class suburb in the early 20th century as both examples of the 'garden villages' models adapted to the South African context. In Langa, the traditional garden village design was adapted to suit what was referred to as the "African" requirements and focused on Black urban workers and temporary migrants rather than permanent residents (Coetzer, 2009). Constructed during the depression years after the First World War (1924-1928), Langa was built using white labour as a means of poverty relief, including the railway stations completed in 1924 (City of Cape Town, Environmental and Heritage Management, 2014). The township was planned to include different urban environments, each reflecting --and promoting-- social differentiation amongst Africans while simultaneously enabling state surveillance and control: a mix of semi-detached row housing and freestanding units for the emerging middle class and barracks and hostels built for migrant single-men workers (De Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Figure 44. Cape Town, Informal Settlements in 2015 and Housing Projects by scale from 1994 to 2015
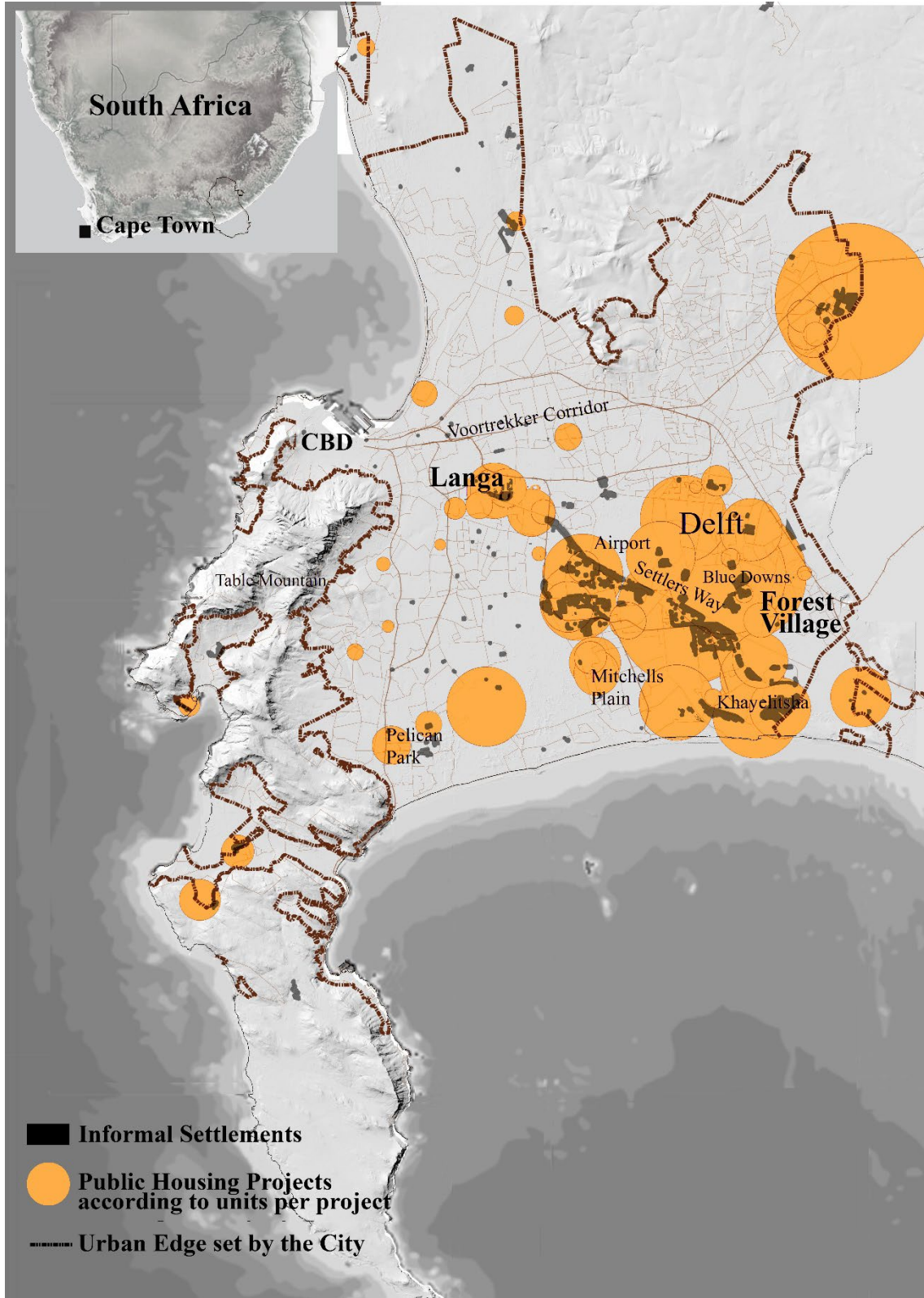
Figure 45. Original layout plan for Langa in
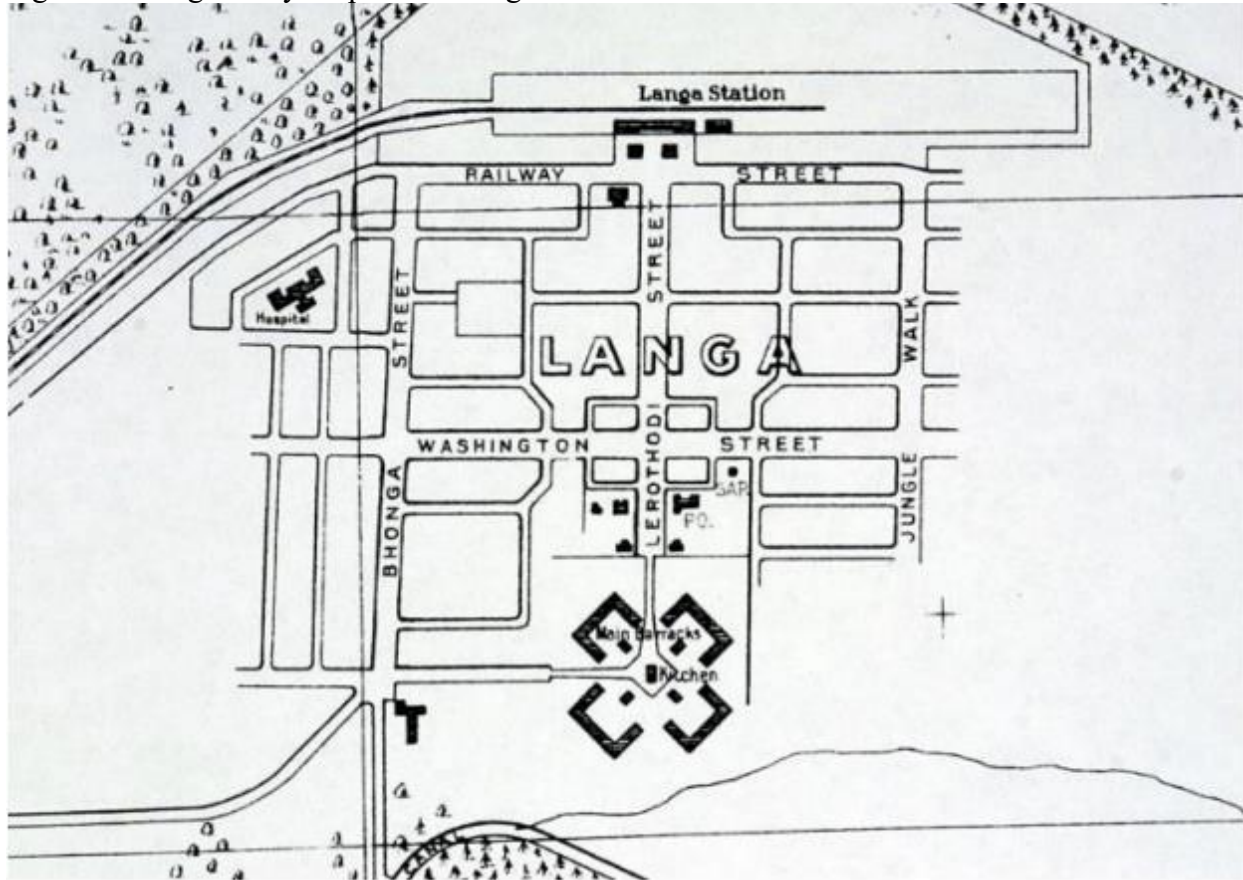
Source: Coetzer, 2009

The advent of democracy and the release of restrictions imposed by apartheid, including the location and mobility controls imposed by Group Areas Act (GAA, 1950), led to the occupation of vacant land located between the edges of the N2 highway and the township. Joe Slovo's land was first occupied by people from the overcrowded Langa's hostels, designed for single male migrant workers but now increasingly home to families. People also moved from overcrowded backyard shacks built adjacent to older traditional houses in Langa. As one of my informants says:

> Before 1983 this site [Joe Slovo informal settlement] was a green field that the
> Xhosa community used for Initiation rituals, by 1994 it was already occupied by
> people in shacks.

These local outflows were followed by rapid immigration of work seekers from former rural 'homeland' areas in the Eastern Cape (Musemwa, 1993; De Satgé & Watson, 2018). Langa's relatively good location for transport, sources of jobs, and the city's Central Business

District made Joe Slovo one of the fastest-growing informal settlements in the city, especially between 1994 and 2004.

Figure 46. Joe Slovo aerial image in 2001, Cape Town
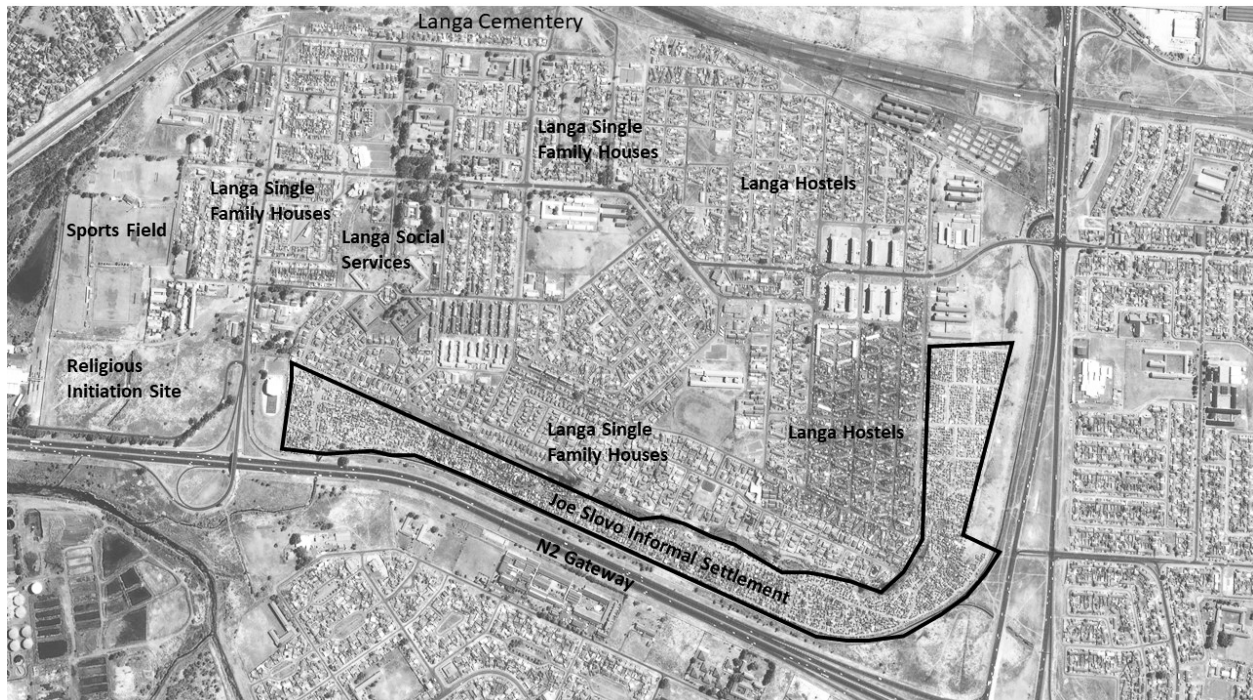
Source: Google Earth Satellite Image, annotated by author

To be the oldest and best-located township in the city meant a high value for the symbolic capital associated with its post-apartheid development, particularly within the challenge of implementing and operationalizing the new vision of BNG. In this context, the national government conceived the N2-Gateway (N2-G) as a pilot project of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan for the Development of Sustainable Human Settlements, informally known as Breaking New Ground (BNG), to address the housing needs of eleven informal settlements (an estimated 6.650 households) adjacent to the N2 Highway, the primary connection between Cape Town's international airport and the CBD.

Operationally, The N2 Gateway was launched as a joint initiative of three spheres of government (National, Western Cape Province and the City of Cape Town) known as the 'M3' technical committee to work in Langa and other townships along the N2 Highway. It had initially intended to deliver 25,000 houses, enabling the urbanization of six slums along with one of Cape Town's major roads that connect the CBD with the international airport. In 2004, newly appointed Minister of Housing Lindiwe Sisulu announced a new government target: eradicating informal settlements in South Africa by 2014. The new housing policy BNG focused on developing integrated human settlements rather than delivering housing units. Joe Slovo redevelopment was conceived as the pilot experience of the aforementioned N2-Gateway housing mega-project to operationalize the BNG's new goals. The Joe Slovo informal settlement in Langa, which had grown exponentially since the early 1990s, was selected as the flagship for the BNG policy vision to provide housing on well-located land. The N2 Gateway aimed to

'eradicate' Joe Slovo informal settlement and replace it with a mix of affordable rental and ownership housing units in different sizes and configurations. According to the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (2009), 4,500 new units were planned for the Joe Slovo area. The Housing Development Agency (HDA) website still describes the project as follows:

> A national government-led priority, the N2 Gateway is intended to address historic and endemic problems associated with rapid urbanisation, poverty and homelessness in the area. Although the project began in 2005, it was formally handed over to the HDA when the agency was established four years later. Like Zanemvula [housing project in the Eastern Cape], the HDA acquired some the project's problematic legacy along with it, and has managed these challenges through similar measures: improved communications, increased institutional ties and stronger project management capabilities […] The commitment of all parties to building human settlements that promote human dignity, and creating healthy and cohesive communities has been identified as vital to the success of the project.

From a sponsor's perspective, the 'N2 Gateway' project had achieved great success, even during the first phases when residents were not a policy target. The project experienced a high demand for housing: 400,000 families expressed an interest in the 22,000 total available units. Although it was initially conceived as a project for low-income groups, high demand across all income brackets has ultimately driven low-income families out of the policy target. However, phases I and II did not answer the affordability challenges facing the low-income families that lived in the Joe Slovo settlement. Critiques highlight that N2-G was designed to position Cape Town as a world-class city rather than a genuine effort to improve the living conditions of poor populations. The democratic transition represented not only the end of Apartheid policy but also the re-establishment of South African cities on the international scene (Wilkinson, 2000). Cape Town's integration into the global economy presented, for both the local private and public sectors, an opportunity to acquire a "global status." In the run-up to international events, South African cities adopted beautification measures that reduced the visibility of informal settlements near airports, stadiums, or major roads (Newton 2009, Steinbrink et al., 2011). This reduced visibility is a prime manifestation of the design-politics politics of the site, exposing who was included and who was not included into the global city image. This goal started to be operationalized through the city's unsuccessful bid in 1996 to host the 2004 Olympic Games and was more fully realized through hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2010 and winning the 2014's World Design Capital Award (Newton, 2009). The government's anxiety to implement the new housing model clashed with the need to "beautify" the surrounding slums of the N2-Gateway (Charlton and Kihato, 2015). A Cape Town City Government official, who was involved with the design and implementation of JS-1 commented:

> When BNG was published, the politicians urged planners and architects to demonstrate that they could implement the ideals they had been claiming for so long. Joe Slovo emerged as an urgency to demonstrate that the new housing model was possible. We also had to build Joe Slovo as fast as possible because of the FIFA- World Cup event. Thus, the Minister told us that the project had to be finished in eighteen months.

In this context, the housing megaproject was shadowed by intense controversy and long-running conflicts that I will develop in the second part of this chapter, as they transpire within the implementation of the Joe Slovo informal settlement redevelopment.

Discussion

The politics of housing in South Africa illustrated during the first fifteen post-Apartheid years has been most thoroughly studied by Marie Huchzermeyer (2010), who analyzes policy approaches to informal settlements within the ministerial politics of the national government. She exposes the contrast between housing policy and housing politics, or what Pithouse (2009) refers to as "progressive policy without progressive politics," suggesting that since 2004, the dominant politics of housing in South Africa has pushed for direct efforts to eradicate informal settlements, through eviction and forced relocation as an outcome of the centralized and simplistic policy. As South Africa reaches almost thirty years of democracy, the contradictions and mismatches between urban policy narrative and actions taken are evident. It is possible to affirm that "the most admirable constitution in the history of the world," as Harvard law scholar Cass Sunstein (2001) once characterized it, has not significantly changed the socio-spatial realities created by apartheid. Although South Africa's income-based poverty levels have fallen in the aggregate since 1994, they persist higher for the Black African population. The share of top-income decile has increased since 1994 at the expense of all the other deciles, especially the lowest, which has at the time of the last census report (2011) a more significant share of the population and a smaller share of income than in 1996.[12] Poverty in urban areas has also increased by 23% from 1996 to 2011 (Leibbrandt et al., 2011). Black African and Coloured townships are still as racially segregated, and their residents live in overcrowded living conditions that are under-served by transportation and infrastructure (Huchzermeyer and Misselwitz, 2016; Turok, 2015).

The political economy of housing exacerbates this scenario since it has operated as institutionalized mechanisms for creating residential segregation by two main factors. On the one hand, the likelihood of a neighborhood to receive housing developments is driven by the fact that politically vulnerable populations receive a disproportionate share of undesirable land uses, which are perceived as a factor of real-estate depreciation (Quillian, 2012). On the other hand, given the scarcity of affordable housing, those who offer this kind of development have the 'upper hand' when choosing where to build the units. Thus, projects are located according to developers' preferences, usually related to cheap land, without necessarily responding to the needs of the beneficiaries (Buckley et al., 2016; Turok, 2016). This logic is exacerbated by the singularities of the South African cities and the spatial legacy of apartheid. Its anomalous density patterns –one that has a positive slope –are a liability for the poor since, for a city with a positive gradient, the median commuting distance is always longer (Bertaud, 2004; Wainer, 2015).

There is also significant qualitative literature that argues that improvements in non-monetary well-being, such as RDP formal housing, did not affect de-racialization and that the post-apartheid democratic urban policy perpetuated the spatial status-quo discriminating the historically disadvantaged (Charlton and Kihato, 2006; Huchzermeyer, 2014; Newton and

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12 The cumulative share of income of the first five deciles decreased from 8.32% in 1993 to 7.79% in 2011, with drops on real incomes as well (Leibbrandt, Woolard and Fint, 2011)

Schuermans, 2013; Pieterse, 2009). The BNG reframed the national housing policy of 2004, created after eight years of the RDP Program and strong criticisms from academics, beneficiaries, and technicians. Lemanski (2009) explains that the national housing subsidy scheme has failed to meet demand because of the persistent quantitative backlogs and the low quality of the housing that the public sector delivers. According to the author, although backyard shacks pre-date the subsidy system, the characteristics of the housing policy itself create a new supply of backyard space because the beneficiaries are cash-poor. Moreover, Lemanski argues that South Africa's informal backyard dwellings are a by-product of formal housing policies, strengthening the social and racial segregation created by apartheid.

Consequently, post-apartheid housing policy has had the unintended consequence of deepening spatial divides, and South African cities remain beacons of racialized inequality (Pieterse, 2006 and 2012). As Mfaniseni F. Sighlongoyane (2015) points out, planning in the post-apartheid era has been a colossal disappointment. It has not dealt with the complexity of two main challenges: overcoming inherited spatial structures and managing the rapid population growth. The housing backlog, which was about 1.5 million in 1994, has increased to 2.1 million in 2013 as the population has grown at a faster rate than urbanization did (Brand and Cohen, 2013). The total housing backlog across the country is estimated at 2.6 million units, according to Ms. Sisulu, Minister for Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation on the occasion of the Debate on the Human Settlements Budget Vote in the National Assembly of July 2020. Regardless of the provision of heavily subsidized housing units at the cost of about $30 billion, there is now a more extensive backlog of those seeking housing assistance than there was when the RDP program began (Bradlow, Bolnick, and Shearing, 2011). According to a 2014 report of the Human Sciences Research Council, the estimated housing backlog in Cape Town is between 360,000 and 400,000 houses and growing at a rate of 16,000–18,000 units per year. As a result, it is not surprising that the most recent National Development Plan (2014) identified the upgrading of informal settlements –previously almost inexistent-- as being the country's foremost infrastructure priority. This evidence sounds important since the RDP housing model is declining in completion rates, fewer transfers of title deeds, and increasing costs, but the government is looking for new ways to accelerate delivery rather than questioning the model itself (Turok 2016). In December 2016, Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini presented the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP) "Vision 2030," which includes the delivery of another six million houses and housing subsidies by 2019. However, between 2015 and 2018 the government could only deliver just under 580,000 homes. Ultimately, the country was involved in the revision of the National Development Plan 2030. It is still to be seen how it will influence the design of the new national urban agenda and third-generation housing policy.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The N2 scheme established that the implementation of the project was the primary responsibility of the City in alignment with a broader national aspiration: ANC's political goal to demonstrate the national and local government's capacity for housing delivery. The minister set as political goal to plan and construct the first units within eighteen months and urged architects to design and build it as soon as possible to demonstrate that the new housing model was feasible. Although the implementation was in the City's hands, the Minister of Housing Sisulu assumed a central role in the conceptualization and direction of the N2 Gateway, in particular, in its design and initial implementation of the first phases. In preparation for her 2005 budget

speech, much emphasis on the N2 first phase was placed on ensuring 'visible progress' as part of the "marketing and branding of the Joe Slovo site" (De Satgé & Watson, 2018). Many interviewees were highly critical of the Minister's approach, particularly her lack of interest in creating an inclusive project and instead championing Joe Slovo redevelopment as her political success. The Minister explicitly excluded the community's involvement in the start-up phases and assumed a direct engagement with the design requiring layout changes. As the N2 Gateway process unfolded, she even issued instructions to remove officials from project teams to retain close personal control over the development (COHRE, 2009; De Satgé & Watson, 2018). This political determination led planners and architects to overlook the BNG's principles about participatory consultation and inclusive housing and focus on fast-track delivery. As I will demonstrate further in this chapter, architecture and urban design operated as a key mechanism to legitimize the contradictions between the BNG normative goals and what got implemented in JS under such political urgency. For example, the buildings' maximum densities justified both "inevitable" massive relocation of the original residents to remote locations without providing those families a proper housing solution. The construction of mid-height apartments rather than single-family homes claimed to achieve higher population densities; however, these buildings were not dense enough to allocate all the people previously living in the same site in informal shacks.

Figure 47. Joe Slovo Phased redevelopment stages until 2020
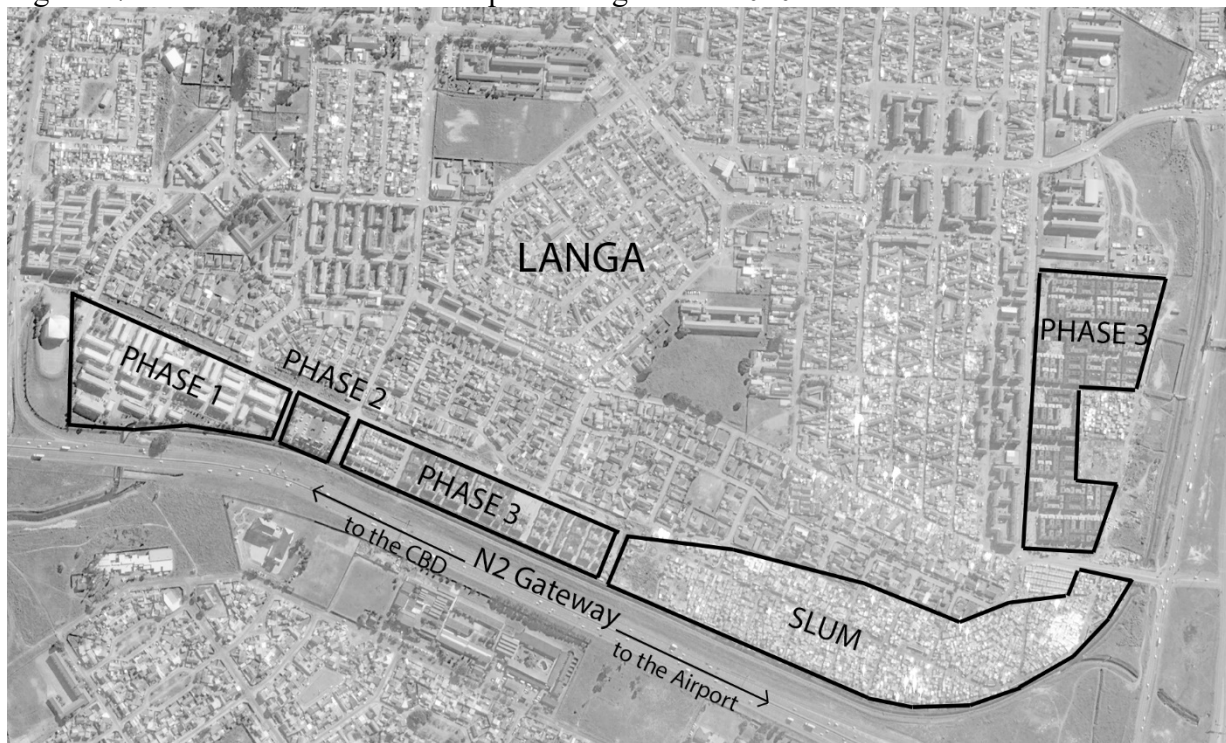
Source: Google Earth Satellite Image, annotated by author

Figure 48. Aerial Image of Joe Slovo Housing Redevelopment, including JS-1, JS-2, JS-3

Source: Getty Images

Figure 49. Timeline and Actors intervening in Joe Slovo 2004- Present
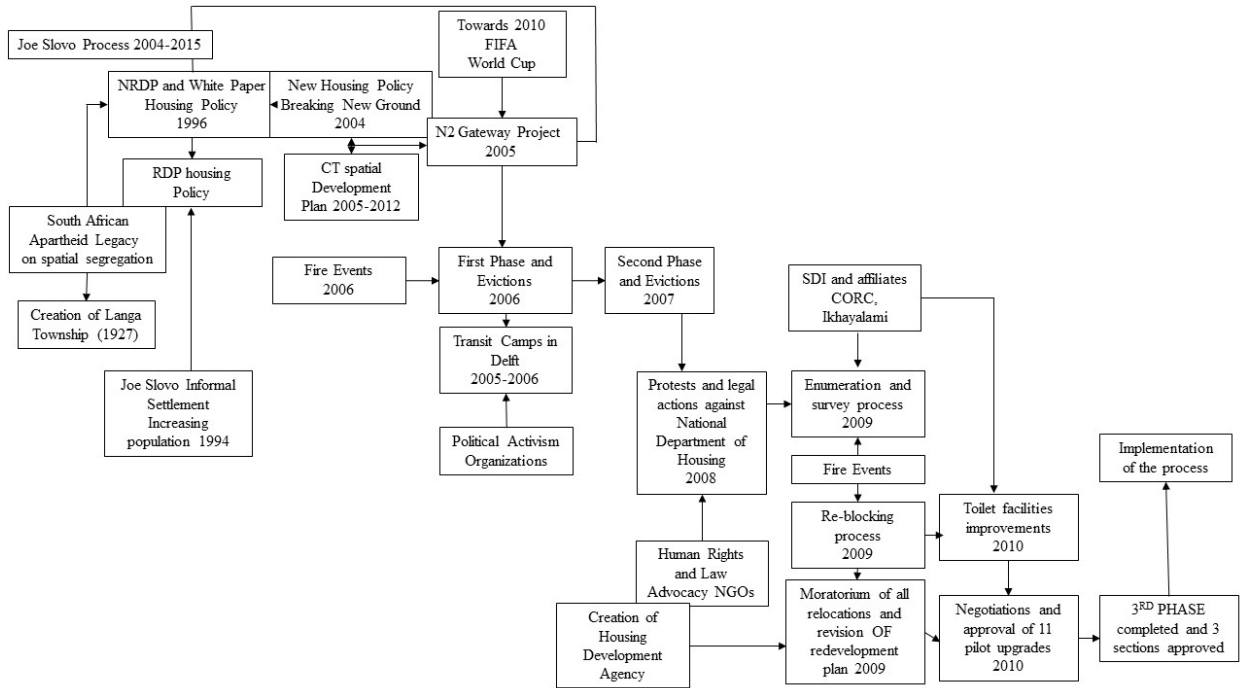
Source: prepared by the author.

This section analyzes the multiple phases of the redevelopment and the various actors that operationalized different political objectives for the Joe Slovo housing needs. It explores the details of a long, complex process that included massive protests between 2005 and 2007, a Supreme Court trial between 2007 and 2010, institutional reforms of the housing sector in 2009, the re-design of the master plan between 2010 and 2011, and the development of innovative bottom-up design strategies between 2007 and 2011. The analysis is structured chronologically, according to the evolution of the Joe Slovo housing redevelopment, focusing on how different actors (the state, the private sector, the community) deployed spatial practices to take control over the project.

Phase 1 (2004-2006): top-down urban design for social exclusion

The construction of N2 / Joe Slovo redevelopment Phase 1—a 705-unit housing complex of apartment buildings for affordable rent— was launched in March of 2005. The official narrative tells us that right before the first phase (JS-1) was due to be implemented in January 2005, a major fire broke out in the slum, leaving about 3,000 destroyed shacks and 12,000 people homeless (Bolnick, 2009; COHRE, 2009).

Figure 50. Joe Slovo Phase 1 in previously informal settlement and then cleared area (2007). On the right remaining cleared area waiting for Phase 2

Source: Google Earth Satellite Image, annotated by author

Langa's good location for transport, sources of jobs, and the city's Central Business District created both problems and opportunities. Rapid densification in the precarious low-lying built environment contributed to several disaster risks, including many fires (2004, 2006, 2008, 2009) that killed many people and burned hundreds of shacks. These fires were not only a

product of the built environment conditions but of the rising tension between those living in the informal settlement, residents of Langa houses, and backyarders of Langa's hostels. The Ukuvuka Operation Firestop Campaign, a partnership set up to address fires in the Cape Peninsula, provides evidence on the probable causes of several fires in Joe Slovo. The report (2007) found that social tension between different sectors of Joe Slovo and Langa residents competing for land might have led to at least one fire.

The unofficial narrative that emerged during my interviews with government officials and residents reveals that the Western Cape and the City governments started removing people even before the fire because they could not deal with the Minister's political mandate of re-developing JS-1 in only one year and a half through in-situ upgrading. Regardless of their position and role in the Joe Slovo redevelopment, more than half of the officers' interviews suggested that this and following fire events may have been intentional--an excuse to evict families from Joe Slovo and accelerate the project's implementation. Responses to the fire event reveal a hidden and complex relationship between the urgent political agenda of the government, the will to improve the housing conditions of the informal settlement, and the temptation to view disaster as an opportunity. What transpires from divergent narratives about the fire event is that the fragility of the built environment and its consequent fire disasters played a vital role in the government's approval of the first enforced relocations. This overlap of events and intentions led to the eviction of hundreds of families to what were supposed to be Temporary Relocation Areas (TRA) in Delft, about 20 km away from Joe Slovo. As a former Cape Town City Government policymaker of Phase 1 point out:

> They [the City government] were evicting people because it was impossible to complete the housing re-development in less than two years while families were still living there. At the beginning, the government didn't know what to do with the evictions, the situation was unsustainable… so they decided to create the TRAs.

The socio-economic and environmental vulnerability exponentially reinforced a situation of unsafe tenure for the original residents. Delft TRA areas had no access to the train, the central public transportation system for families living in Joe Slovo. Since the government considered the TRAs as temporary solutions, resettled dwellers were initially given the prospect of returning. TRAs were designed as refugee camps, resembling the aesthetics of temporary shelter rather than permanent housing provisions. Shelters were built with light wood structures and metal-sheet walls without floors, piped water, and sanitation sewage. No effort was made to level the site or pave the streets. Public lighting was also designed to be short-lived, dependent on precarious electrical service. Designers did not consider including shops or social infrastructures, such as schools and parks. Beyond the precarity of the built environment, the government did not provide any additional solution regarding transport to jobs and schools nor any economic hardship compensation. The economics of living in Delft--far from the city and transport--restricted the livelihoods opportunities and advantages of living that they had enjoyed in Langa: relative affordability of train transport, proximity to affluent areas such as Pinelands where there is a demand for domestic work, proximity to the industrial park, and access to the Langa's facilities such as schools, health centers, cultural centers, and commerce.
Most importantly, the design of the TRAs also facilitated surveillance: the site was fenced, and the streets' grid was extremely homogeneous and disconnected from the surroundings, reinforcing the isolation from other areas in Delft. To a certain extent, the national government

conceived the TRA of Delft as a planned informality, a precarious settlement designed by the State. According to the residents, this isolation made the TRA an unsafe place, where the lack of economic opportunities leads to crime and gangs' territorial control. Even today, residents threatened with displacement fear being relocated to Delft.

Due to the lack of financial capacity, most relocated families could not return to the N2-Gateway area, so they had to establish themselves in Delft permanently. The JS-1 apartment units were designed for an upper-income sector capable of affording a subsidized rent--and not for the very poor, displaced families previously living in the informal settlement. These families relied on informal livelihoods that were also disrupted by the displacement to Delft. The train organized commuting and the families' networks of informal work, connection, and territorial knowledge about daily job opportunities. As a result, the government displaced Joe Slovo families and developed a new slum around the TRAs' shacks, now disconnected from livelihood opportunities (Newton, 2009; Swart and Jurd, 2012). The permanence of the TRAs exposed the mismatch between the normative, development post-apartheid agendas of land and housing, which aimed to address issues of redistribution and social justice, and the actual outcomes of the policy, which built a similar urban landscape of poverty to that created by the previous authoritarian regime. The informal growth within the TRAs was not a concern for the government because, in contrast to Joe Slovo, these areas were not visible from the N2-Gateway.

Figure 51. Routes and distances between JS-1, TRAs in Delft and job sources in Cape Town
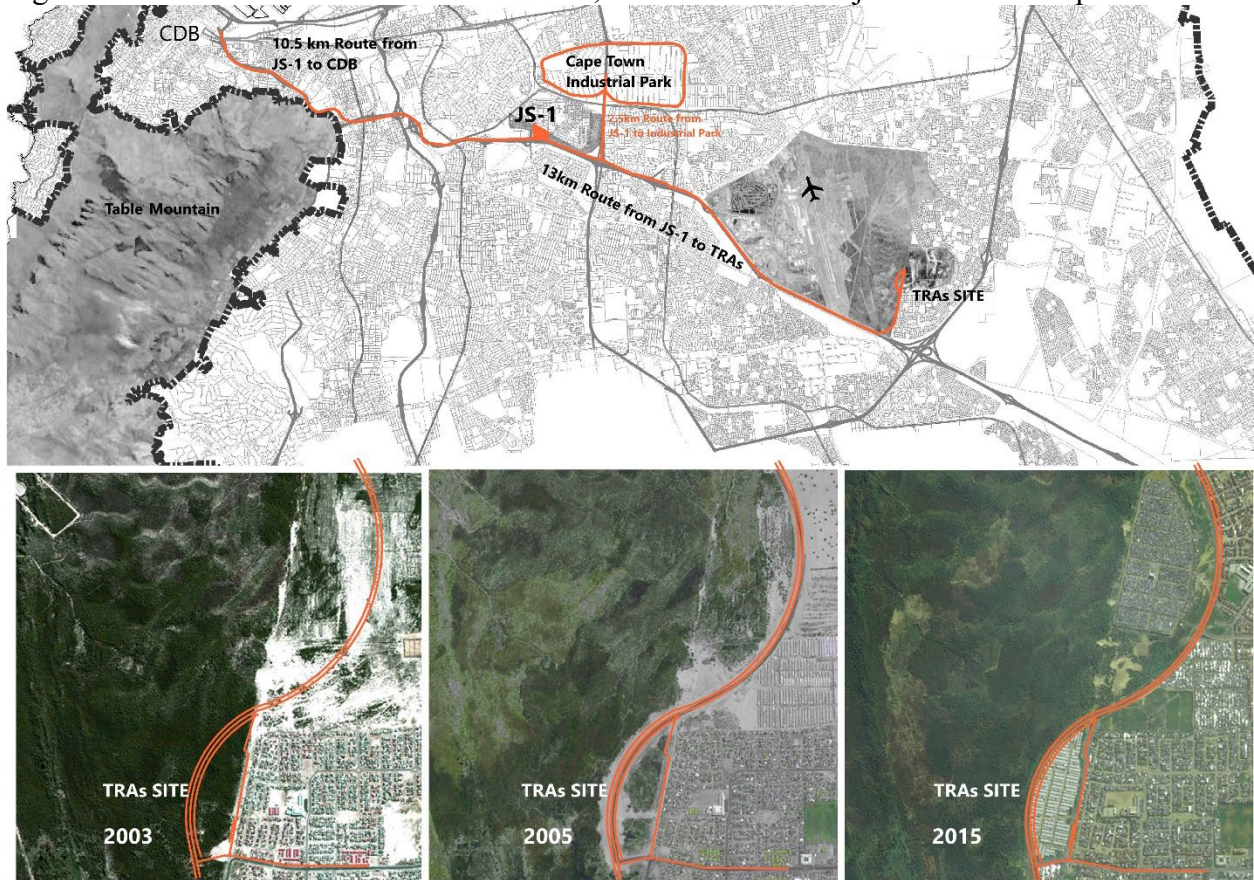
Figure 52. Analysis of TRAs' built environment in Delft

Backyard shacks, fences, livestock sheds

Government provided chemical baths instead of water and sanitation infrastructures

Shelters were built with light wood structures and corrugated metal-lit walls without floors, piped water and sanitation sewage.

The site was fenced, and the streets' grid was extremely homogenous

Source: graphics by the author, images by Anti Eviction Campaign

Community leaders and NGO officers argue that JS-1 was intentionally designed --in architectural and financial terms-- to displace people from their well-located land. Evidence of this intention is reflected in how officials and designers excluded the informal residents from participating in any decision-making process. In the hurriedness to deliver JS-1 of the N2 Gateway, political principals deemed that further consultation and engagement with Langa residents was unnecessary. The lack of interest in knowing the community's characteristics and desires is also demonstrated by a flawed baseline enumeration survey that was supposed to provide profiles of between 12,000 and 16,000 households affected by the N2 Gateway (De Satgé and Watson, 2018). A steering committee created to monitor the City's actions determined that this enumeration report could not be reconciled with the data received and could not serve as a beneficiary list to extrapolate housing typologies and affordability levels and estimate the number of units to methodological errors.

Consequently, without a census and a consultation, there was not enough awareness about the opportunities and challenges of a rental scheme for these families. A community counselor who lived in the informal settlement described how the promise of prioritizing the fire victims for the rental flats in JS-1 suddenly changed to a matter of lack of affordability. Instead of delivering the apartments to the displaced families in the Delft TRA, most units there were finally delivered to other Langa and surrounding residents--mostly backyarders of Langa Hotels and neighboring townships of Bonteheuwel and Bokmakierie. These residents were also living in informal settlements or backyards, waiting for a housing solution for decades. As a tenant describes the process:

> In 1994 when the apartheid government finished, I applied for the flats, in a
> waiting list. I applied at a police station was near here in Langa. Before, I lived
> like many families in a backyard. The post-apartheid government gave us a Red

Card, meaning that we already were in a housing waiting list. And we had waited for ten years.

The migration of new residents into the apartments created significant tension between those already living in Joe Slovo and the new incoming residents. This situation overlapped with pre-existing tensions between different sectors and groups in Langa, a reason why the City decided to create a buffer area between Langa, Phase-1 Flats, and the remaining informal settlements. JSA architects argued that the design of JS-1 "is organised around a system of public spaces that link the development into the existing built fabric of Langa. The public spaces are therefore purposefully located at the edges of the site rather than within to become focal points for the broader area."13 However, the public spaces worked as a buffer area rather than a space for integration between different community groups. With time, the buffer area was reinforced by a wall dividing the two areas, another design-politics manifestation. The government tried to solve the tensions and conflicts by physically diving the areas different sectors that should not interact each other.

Figure 53. Fenced wall dividing Langa from the Joe Slovo 1, 2 and 3 phases

Source: Laura Wainer

Later on, fencing and walling became a common practice to avoid social contact between different areas in the Joe Slovo, diving Phase 1 from Phase 2, and new developments of Phase 3 from Langa. These practices marked how the area's inhabitants use public space outside the fences. Instead of spaces for socialization among residents, the "shared" spaces are merely places of passage, transitional spaces where boundaries and differences are emphasized rather than commonalities. These "solutions" to social tension and conflict are accepted - and even welcomed - by residents. According to De Satgé and Watson (2018), Langa residents desire to be

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13 JSA architects website http://jsa-architects.co.za/portfolio/joe-slovo-1/

separate from Joe Slovo residents. In my interviews, Phase 2 residents agree with being isolated from Phase 1 and 3, and Phase 1 residents do not want to "blend in" with Phase 3 residents. Walls and fences as practices of social segregation have been analyzed as devices of class differentiation by authors such as Teresa Caldeira (2000) and Nora Libertun (2006). In Latin America, gated communities seek to separate the rich from the poor. Private fencing solutions show the approach to urban space by the elites, who, in recent decades, have replaced traditional public spaces with privatized spaces for collective uses (Caldeira, 2000; Libertun, 2006). However, the case of Joe Slovo demonstrates that the practices of enclosure and walling transcend the class question and are also embedded in a multiplicity of social identities linked to the origin of populations, seniority in a given neighborhood, and the same material space that defines the political interests of different groups. Those who live in the Langa hotels, the residents of the informal settlements, the tenants of the Phase 1 apartments represent political communities that emerged from the demands resulting from unaddressed urban and housing rights.

Figure 54. Fences separating Joe Slovo Phase-1 apartment buildings and Joe Slovo Phase-2 houses.

Source: Laura Wainer

In addition to exclusion created by the TRAs displacement and the rental unaffordability, symbolical exclusion became a central part of the project. As a community leader poses it, "It is very clear that, in Joe Slovo, the government 'shaped' the participation of the community by limiting it rather than supporting it." This exclusion took a particular morphology. JS-1 presented remarkable physical similarities to the architecture developed under apartheid. The project followed a rigid, modernist architecture that served the narrative of efficiency-based design. Architects proposed simple geometries for four-story buildings ordered in straight, parallel rows to maximize land use and, therefore, include as many families as possible in the

small, compact apartments, similar to those built by the Apartheid regime in Langa. For the first time since 1994, mid-density buildings replaced the typical South African public housing typology of single-family units as well as the typical township house created by the apartheid government, such as in Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, and Imizamo Yethu townships in Cape Town metro area.

Figure 55. Apartheid housing (left) and RDP Housing (right)

Source: Getty Images

Indeed, JS-1 was perceived as the example of higher density housing in the country and published in renowned architecture magazines such as Architecture, the South African Institute of Architects journal. As a result, the Ministry of Housing alleged that some relocation was "unavoidable" because not all of the resettled slum dwellers "fit" in the new, formal neighborhood, even if the government was highly committed to changing the density patterns of public housing. However, as a community leader points out, the total net population density of Phase-1 was significantly less than the density of the slum. Community leaders charged that the Ministry's arguments were unfounded because, by 2004, nobody knew in detail how many people lived in the Joe Slovo informal settlement. The government did not have accurate demographic statistics or a "real" intention to keep the original residents in the area. There could also be an incentive to understate the population, as a way to suggest that a higher percentage of the total were able to return. As a community leader recalls:

> During those days [2004/2005], the government said that there was not enough time to open-up the discussions about the design of the project. That was an excuse, so they could avoid recognizing how little they knew about the slum. For example, they claimed that the Joe Slovo was inhabited by 20,000 people but we all knew that quantity was intentionally overrated, so they could relocate the population out.

Figure 56. Architecture Magazine cover showcasing JS-1 and Langa's Hotel of apartheid era
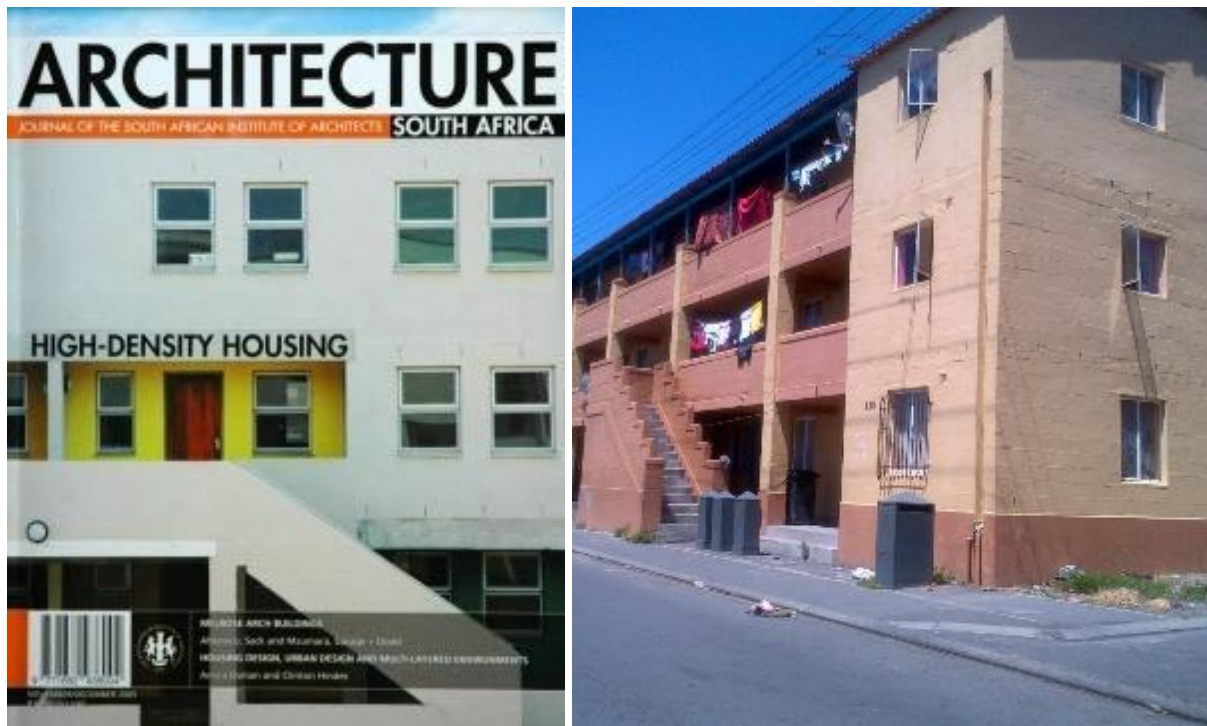
Sources: Autors's picture and Archives at the University of Cape Town

The official drawings of the master plan reflected the lack of knowledge about the slum's living conditions and its population: The Joe Slovo area is represented in the plans by a blank space while the Langa surroundings are drawn in full detail. There is no single reference to the pre-existing conditions of Joe Slovo, such as population data, information about the quality of the built environment, streets, or urban morphology. This intentional blank space served the modernist ideal of *tabula rasa*, as slums were considered "shabby," messy, unhealthy, and places of social disorder and insurrection (Scott, 1999). Indeed, the tabula-rasa justified the need for a new radical beginning for the beautification purposes of the FIFA-World Cup event (Newton, 2009). For instance, the spatial arrangements of the buildings in parallel, identical row-blocks created an image or order that contrasted the dense and heterogeneous 'sights' of the slum.

Phase-1 exposes the ways in which modernism plays a significant role in reinforcing social distinctions in space, exposing the political goals of monopolistic urban governance as a mechanism of social engineering (Davis, 2014). When design embraced the state's monopoly on the decision-making over JS-1, it re-defined the territorial control over the informal settlement, privileging certain social groups in the design targeting, displacing informal dwellers to distant locations, and reinforcing the boundaries between the formal and the informal city. The government designed these modernist buildings as a way to eliminate and prevent "backyarding," an informal growth phenomenon that frequently occurred in RDP public housing at the time (Lemanski, 2009). The design description of JSA architects, the authors of Joe Slovo Phase-1, remarks the project's "focus on modern Urbanism" and "an Urban Design driven approach to develop sustainable human settlements" to "emphasizes the need for contextualization of urban development options in order to acknowledge specific community,

locational, accessibility to urban infrastructure and sustainability needs and realities within the urban context." [14] However, a JS-1 public officer claimed, the government delivered houses at the expense of family livelihoods. The one, two, and three-bedroom typologies did not consider the families' composition or the sources of their economic activities, but only their income levels. For example, the three typologies were designed to cover different levels of rent affordability rather than families' needs: "[if] you could pay more, you received a larger apartment, that is the way they distributed the houses," a community leader of JS-1 said. Flats, flat rentals ranged between ZAR$ 165 (us$28) and ZAR$ 200 (us$35) per month for small flats and ZAR690 (us$118) for larger units. As a consequence, the architects designed highly standardized units and assumed overcrowding conditions in advance. The architectural drawings of the apartments showed more than four persons sharing a single, minimum-sized room.

Figure 57. Joe Slovo's Original Phases in Official Documents, showcasing "Phase 2 to be determined"
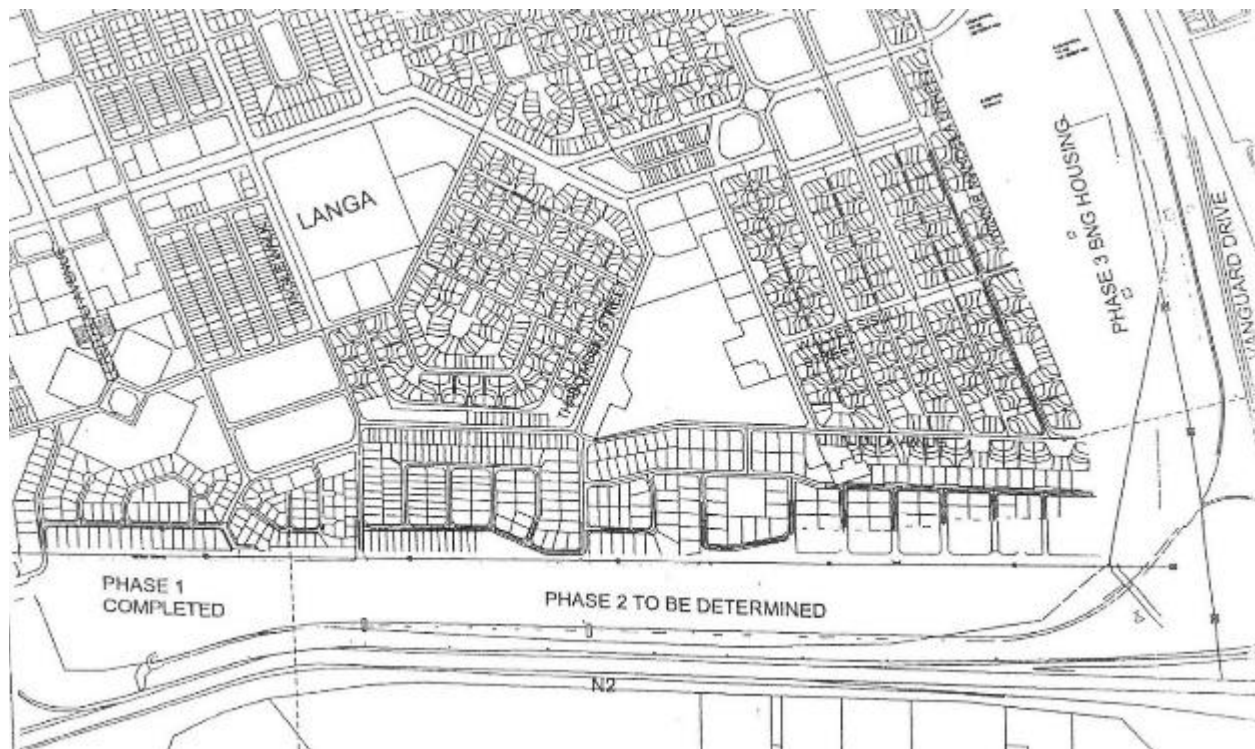
Source: graphics from Joe Slovo Demonstration Project, facilitated by Community Organization Resource Centre

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[14] JSA architects website http://jsa-architects.co.za/about/

Figure 58. One- and two-bedroom apartment units in Js-1 flats

outdoor walls contain an insulation air-space to improve the thermal inertia of the apartments

mily's bathroom access and terrace is through second bedroom

Dinning / kitchen area has no space for dinning table

bedrooms show beds for 3 and 4 people per room

Main entrance to apartments

Outdoor terrace facing communal space

Bathroom has appliances and prefab shower

Outdoors stairs to second and third floor

Source: author's drawings based on fieldwork observations

Public spaces also served to target future higher income levels rather than improve the existing community's quality of life: most of the unbuilt areas were designed as parking slots as if car-owner families would be the beneficiaries of JS-1. This rendering is a design-politics artifact, as well. It expresses graphically but not verbally a targeting of families with cars to live in the new housing rather the poor families living in the informal settlement. In their design memories, JSA architects argue that: "Being so well located close to amenities and public transport, no formal parking is catered for. Rather the intention is to promote public transport." Despite this decision, many families have cars and use sidewalks and other interstitial public spaces as parking slots. In this sense, public spaces also served to target income levels rather than to improve the community's quality of life: most of the unbuilt areas were designed as parking slots, as if car-owner families would be the beneficiaries of JS-1.

Figure 59. JS-1 flats layout with communal space, community hall and perking area
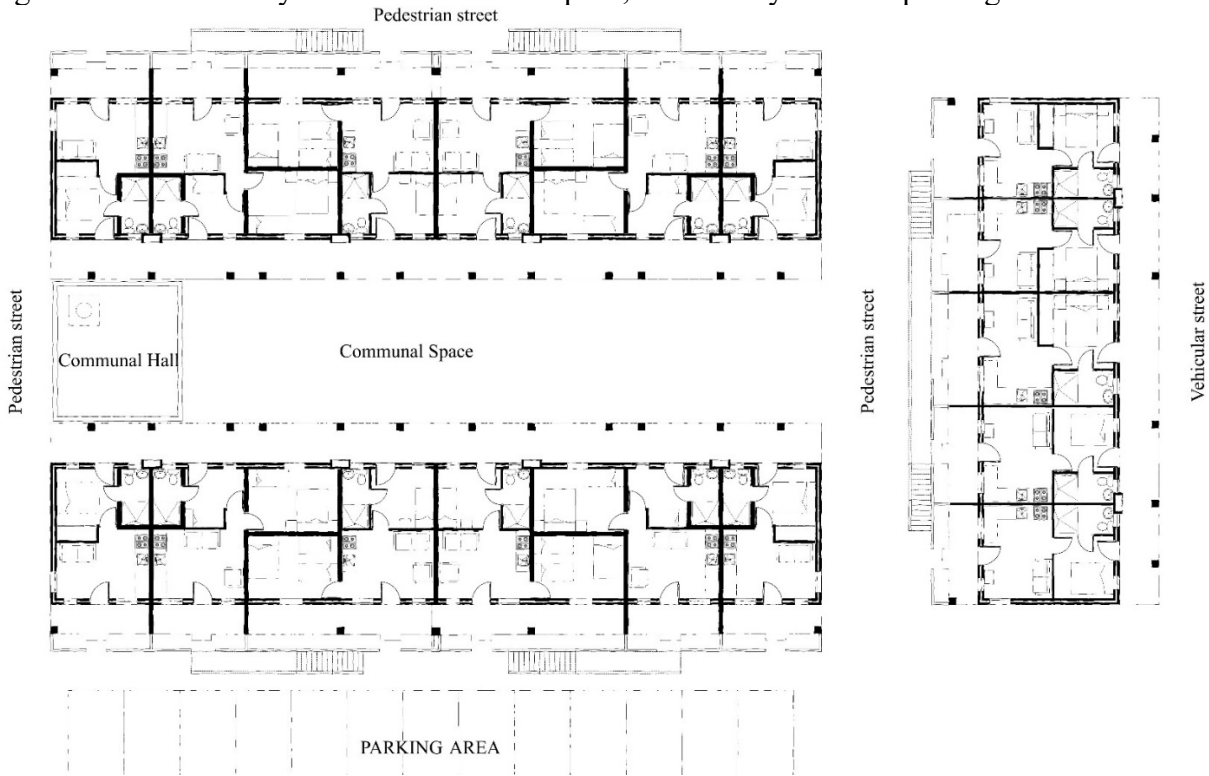
Source: author's drawings based on fieldwork observations

Figure 60. Parking area in Joe Slovo Phase 1 flats and vehicular street

Source: Laura Wainer

When asked about the rationality of this kind of design intervention, town planners I interviewed marked that they "did what they could" given the expertise they had and the need to fit high-density flats sustainably, and the political urgency of the national government. In other words, the "design intelligentsia" of this modernist project was driven by the mechanical repetition of a pre-existent model in a rush to accomplish the Minister's urgent goal rather than to engage a

particular ideological purpose behind it. This modus operandi contradicted the existing know-how of city officials and their long commitment to working in the informal settlement prior to the N2 Gateway project. From an early stage, officials responsible for project management became increasingly concerned about how this political impetus to 'deliver' was overwhelming planning and feasibility concerns, leading to a predestined failure (De Satgé & Watson, 2018).

Figure 61. Comparison between Langa's Apartheid Hostels and "Native Housing high-rise" 1950-1980 (left) and Joe Slovo Phase-1 BNG Housing 2004-2006 (right)
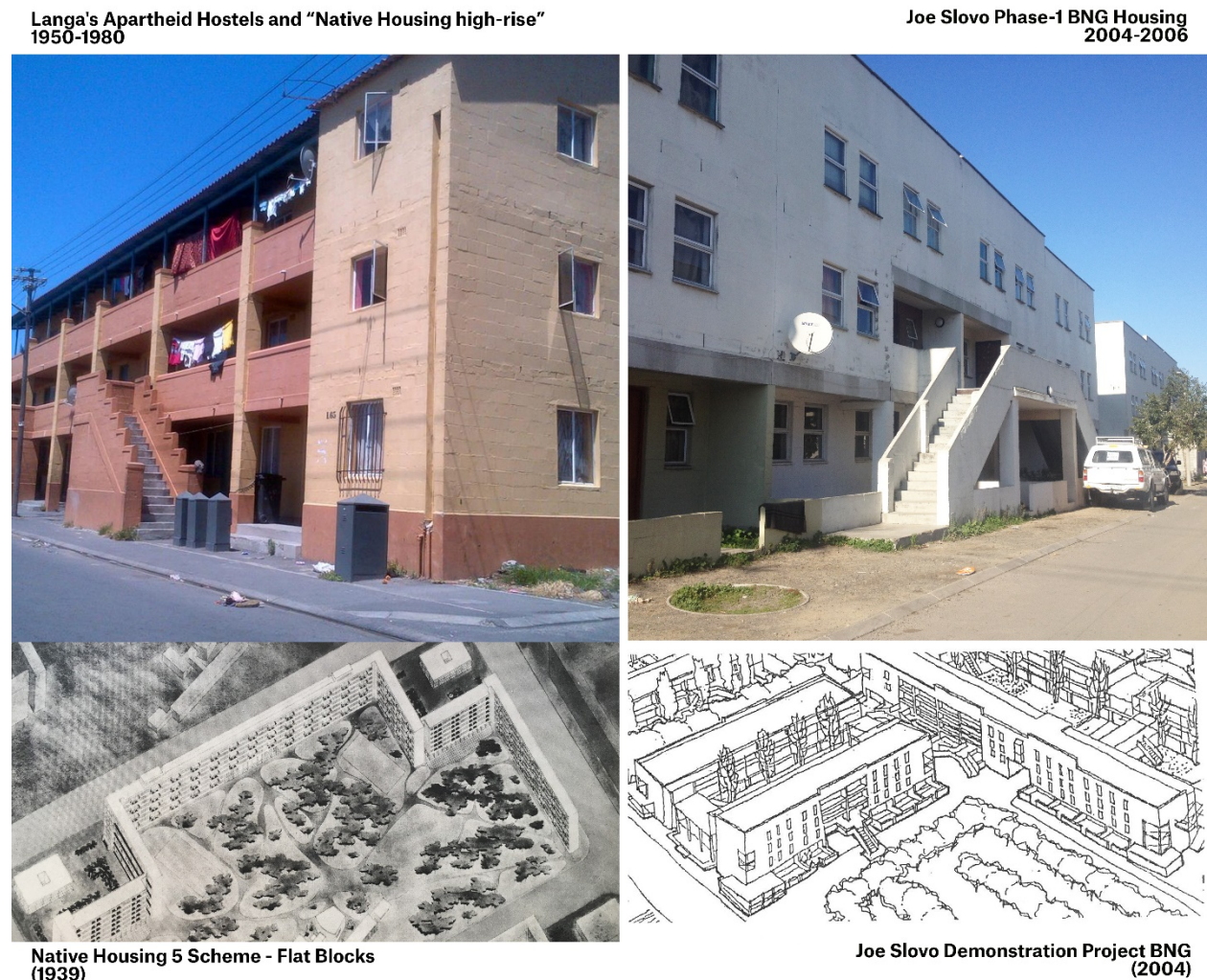
Source: pictures by the author, graphics from Joe Slovo Demonstration Project (2004); Connell, P. H et al. (1939) "Native Housing"

This failure was reinforced by the lack of an effective management system for the buildings. In South Africa, non-profit organizations named Social Housing Institutions (SHI) build, manage the rental stock, and oversee the allocation process of subsidized rental units by the government since 1997. However, no SHI was allocated or took responsibility of JS-1 which remained in the first years under the responsibility of the construction company. Without a transparent management system, the buildings suffered from decay early on. In 2010, the national

government noticed the buildings and public spaces of the flats and admitted that "There were structural defects and there was a lack of general maintenance" due to corruption at all governments levels, including allocation of construction to companies that did not have any capacity to deliver and contractors that "had taken advantage of government with shoddy workmanship and inferior materials."[15]

In this context, tenants must take the individual responsibility for fixing the buildings they do not own, often making trade-offs. As a flat's tenant poses it:

> The flats have many problems, they are not finished, the floor breaks, as well as the steps in the stairs. The main problem is that with the pipes of the water and sanitation. The public spaces get flooded with brown waters. That is a disaster. Still, nobody maintains, nobody supervised the works right after the construction either. We must fix the problems but many times we do not have enough money for those big problems. For example, I haven't used my shower tub for the last eight years, I do not take a shower there since then.

The living conditions experienced by the tenants motivated a rent boycott, a self-organized action to stop paying rent because "living conditions in JS-1 do not worth to pay the rent of these apartments." As they continue the boycott claims for building and infrastructure improvements, these organized tenants had meetings with city government representatives, who seem supportive of their situation but do not offer any clear solution. Consequently, tenants feel trapped between sustaining the boycott, which still exists today and represents a protest method and the only possible way to afford urgent repairs in the buildings, their lack of affordable option to move out to another formal market choice, and the lack of any feasible solution in the short-term future. As I mentioned before, most of Phase-1 tenants were backyarders at Langa's hostels and other neighboring townships. Although moving to JS-1 flats still represented renting out –rather than owning-- a property, it also meant –at least in theory-- a significant improvement of their living conditions. These expectations were spoiled in the short term due to the poor-quality conditions of the buildings and the inadequacy of the units to their lifestyles. As one of the leaders points out:

> The flats had problems since the beginning, but we did not have other option. We were finally independent [from backyarding], so we had to grab the opportunity. We don't want to have the apartments in this condition, but we feared that if we say no, the government will never give us another chance. Mayor [of Cape Town] Lile herself told us not to pay the rent but the government does not know what to do. They say to be unable to offer a response since these buildings should be demolished and built all over again.

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15 Minister of Human Settlements on his visit to N2 Gateway Project and other housing projects Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation 27 January 2010. Meeting Summary at https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/11147/

Figure 62. Comparison between how the project looked like before occupation (above) and ten years after occupation (below)

Source: (above) JSA architects, (below) Laura Wainer

Some experiences of physical informality began to emerge on the first floors of the apartments, but on a smaller scale than informalization processes such as backyarding often found in RDP housing programs in Cape Town. This smaller scale is probably due to the inertia and rigidity of the built environment in JS-1, particularly the rigid modernist morphology that does not allow for spatial transformation. The apartments have no land extensions of their own, the spaces are extremely cramped, and the appropriation of public space is exposed for all to see.

Figure 63. Expansions over terraces facing communal spaces; some are used as an extra room, others as workshops and retail
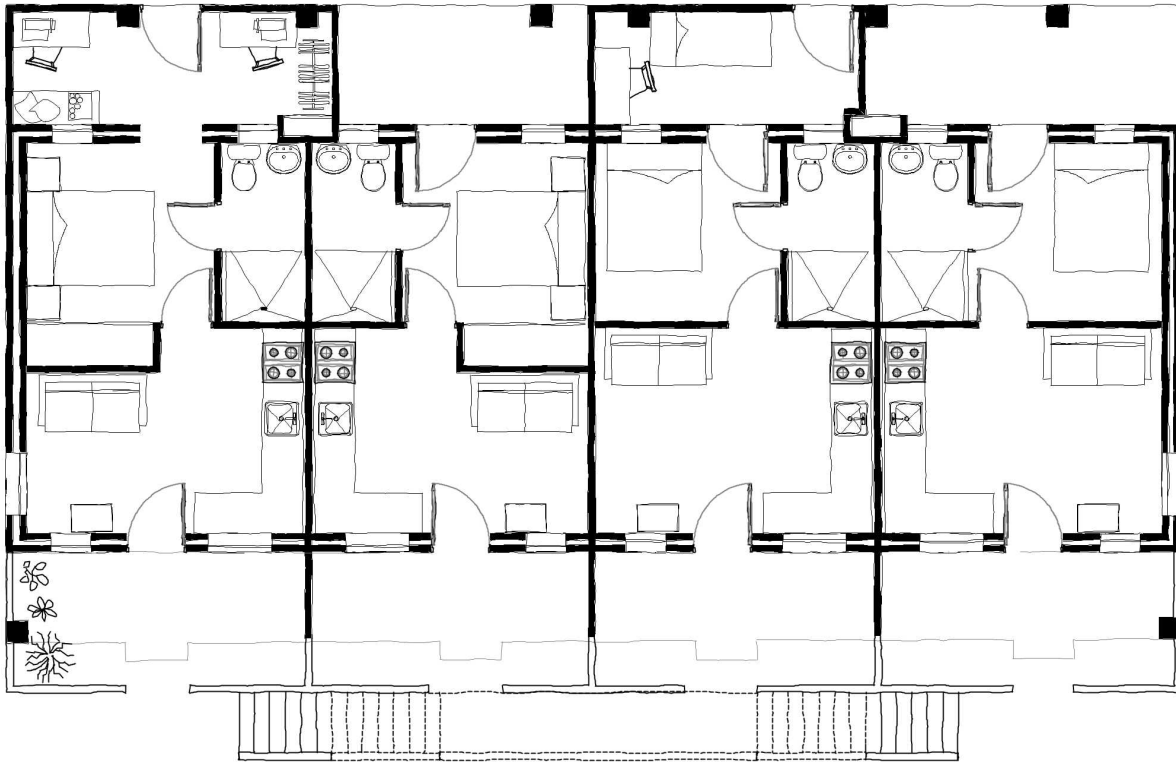
Source: author's drawings based on fieldwork observations

The idea of failure reigns in the JS-1 section. While there is no visible State intervention to improve living conditions, the informalization of the apartments slowly progresses and remains invisible in the rigid modernist architecture. First-floor residents expand their units into the corridors of public space, community halls (rooms built to provide community space) are taken over by families and converted into residences or abandoned. Water and sewage leaks in the apartments and public spaces mean that owners must convert toilets and use their neighbors' bathrooms. Other tenants have left these apartments for more convenient locations and have informally sublet their units. The rent boycott was quickly paralleled by the sub-letting of units, with many of the original occupiers acting as lessors, pocketing rent payments that they received. Informal renting appears prominent given Joe Slovo's rental benefits relative to the rest of the city. Without being a massive physical informalization, the institutional space is completely informalized, where there is no institution in charge of managing the buildings, the residents are organized under boycott status, and the city does not know what solution to offer in the face of the precarious housing conditions in which they live.

Phase-2 (2006-2008): mixed income design fragmenting the social fabric

Early in 2006, the ANC's main opposition party entrenched on the economic centre-right with mostly neoliberal policies --the Democratic Alliance-- took political control of the City. In a media statement, the new DA Mayor characterized the N2 Gateway as a "poisoned chalice" swamped in cost overruns and misallocation of flats in JS-1 (COHRE, 2009). This event significantly changed the political landscape of the N2 Gateway project: the national government, which remained ANC, dismantled the tripartite project steering committee and took away the implementation from the City's responsibility.

Figure 64. Joe Slovo Phase 2 in previously informal settlement and then cleared area (2007). On the right remaining cleared area waiting for Phase 3. On the left, completed Phase 1

Source: Google Earth Satellite Image, annotated by author

The Minister appointed Thubelisha Homes, a "Section 21" company, as an extension of the national government to manage the project. Section 21 of the Companies Act 61 of 1973 allows for a 'not-for-profit company' or 'association incorporated not for gain'. Section 21 companies resemble business-oriented (for profit) companies in their legal structure but do not share capital and cannot distribute shares or pay dividends to their members. Instead, they are 'limited by guarantee,' meaning that its members undertake to pay a stated amount to its creditors if the company fails.

Thubelisha had no institutional experience of working with informal settlements, managing social housing or construction projects at the scale of the N2 Gateway; however, it was set as the Project Manager, including institutional coordination, budgeting, programming, construction, and administration. In alignment with this political change, as the JS-1 was about to be finished, the national State decided to diversify the social target of the beneficiaries by incorporating a subsidized mortgage system for first-time homeowners. The goal for Phase 2 (JS-2) was to transform N2-Gateway into a more financially sustainable project and to create a mixed-income neighborhood by integrating middle-class families. About 1615 from the 21,300 dwelling units were allocated to rent control housing, while other "ownership" areas would financially balance the project. As the first action of a new, reviewed version of the N2 project,

Thubelisha Homes decided to go forward with a fast-track implementation of JS-2. The first action involved constructing 1000 free-standing houses with yards, not for rental but for a subsidized mortgage scheme in partnership with First National Bank (FNB). The Bank designed the mortgages for people earning above the RDP subsidy threshold. These houses were to cost between ZAR150,000 (US$ 21 205.16 at 2007 exchange rates) and R250,000 (US$ 35 341.93 at 2007), and the FNB released bonds available to people earning ZAR3,500–7,500 (US$ 494.79 - 1 060.26 at 2007 exchange rates) per month.

Figure 65. JS-2 pictures, showing the inner parking-green area

Source: pictures by the author

As Thubelisha based its financial scheme on a State-subsidized mortgage system, the houses had to be desirable market products for middle-income families in Cape Town. Developers faced two challenges. First, although JS-2 was well located, it was surrounded by slums and low-income houses, making the site less attractive for homebuyers. Second, they had to differentiate their product from Phase-1 houses, whose aesthetics expressed low-cost standardization and lack of identity since all the buildings looked the same and, most importantly, the architecture did not represent the symbolic aspirations of the emerging middle class. Thubelisha Homes proposed a radically different design: resembling a gated-community environment as a way to isolate JS-2 from the surroundings and their population in JS-1 and the informal settlement. The designers created a cloistered layout, with a unique entrance to the neighborhood, specially designed for car access so the residents would not be exposed to any social contact with the residents of JS-1 and the slum dwellers, another design-politics gesture. The single-family units faced the central yard, including parking and a "communal" --but private-- green area. To reinforce autonomy, JS-2 was gated with a perimeter fence. Some architectural features were forced to adapt the image of a single upscale house typology to an affordable housing unit. For instance, plots were of a minimal size, but developers still built single-family, detached houses, leading to inefficient use

of land and more expensive per-unit construction costs. Only forty-five houses got to be built in this initial pilot project.

Figure 66. Analysis of JS-2 Architecture and Urban Design
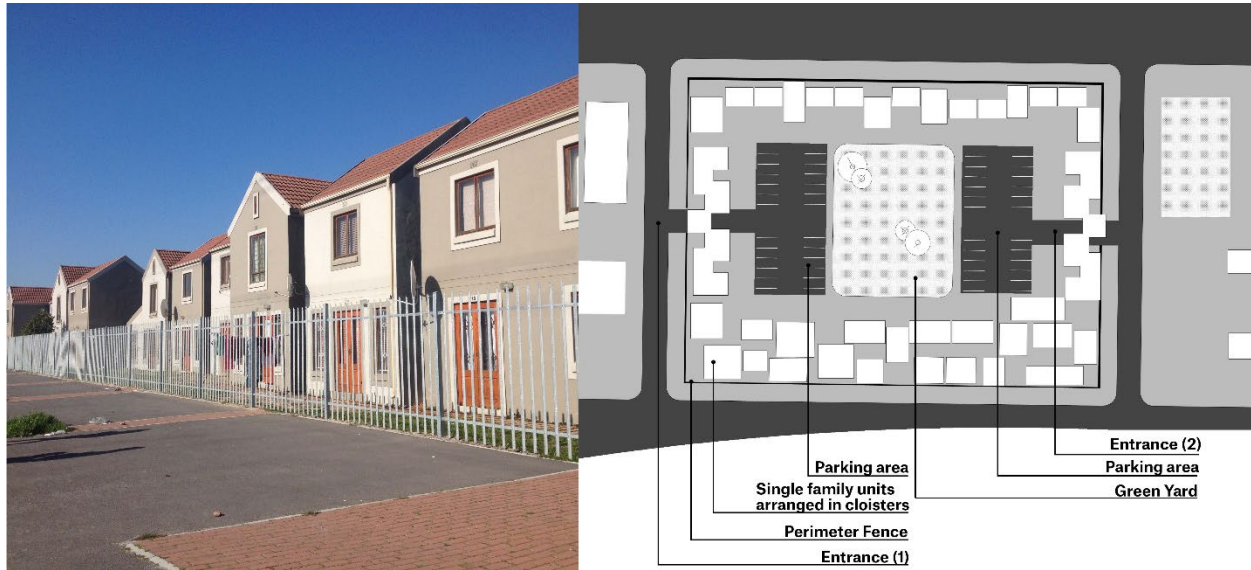
Source: graphics and images by the author. Satellite Images from Google Earth.

JS-2 exemplifies how inclusionary policy goals for mixed-income housing were operationalized as exclusionary practices. By delegating the design decisions and regulations to the financial sector, the state allowed the developer to set the social rules of the project. For example, in JS-2, only the residents control the main gate and thus decide who enters and who does not enter their small, gated community. As a result, JS-1 and JS-2 not only evicted original residents from their land; they also restricted the public areas to which the slum dwellers had access in the new project. This total control over the people's destiny, practiced through exclusionary housing design, became an unsustainable political situation in the democratic context of the post-Apartheid city, leading to several civil protests. As a Political Activist of the Anti-eviction Campaign highlights about the Phase-1 and Phase-2 experiences:

> The government planned the evictions so they could carry their 'Integrated Development Plans'. That is to say, different colors (races), different income levels... But, under the excuse of a mixed income neighborhood, they wanted to 'clean' out the N2 from poor people. They moved rich people to poor areas and displaced the poorest to Delft. The FNB was supposed to build 200 houses, but they only got to build 35 because the community reacted (as soon they realized these were targeted to non-poor population).

Residents of both the informal settlement and Langa highlighted that both JS-1 and JS-2 benefited "outsiders" rather than the residents, emphasizing that the flats and houses in the gated community brought people they "did not know." The uncertainty about who was about to get what was reinforced by the nature of the phased model of Joe Slovo allowed the government to speculate and calibrate the project's development, generating much uncertainty among the slum dwellers. As two community leaders argue, the government did not inform the community about

the future plans of Joe Slovo. Initially, the JS-2 site involved a much larger area than what was actually built. Nevertheless, in the official plans, the area was labeled as "to be determined," so the Joe Slovo residents could not have any idea about their own destiny. This calculated uncertainty operated as an essential design politics technique since it disempowered the Joe Slovo community, who noticed they were not included in the JS-2's plan because the first built houses looked like middle-income rather than poor people house, because these areas were fenced, and because access was car exclusive. As a community leader points out:

> We didn't know about the government plans, but at some point, we realized that our families were going to be displaced. That happened right after the government finished the first houses at Phase 2. Those houses looked like rich people houses. Also, after the relocation of the victims of the fire in 2005, the government started reporting more relocations. Thus, we started a process of claims and memorandums.

This led to social unrest among residents that generated a series of protests leading to the suspension of the JS-2 implementation.

Transition from JS-1 and JS-2 to phase 3: the turning point in design politics

The rent boycott organized by the Tenants Committee gathered public attention in the JS-1 flats in mid-2007 when the residents of Joe Slovo informal settlement also organized a Task Team to represent their interests. The Task Team coordinated protests at both Langa and the CBD including two marches to Parliament demanding RDP, rather than bonded houses and rental units, for the following phases in Joe Slovo. According to community leaders and activists of the Anti-Eviction Campaign, a political group that partnered the Task Team in the political protests, the community tried many institutional channels to claim for their right to "stay in our place." Nevertheless, when memoranda, formal letters, and meeting petitions did not work, they started protesting at the Parliament House in the city center. That did not work either: "we never got a single response back from the government," a community leader indicated. By 2007, the residents felt they had exhausted "all the possible formal channels" with no positive effects, so the leaders and political activists organized a barricade along the N2-Gateway. Since the police blocked the pedestrian entrances to the highway, the community first built a bridge to facilitate access from Joe Slovo to the highway. During the first protest, 2.000 people crossed the bridge at 2 a.m. As a community leader described:

> We are angry. We want RDP houses in Joe Slovo. We want the Department of Housing to stop moving our people to Delft. We refuse to be moved there. It is far from our workplaces and also from places where we look for work. We can't and won't move. The government took this decision without consulting us and now they must change it. (From Bolnick (2009), Case Study – Joe Slovo Survey 2009, Cape Town, South Africa)

The occupation of the highway as a way to claim and demonstrate who owned and controlled the place led to the first government response and represented a turning point in the politics of the housing redevelopment. Minister Sisulu said that protesters were committing a crime by co-opting the highway. The government removed protesters from the N2-Gateway

housing waiting lists. In response to the protest actions and residents' Thubelisha Homes, the national Minister for Housing and the Western Cape Government initiated expedited evictions against informal dwellers in Joe Slovo. The Task Team partnered with a legal-based NGO to oppose the application, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE). COHRE represented the community at the South African Supreme Court, arguing that the project acted against their constitutional rights (Jordhus-Lier, 2015). The Judges of the Constitutional Court did not all agree on whether the residents had the right to occupy the site, but they reached a consensus that an eviction order was just and equitable under the circumstances and that the relocation was "undoubtedly in the public interest" (Ray, 2010).

Nevertheless, this legal step backward, the design and construction of the bridge to occupy the highway, marked a turning point in the politics of Joe Slovo. It was then that the community began a learning process about gaining political capacity through non-traditional struggle mechanisms: bottom-up transformations in space to take the physical and organizational control over Joe Slovo. The community's political empowerment overlapped with Thubelisha Homes' disempowerment, which declared itself financially insolvent and dismantled in July 2008 (De Satgé & Watson, 2018). This created an institutional vacuum in the management of the N2 Gateway that the residents' committees used to self-create the institutional capacities to gain control over the design and allocation process of the project.

Figure 67. Bridge's location during the occupation of the N2 Gateway

Source: mages by the author based on Satellite Images from Google Earth.

By 2008, participatory and judicial processes were not working as expected, so the community decided to change the method of struggle, shifting from protests and legal actions to information production and negotiation. This new role required the development of previously non-existent skills. While the court battle was still in progress, some of the community leaders developed relationships with grassroots NGOs such as the Community Organization Resource Centre (CORC), the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP), and Slum Dwellers International (SDI). They introduced the idea of enumeration and information-based empowerment. The Enumerations Final Report (EFR) of 2009 was a slum census carried out by the NGOs and the community to measure demographic and socioeconomic indicators missing from the official Censuses and Surveys statistics. This report proved critical to the empowerment process of the community since the findings presented very different population demographics than the official narrative. Crucially, it revealed that the Joe Slovo population was much smaller than estimated and that, on average, households had at least one person working in the formal or informal sectors. The government used the 2001 old city census, which recorded 20,000-plus people to

estimate the informal settlement population, but the community report indicated that the population was about 7,946 people instead, including 3,100 families who lived in 2,748 shacks (FEDUP, Enumerations Final Report 2009). The EFR also demonstrated that most of the employed household heads found their workplaces adjacent to their communities. Thanks to the proximity to the train station, about 57 percent of the households could benefit from relatively cheap train services. The report stated that it was likely that many of the people, although gainfully employed, would not be able to carry the additional burden of transportation costs and would lose or even forfeit their jobs if they were displaced to Delft. In many ways, the report was the first step towards proving that in-situ redevelopment might be feasible.

Despite the success of EFR, the relationship between the Joe Slovo community and the NGOs was slow to build. The community had been at first suspicious of the NGOs because they assumed they were working with the state and would further threaten their autonomy. "At the beginning, they called us puppets of the state," an NGO leader said. For an extended period, the NGOs worked in building trust with the informal settlement residents. The Task Team was not partial to CORC and the FEDUP, as these worked within an "action-based approach" rather than a "rights-based approach" based on political mobilization, protests, and legal actions. An NGO leader explains that action-based NGOs gained the community's trust through time and that bottom-up design practices were vital in doing so. The Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP) established the first collaboration with the local residents in 2007. They implemented a small savings group for 20 families who lived in one of the most impoverished areas of Joe Slovo. In 2008, the same area was affected by a fire event. Ikhayalami, an NGO that develops affordable technical solutions for informal settlement upgrading, and CORC, a non-profit organization of professionals and grassroots activists supporting land issues, evictions, informal settlement upgrading, and women's collective savings, offered the affected families support for the construction of fifteen shelters. This rapid response caught the attention of community leaders, who proposed that the NGOs collaborate on constructing a community hall. Ikhayalami and CORC provided technical and fundraising support. When another major fire occurred in 2009--destroying 513 shelters and leaving 1,500 people homeless--the NGOs already had gained enough trust with the community.

This second major fire of 2009 opened a significant amount of space within the settlement, creating an opportunity to rebuild using 're-blocking'--an in-situ upgrading system to rearrange public and private space more effectively for infrastructure provisions, emergency services plans, and healthier environmental improvements. Through re-blocking, the community re-designed the urban layout, arranging the "empowered shacks" (fire-resistant structures) to create community spaces that worked both as public spaces (recreation, commerce) and backyards (laundry, childcare activities). The new land design allowed demarcated pathways or roads, public and semipublic spaces that considered open access for emergency vehicles, the provision of infrastructure, and essential services. Residents dismantled and rebuilt the shacks on the same day. The transformation of the settlement was planned in sequenced clusters of shacks. All shacks faced the courtyards, so the common spaces ensured a safer environment for women and children. Also, the new layout included productive places such as washing lines, food gardens, and space for the local government to install community halls or healthcare centers.

Figure 68. Design and implementation of reblocking process supported by CORC and Ikhayalami

Source: graphics and images by CORC and Andrea Bolnick. Satellite Images from Google Earth.

The EFR enumeration process, which was being implemented simultaneously, and community mapping supported the re-blocking, as it reduced the risk of unfair dispossessions by clarifying who owns what. As a community leader highlighted, when the re-blocking process started, the community understood that the design of a new layout and physical transformation of space offered the opportunity to establish control over the land. This let them make the community's values more spatially visible, demonstrating "the kind of neighborhood we wanted" by crafting the relationship between the public and the private, the location of houses, and population density.

The community also saw re-blocking as a new form of struggle to demonstrate that all the residents of the slum could be made to "fit" on the site in an ordered, planned fashion. As an NGO leader puts it, even if "traumatic," this upgrading strategy generated internal learning about the community's political capacity to control the course of the housing redevelopment since local residents showed the capacity to develop design solutions without architects and engineers. The community-acquired expertise on technical issues, such as density and public/private space ratios. Later, the leaders would use that expertise in future negotiations with the Western Cape government. In parallel, other experiences on knowledge-based activism set up an institutional culture for the phased- redevelopment. The Development Action Group (DAG), an NGO that supports communities enabling affordable housing, land and tenure security, resist evictions and shape urban development policies, conducted a study on the socioeconomic impacts for families

relocated to Delft (2007), showing the impoverishment of families and worsening of their living conditions in the TRAs. This study had a significant influence on the arguments for in-situ upgrading in Joe Slovo and to rethink the specifications for TRA construction and levels of service specified in the 2009 Constitutional Court judgment.

Figure 69. Source: Drawing of the reblocking in Joe Slovo
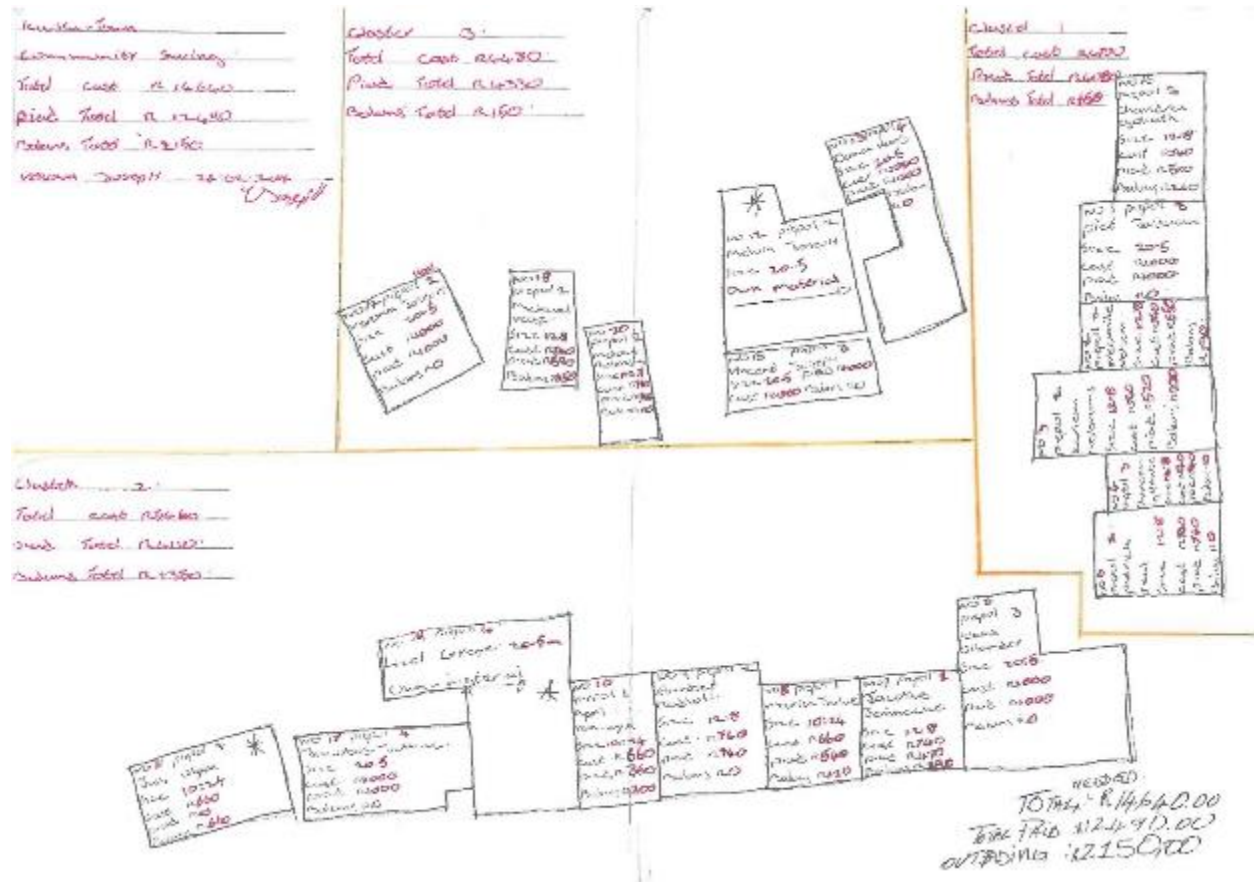
Source: graphics and images by Ikhayalami.

The re-blocking negotiations over space and land became their main political project of the community, shifting the political scenario of Joe Slovo: from design for the people to design from the people. The fire event's enumerations and the following reblocking process worked to build trust and partnership between the Task Team, which consolidated as the community representation, and the NGOs. This new partnership implied the rupture between the task team and the Anti Eviction campaign, who still believed that continuing the political protest should focus on the informal dwellers' actions towards fulfilling their right to housing. For the Task Team, the survey worked for a more practical and local agenda focused on housing and jobs. For CORC used the EFR enumeration process (training, meetings, workshops) to establish a strong relationship between the informal settlement residents and the broader network of slum dwellers coordinated by SDI. While the appropriation of survey technologies enabled the informal dwellers to profile their situation and use the information to bargain for resources with the City, it also contributed to a reshaping of power relations. As described by De Satgé & Watson (2018), senior officials in the Provincial Department of Human Settlements and the city government

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regarded the survey's information as an "impressively professional study" that yielded important details and results that were important for the housing policy acknowledgment.

Phase-3: designing "who gets what"

Community and NGO leaders indicate that the re-blocking experience did not directly influence the design of Phase 3, but it organized the community around a specific project-based agenda instead of a claim-based one.

The barricades along the N2_Gateway and the construction of the bridge worked as an act of political awareness and renewed control of the site by the community. The enumerations and the re-blocking experience forced the community to think about what kind of housing they wanted and trained leaders for future negotiations with the government officials and design experts. An NGO program leader officer stated that there was no association between the re-blocking process and the design of the houses of JS-3. But it did influence the politics of the project since it opened a window to establish relationships within the community, and between the community and CORC-SDI. An NGO leader clarifies:

> From that experience [the reblocking], the community resisted through two tactics: the legal channel in the Supreme Court supported by COHRE and the "intervention method" of SDI and CORC.

In 2009, coinciding with the first report findings and finalizing the re-blocking process, South Africa's Supreme Court approved a moratorium on all the Joe Slovo original settlers' relocations and a revision of the N2-Gateway master plan. A few months before, the national government also decided to create the Housing Development Agency (HDA) to replace Thubelisha Homes. The HDA mandated the creation of "well-located land and buildings available for the development of housing and human settlements" and to "fast-track the processes of housing development" (HAD, 2010). While it had to resolve the conflicts around Phase 1, particularly the rent boycott, the real emphasis of the HDA was on getting Phase 3 implemented. This mandate required some political agreements between the different levels of government and the residents of Joe Slovo and Langa. In addition, the national government

establishment of committees for community consultation, capable of representing the divergent voices involved in the Joe Slovo phased redevelopment. This special Joint Steering Committee with community representatives, building contractors, and the Western Cape government started negotiating the JS-3 design and conditions. Neither community leaders nor NGO activists described the committee as a "participatory process." A community leader describes it as a "negotiation table," where the discussion focused on how the project's design could include as many slum dwellers as possible in single-family houses. So far, the allocation of units has followed principles of mixed-income development, which is supposed to bring people from other areas and social sectors in Cape Town and a percentage of the units destined to backyarders in Langa. The negotiations about fitting in all the informal dwellers also included about 20 percent of the households who were not registered in the City's housing waiting list and others who did not qualify for an RDP housing subsidy, either because they had greater income levels, or formal jobs or their family members were already homeowners (De Satgé & Watson, 2018). In this context, fitting "everyone in" became the main political agenda of the Task Team. As one of the Task Team leaders points out:

> We fight for jobs and houses for all. We want jobs through the construction process. Phase 3 must house us all and employ us. We don't mind about flats or houses, but we all want housing.

The Western Cape technicians offered three design models, and the community representatives chose and negotiated those options with no room for what some of the NGO leaders described as "real participatory design." They showed disappointment that the negotiations focused on 'who was in and who was out and who qualified for the free-house subsidy that the design discussions narrowed down to densities, plot size, and housing typologies, and there was no room to discuss environmental issues and public space design. The technical bodies proposed the densification of the original project, going from 1,500 to 2,800 units in the same plot of land to provide all the former residents of Joe Slovo informal settlements with housing opportunities (Bolnick, 2009).

In 2010, the committee approved the upgrade of eleven subsections for the JS-3 site that did not involve any permanent relocation. The JS-3 designers replaced parking slots with pedestrian streets, and the original JS-1 model of buildings changed to compact two-story, row-houses best known as the "10 by 10 houses." This typology used 100% of the plot surface to build the house and shared backyard space among many houses, creating community blocks with small-scale semi-public common areas in the center. Although the "10 by 10" houses also restricted the possibility of backyarding, ground floors were flexible enough to allow for small shops in the front rooms. The design of this block of medium-density, compact houses enabled families to aspire to have their own single house in a context of extreme land scarcity.

Figure 70. Analysis of architectural and urban design of Joe Slovo Phase 3.
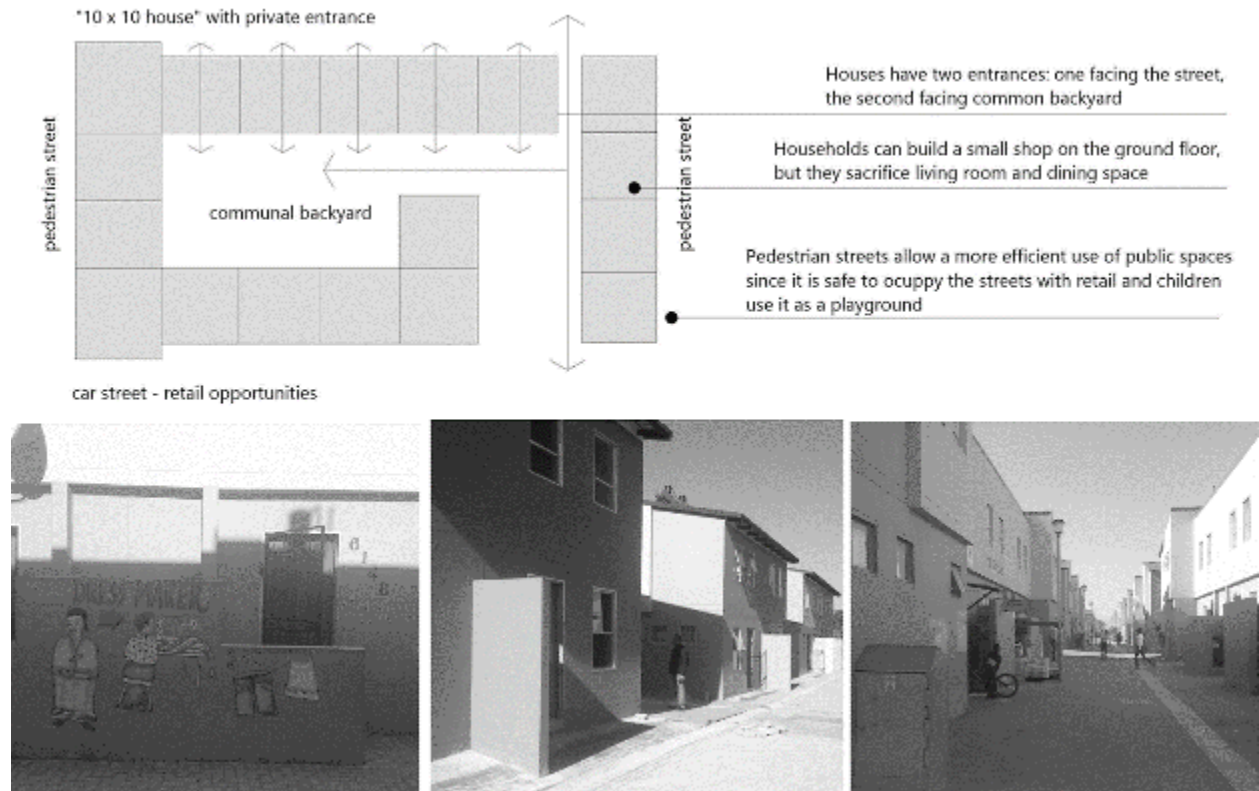
Source: pictures by the author. Graphic by CORC

Unintentionally, the design resembles some values of the English New Towns, a response to modernist housing in the post-World War Two period. The idea of small, compact row-houses with semipublic "patios" was the core of the sociology of the New Town. Still, it seems challenging to align Joe Slovo Phase 3 with a particular "design ideal." The material outcome of multiple actors interplaying in the same space, fighting for "the city they want," and negotiating their own sets of values resulted in a very pragmatic architectural design that does not necessarily express a particular city-vision, but rather a hybrid project that intended to achieve plural consensus --a consensus that was not fulfilled. Supporters of JS-3 argued that the houses were too compact, and streets narrow, but now "everyone fits in," referring to the fact that JS-3 did not entail more relocations of informal settlers to the TRAs, thereby making it one of the best examples of South Africa's housing policy. During my interviews, some NGO leaders argued that the design of JS-3 was a missed opportunity to establish a radical new model of housing delivery despite substantial momentum: the good policy framework, the financial mechanisms available, the community participation, and the good location. As one political activist pointed out, the problem of fitting people into such tiny houses represented both an agreement with the community and, at the same time, a symbolic act deeply connected to what the government perceives affordable housing should afford: the creation of a new social class of poor homeowners. He/she nicely put it:

> By designing micro-houses rather than flats, the government wants to create the idea that they are interested in transforming slum dwellers into homeowners. If

not, why are the houses in Joe Slovo so nicely finished in the outside but incomplete indoors? They are obsessed with the image. BNG is preoccupied with making the poor look like middle income class, to hide poverty. Classes by houses! I say that the Minister wants to create a new class, a buffer between the middle class and the poor--the poor homeowners.

Figure 71. Pictures of JS-3 commercial activities in "10 by 10" houses

Source: pictures by the author

The struggle about who gets what in Joe Slovo is not over. During the implementation of JS-3, the community also suffered from several intra-group fragmentations, leading to another boycott that impedes the continuity of the construction of Phase-3. As of 2020, those factions are expressed in space, between the already re-developed areas of JS-3 and the remaining slum where the community implemented micro-improvements, such as opening new streets and installing public lighting. The different fractions show that the community at Joe Slovo is by no means a homogeneous one. Instead, there are different interests and demands at stake, and even struggles for controlling the community representation at the negotiation tables. According to a community leader, some portions of the Joe Slovo community argue that the design of JS-3 is not adequate because the two-story houses are too small and do not include private backyards. They also argue that the houses are finished the outside so that N2-Gateway motorists can see painted facades and not realize that the units are unfinished indoors. Protesters claim that low-income families cannot deal with the burden of buying construction materials and finishing the house on their own:

> The BNG houses [refereeing to "10 by10" typology) were not designed. They [the government] have that prototype and apply it everywhere, no matter the context. The houses are very small, so they could fit all the people of the slums. But you don't design something to fit people but to offer people a solution that

works. These houses do not even achieve the minimum standards of any middle-income house.

In 2012, residents remaining in the informal settlement created a new community organization, the "Informal Area Committee," in opposition to the Task Team, the Residents Committee, and the Tenants Committee. The Informal Area Committee boycotted the construction of JS-3, arguing that the need to create a denser settlement on well-located land expressed in the denser double-story contradicts the Constitutional Court directive for "meaningful engagement" in the redevelopment process. As one of the leaders points out:

> If there was a consultative process, how can people say we want a free-standing house…and suddenly you give them double storeys? [The government] used to say, 'I heard what you want; you said you wanted a house which is freestanding, where you could stay with your kids and your dogs in your own fence.' They wanted their own land because there are cultural things that people want to do. You can't do it in the sky, and you cannot take the cow up the stairs. (Interview: Langa Councillor 02M, 14 October 2012, in De Satgé & Watson, 2018)

Some community leaders and NGO officers think that these design claims are an "excuse" to hide the real purposes of the JS-3 boycott, that is, to gain political power within the community through the control of the housing project. Yet, the transition from JS-1 and JS-2 towards JS-3 has nonetheless provided some space for the political empowerment of local leadership.

The great tension between different community sectors is expressed in significant delays and contested policy approaches between the Western Cape government, the community, and NGOs involved in the redevelopment. For example, in 2014, the national government re-established the pre-requisites of the RDP-BNG free houses program, arguing that people under forty years old were not directly affected by the apartheid regime; thus, they shortened the beneficiaries' lists in Joe Slovo. This happens in a context where on average, Western Cape residents will wait at least 15 years before they are allocated housing (Qukula, 2020). As a result, the intra-community struggle acquired a new, intergenerational dimension that illustrates the current socio-racial struggles in the post-democratic transition in South Africa.

The last events of this struggle are reflected in the relocation boycotts that took shape within the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-2020. Due to the fragility of the built environment, fire events kept destroying shacks and people's lives in Joe Slovo. Two fire events caused by precarious electric connections broke out in 2020, destroying more than eighty shacks and leaving 120 people homeless. Essential train services had been affected, and people struggled to get to and from work. Instead of providing building materials for reconstruction, the City established the relocation of the victims to Forest Village, a new housing project (not a TRA such as Delft but proper housing) located 22 kilometers from Langa, with no public transport connection to the old township. Some community leaders presented opposition to these relocations, arguing that they were planned without any community consultation or job opportunities guarantees. In response to those Slovo residents boycotting the relocations, Western Cape Provincial Minister of Human Settlements Tertuis Simmers publicly condemned the "unruly Joe Slovo informal settlement community members who denied fifty-six other residents from the same community the opportunity to move to their homes in Forest Village." In

a public letter he also "[…] commend[s] the police for attempting to engage the group to avoid any conflict or violence but given that this group is set on embarking on criminal activity, I call on SAPS [police] to arrest anyone who is involved in this intimidation so that they can face the full might of the law." The tensions between those who wish to be relocated and those who boycott the relocation overlap with tensions between Langa residents and Joe Slovo residents around the advance of the in-situ upgrading. In December 2020, Langa backyard dwellers boycotted the City over the planned relocation of Joe Slovo fire victims to a site next to Mokone Primary School in the northwest area of Langa. Initially, an initiation site (a cultural practice that marks the transformation of young men to adulthood) was considered for the relocation, but heritage organizations in the area successfully fought this. Backyard dwellers spokesperson said to media journalists that the City failed to consult the community and the ward councilor about the relocations:

> The place was reserved for the extension of the cemetery by the late councillor Nomtha Dilima, but all of the sudden the people of Joe Slovo are to be moved to the space. That is what angers the community. Every single year there is some sort of fire that is created deliberately so that these people get first preference when there is new housing development. That is their modus operandi and people are now sick of their tactics and what the City is doing. What they are doing is creating some of a chaos and animosity between us and the residents. (Interview in Ntseku, 2020)

The backyarders believe these Joe Slovo's families must be relocated to "other areas where there is enough space." Since then, Langa's backyard dwellers sleep outside at the site to ensure nobody from Joe Slovo occupies it and fire victims do not have enough resources to re-build their shacks.

CONCLUSIONS

In 2004, when Joe Slovo redevelopment was launched as an exemplary pilot project, the government officials decided to transform an inclusionary post-Apartheid welfare-state policy into exclusionary housing design, causing political contestation among the residents of the informal settlement. The community materialized the struggle for their housing needs in creative spatial-informal practices that enforced alternative values of city-making and introduced an example of design politics "from below." These practices not only re-defined the spatial control over Joe Slovo's territory, but also, by the production of alternative urban space, informalized institutional spaces, re-defining who plays what role in housing delivery.

Figure 72. N2 Gateway promotional street sign in 2008, featuring Joe Slovo plans and insignia "Slums shall be abolished."

Source: Brian J. McMorrow

As a result of a long community struggle, the development of Joe Slovo's phases changed its original path. Today, the long-term, complex process of design and implementation of the housing program and its different visions can be read in the various architectural typologies of JS-1, JS-2, and JS-3. The rent boycott of the apartments, the occupation of the freeway, the reblocking, the census replication carried out by the community (EFR) exemplify informal-spatial practices that influenced the redesign of the project, including the architecture of the housing, the type of public space, the tenure regimes and even the choice of beneficiaries for the

housing program. However, these informal-spatial practices not only redefined the physical landscape, but they also redefined the political landscape of the N2 Gateway.

In this last section, I conclude the chapter on Joe Slovo's housing redevelopment by analyzing my findings on the role of informality in the transformation of Joe Slovo's political-institutional landscape. I highlight four critical processes: the transfer --instead of eradication-- of informality towards the peripheries of the city, the correlation between rent boycott as a protest measure and as an enabler of an informal rental market, the political influence of spatial practices, and the informalization of the process --and not only the project-- of housing construction. The informalization of Joe Slovo reveals a complex and contradictory scenario that occurs when the State loses control over decision-making processes.

Displacing Informality as a tool of poverty management

The contradiction between what ought to be done as proposed by the BNG and what ended up being implemented at Joe Slovo has three explanations. First, the political mandate to urgently realize the BNG's normative vision took over the policy's objectives. The urgency was built not necessarily on a housing political agenda but on a need to position Cape Town as a "Global City." Second, the policy normative vision "on paper" did not correlate with the politicians' political vision of what to do with informal settlements. While the words "on paper" left enough abstract space to interpret general normative objectives, such as that relocations will only be implemented if "inevitable or necessary," it was the particular policy objectives that drove the meaning and direction of the N2 Gateway housing project.

Consequently, the holistic and inclusive vision of the N2 was overshadowed by the need to demonstrate leadership in public management by a new Minister in office. Thirdly, the operationalization of housing projects was still influenced by the long history of the private sector and state interventions before democracy. In particular, the monopoly of large, private corporations created in the 70s represented the de facto extension of the historical policy trajectory of the country and, in operational terms, avoided challenging the fundamentals of the apartheid city. Architecture and urban planning served to resolve conflicts between the policy normative goals and politics of housing delivery for low-income life based on quantitative objectives and fast track delivery. Modernism played a significant role in operationalizing principles commonly related to socio-urban inclusion, such as density and mixed-income housing, while reinforcing social distinctions that expose the political goals of monopolistic urban governance as a social engineering mechanism. When designers with unspoken (or explicit) political agendas embraced the State's monopoly on the decision-making over JS-, they re-defined the territorial control over the informal settlement, privileging certain social groups in the design targeting, displacing informal dwellers to distant locations, and reinforcing the boundaries between the formal and the informal city. In Joe Slovo, exclusion was operationalized through several design mechanisms: displacing the inhabitants of the informal settlement to the TRAs, determining an affordable rent system from which the poorest residents could not qualify as beneficiaries, identifying the pre-existing settlement as a "tabula rasa" in official documents, and creating a gated community to implement the objective of social mix within the housing development.

The TRAs recreated a planned, informal settlement, reaffirming the government's intolerance towards informality by deploying a very clear geo-spatiality elsewhere in the city-region. The permanence of the TRAs exposed the mismatch between the high-minded post-apartheid development agenda for land and housing, which aimed to address issues on redistribution and social justice, and the tangible outcomes of such policies, which built an urban landscape of poverty similar to that created by the authoritarian regime. The informal growth within the TRAs was not a concern for the government because, in contrast to Joe Slovo, these areas were not visible from the N2- Gateway, the poverty-masking walled highway planned to whisk World Cup visitors from the airport to the touristic areas of Cape Town. To government authorities, this opportunistically, pragmatically, and symbolically underscored the sense that informality is only intolerable in those locations where it is visible. The relocation of informality--that is, its relocation as a mechanism of abolition--functioned as a spatialized tool of poverty management to capture control over Joe Slovo's territory. However, the management of informality proved to be more than a top-down mechanism. Once inclusionary housing policy resulted in exclusionary design during the first two phases, the community itself began implementing its own design techniques--building a bridge to facilitate protest, mapping, enumerating houses, and re-ordering the urban grid. These practices re-defined control over the space of the Joe Slovo territory yet again, even as the state lost implementation capacity.

Rent boycott and the rise of the informal markets

The first step towards a change in the management of the housing project and the territorial control proposed by the State was the boycott of JS-1 rents. The residents claim that the boycott came as a response to the poor building conditions and rising rents. The N2 Gateway Tenants' Association said it started its rent boycott in 2007 in the hope that the government would address its concerns. HAD authorities and representatives of local and provincial governments acknowledged the techno-political failures in the processes of awarding works to incompetent companies and the poor controls of works capable of guaranteeing the habitability conditions required in buildings of this type.[16] The "housing department and the agency" committed to taking action, including the suspension of payment to contractors who underperformed while Thubelisha managed the housing project (Jooste, 2009). They also proved to be sensitive to contractual rental conditions and to the inability of tenants to keep up with payments.

However, the political leadership mistrusted the veracity of the Tenants' Association's position. In 2010, the Western Cape Housing Minister pointed out that the Emerald Sky Project at Buffalo City [a similar project to JS-1] had a 96% rent collection rate while the N2 Gateway Project only had a 5% rent collection rate. The Minister queried: "The question was whether tenants can afford the rentals or whether they were simply not paying. Were consultants not hired to screen possible tenants to check on whether they could afford to pay the rentals? If these checks were done, why was there non-payment of rentals at the N2 Gateway Project?" the Minister pointed out--assuming that if the units were being sublet, the original tenants had not needed accommodation in the first place. Consultants had screened tenants but in "real life" things did not work out as planned. By the mid-2000s, South Africa was in the midst of a

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16 https://pmg.org.za/committee-meeting/11147/

recession, and people were suffering financially. Many were unemployed. When you're unemployed, how can you pay rent?" asked a Tenants Association leader--"I don't know of any person who is not paying rent, but some are already three months in arrears, for example (Ndenze, 2007).

Whether the boycott was a strategy to get the government to fix construction flaws and structural problems in the buildings or a sign of the inadequacy of the contractual conditions for the beneficiary population, the JS-1 rent boycott signified the Tenants Association's takeover of the management of the buildings. The loss of State control over the administration and management of the buildings made possible the development of an informal rental market. JS-1, which displaced informal settlers to the city's peripheries to eradicate informality, instead contributed to the emergence of one of the hottest informal market hubs in the city within a formally planned space.

In 2009, The National Department of Human Settlements noted that the legality of sub-letting remained clouded with an official statement that "the regulations governing sub-letting were unclear," leaving an open window to sustain the current situation rather than rectifying the situation in the context of other escalating conflicts within the N2 Gateway project. The lack of political will to address the conflict was compounded by either the inability to enforce contractual conditions and the lack of legitimacy to take any legal action. The Thubelisha Homes Closure Report clearly noted an awareness about the lack of legitimacy to execute subletter evictions:

> […] the people who had been screened and deemed qualified to pay rentals had boycotted doing so due to the structural defects of the houses. It was crucial to ensure that all these defects had in fact been corrected. If so, and there were no defects that would justify non-payment, then the law should be allowed to take its course, because Government could not afford to lose any more money on the rental units. […] The fact that there had been structural defects also lowered his confidence in Thubelisha's capacity. (Thubelisha Homes Closure Report, 2009)

The decaying conditions of the flats gave the renters fair and reasonable reasons why stop paying rent, as maintenance costs became a financial burden and also the contractual terms of renting "decent housing" was not achieved by the State. At the same time, the acceleration of rent boycotts, followed by extensive sub-letting, released an informal type of management that depends on the persistence valid complaints about building quality and maintenance. As de De Satgé (2014) points out from an interview with a HAD official this informal market represents the private appropriation of State rental stock and the empowerment of landlords who "do not like to see changes because that would mean loss of income." From this point of view, the lack of maintenance seems to be a critical factor in the ability of landlords to maintain control of the buildings and thus sustain the housing market in JS-1. This represents a significant paradox concerning the satisfaction of housing rights for those who have the right to live in dignity in these units, regardless of their tenure status.

Informal design practices with political influence

The Joe Slovo community materialized their struggle for housing rights in creative examples of "design from below," such as a prefabricated bridge and re-blocking. Bottom-up design mechanisms did not necessarily lead to better design solutions in Joe Slovo, but they served the community as a way to re-shape the political territory within the housing redevelopment process. The barricades along the N2_Gateway and the construction of the bridge worked as acts of political awareness-building and contributed to renewed control of the site by the community. The enumerations and the re-blocking experience forced the community to think about what kind of housing they wanted and trained leaders for future negotiations with the government officials and design experts. Community and NGO leaders indicate that the re-blocking experience did not directly influence the design of JS-3, but it was the Joint Steering Committee of JS-3. However, they point out that reblocking organized the community around a specific project-based agenda and, at the same time, established a new power dynamic between the community and the government that led to the creation of the committee and a different power dynamic around spatial decision making in Joe Slovo.

The material outcome of multiple actors interplaying in the same space, fighting for "the city they want," and negotiating their own sets of values resulted in a very pragmatic architectural design that does not necessarily express a particular city-vision, but rather a hybrid project that intended to achieve plural consensus --a consensus that was not fulfilled. During my interviews, some NGO leaders argued that the design of JS-3 was a missed opportunity to establish a radical new model of housing delivery despite substantial momentum, a good policy framework, available financial mechanisms, community participation and a good location. This missed opportunity became evident when the City tried to replicate the re-blocking system at a city-wide level through the Proactive Re-Blocking of Informal Settlements policy in 2014. According to local policy makers with whom I had informal talks in July 2016, Joe Slovo was the first community to implement the re-blocking system in 2009 and the case was set as a "learning catalyst." Nevertheless, local authorities have struggled to systematize, implement and scale the model up because there is not a deep understanding of how it really works, what the preconditions are for its implementation, and how it can be replicated at formal policy levels. If re-blocking is to be fully valued as a model for Cape Town's housing sector and for other cities in the Global South, a detailed study that complements the existing descriptive studies, must analyze the interaction between the design of spaces and the power relations that prevail among communities and policy makers.

While these practices do not necessarily represent the permanence of informal rationales to design a better and more sensible housing project, they do represent tactics to change the political landscape of the housing process. These practices not only changed who has spatial control over Joe Slovo, but also, by producing alternative urban space, they challenged institutional spaces by questioning who plays what role in housing delivery. In this sense, the "site of action of spatial agency" is--as Awan et. al (2011) posit--physical, social, metaphorical, phenomenal and, I argue, institutional as well. The link between the transformations of the informal spatial practices and governance invites us to analyze design outcomes in terms of the realization of political interests, rather than as issues of taste or aesthetic values. This opens a window into understanding informality as a political device of urban governance.

Calibration between formality and informality as a management method

The empowerment of different community factions and the informalization of the housing project process forced the State to take a different stance on informality. This occurred at many levels of the project. An example of this calibration was reflected in the design of the new housing units in phase JS-3. The architectural typology allowed for the development of commercial activities on the ground floor, mainly food sales and miscellaneous or sewing and shoe repair shops. However, while the new typologies, unlike the apartments, "admit" other types of informal economic activities, they restrict the possibilities of backyarding, a widespread practice among the classic RDP houses that represents a source of income for the families. This decision to "liberate" certain aspects of housing to informality while restricting others also occurred at the institutional level.

The government capitalized on the insurgency of the community organizations created in the occupation of the highway and the reblocking process and prescribed participatory processes which took shape of the Joint Steering Committee of JS-3. This committee was supposed to include the residents of Langa and Joe Slovo in a "meaningful engagement" in order to stabilize the conflict and carry out the construction of the next phase without the conflicts experienced in JS-1 and JS-2. However, the participatory process soon turned into a discretionary negotiating table of those individual members of the committee. This negotiation space proved a poor substitute to what many would have considered as a "real participatory process." Many NGO leaders showed disappointment that the negotiations were so focused on 'who was in and who was out' and who qualified for the free-house subsidy that the design discussions narrowed down to densities, plot size, and housing typologies. Despite substantial momentum, this missed the opportunity to establish a radical new model of housing delivery.

Negotiations of the desires and needs of community leaders representing the residents of Langa and Joe Slovo were intermingled with personal negotiations to consolidate spaces of power in the territory. These leaders became "gateways to the community," consolidating power by capturing specific spaces within the housing construction process. Some became associated with the management of the project and the allocation of work opportunities and housing units, while others created security company with a contract to guard the buildings under construction in Phase 3. Still others became part of the leadership of the NGOs such as CORC, and others were being hired as Community Liaison Officers and applied for tenders as subcontractors within the project. In this context, the State officials felt the need to calibrate the formal and informal spaces for negotiation and empowerment to continue with the progress of the construction works. Pragmatically, the State maintains institutional channels, such as the steering committee, and, at the same time, reaches discrete agreements on specific conflicts, such as who is in charge of security at the construction site. These tactics and practices have been confirmed by a high-ranking government official in my interviews. This intertwined network of negotiation, representation, and individual empowerment created opportunities for patronage. The current phase has been marked by complex micro-struggles to try and secure access to the opportunities offered by the state scheme of improvement and avoid displacement by rival claimants.

Living on Conflict, Rights and Empowerment

It has often been claimed that housing studies are dominated by a policy perspective, rather than a political perspective. This chapter sheds light on the tensions between normative planning and the politics of housing production. The findings on the informalization of Joe Slovo housing redevelopment reveal the multidirectional actions between governments and communities that occur when the state loses control over design decision-making processes. The community's right to not be displaced to distant locations was ultimately guaranteed only by reducing the state's implementation and delivery capacity. This exposes the challenges of city co-production and invites us to rethink who has the right to design, code and imagine our cities. In this sense, this case opens a window into understanding informality as a political device of urban governance.

The community empowerment, which avoided and still avoids more displacements, is in constant tension with the housing needs of those residents who still live in the remaining, not-redeveloped, areas of Joe Slovo. The community's control over the land did not result in participatory processes, but in a "negotiation table" between community leaders and government representatives. Interesting enough, community leaders did not release control over the project to accelerate the housing delivery, even when JS-3 already demonstrated that the government followed the design agreements of the negotiation. Recalling Erik Bähre (2007), this shows that conflict, tensions and even violence are essential features of localized development, and that city production is more like "arenas of contestation" than a dialectic relationship of normalized authoritarian actions (like those design-politics decisions implemented in Phase-1 and Phase-2) and passive resistance (like that experienced by the families displaced to Delft that still remain today). The result of such a long period of spatial and political contestation led to what many consider to be an ungovernable territory. Joe Slovo started out in 2004 as the flagship of a new housing model, and resulted in a complex matrix of space, power and politics where it is difficult to define who controls what. As a response to the exclusionary design and implementation of this new housing model expressed in the first two phases, the community began to implement its own design techniques, such as building a bridge, mapping, enumerating houses and re-ordering the urban grid. These practices re-defined control over the space of the Joe Slovo territory, while the state lost the capacity of implementation. But, through these spatial transformations, the community also challenged institutional spaces, re-defining who plays what role in housing delivery. To date, the government has been incapable of re-formulating its own role in this new game. For instance, a current high-level official wistfully concluded that "nobody knows what to do with Joe Slovo." Until the beginning of 2018 (the last date of my interviews), the government authorities were incapable of re-formulating their own role within the new political landscape. For instance, a current high-level official assumed that "nobody knows what to do with Joe Slovo." The Western Cape officials feel that the project is ruled by obscure business dealings between the contractors and the National Government. The HDA could not escape the intense contestation associated with the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway, including allegations of collusion between HDA employees and "informal brokers" to influence allocations in JS-3. Neither has it been able to develop more affordable projects for the bottom-end of the income pyramid in well-located land. The empowered community leaders are accused of being coopted by NGOs; NGOs can be sharply critical of one another, and other leaders are suspected of using the project as a channel to empower themselves. The rivalry between multiple organizations representing different groups that claim Langa's and Joe Slovo's residents

(Tenants Association, Task Team, Residents Association, Langa's backyarders, Informal Area Residents) fragments territorial control. Those who acquired power in the contestation for space must sustain conflict with the State and rival organizations to keep accumulating control in the housing construction process. This space captured by local intermediaries with influence on access in the development is manifested in the acquisition of housing, contracting for the execution of construction, security and surveillance contracts, transportation of workers and materials, among others. As one Western Cape official put it, "if the project is finished, they are finished politically." This suggests that some community leaders hold back political power with the state authorities by making Joe Slovo ungovernable. In this context, there is a clear loser: those who still reside in the remaining informal settlement and must deal with the fragility of the built environment, recurrent fire events, lack of jobs and the risk of being displaced to other areas of the city.

This blurry institutional scenario exposes the tensions between the real empowerment of the community, which avoided more displacements, and the ongoing housing needs of those who still live in precarious conditions. As Ryan (2017) observes, constructing plural urbanism is not simple since it operates over a complex political problem: how to agree on design issues that encode contested sets of values. Joe Slovo shows that the space for authoritarian planning practices will reduce as our societies change and evolve politically. This is particularly important in the context of post-Apartheid South Africa, but also offers lessons for other cities in the Global South where, as Watson (2002) and Harrison (2014) note, normative planning has failed.

CHAPTER 6 - CIUDAD DEL BICENTENARIO

Figure 73. Art-wall in Ciudad del Bicentenario made by local artist with support of Fundación Santo Domingo

INTRODUCTION

It was a morning in January 2016 when I took a two-hour interview with Juan, a resident of Ciudad del Bicentenario (CB) housing project. Juan told me that since he moved into his new house (an apartment in a multi-family building, his economic opportunities have diminished, that he was too far away from the city. He had no money to pay for his motorcycle's gas, which he used to make deliveries. Juan also mentioned that he and his family were in worse condition than those beneficiaries who received a single-family unit. They could adapt and renovate the houses to include extra bedrooms, open shops, and create workspaces, but Juan felt like a prisoner in his own apartment. I remember his frustration, his feeling of injustice for receiving an apartment -- and not a house-- as much as I remember his desire to fulfill the ownership opportunity with the necessary "economic change" for a better life. Juan's sense of injustice and dissatisfaction with his apartment unit contradicts the positive sense of CB's creators. To them, having varied housing typologies was an accomplished goal: "For us, the fact that all the houses were not the same, like in Mexico, was a great achieved objective," emphasizes the former CEO of the non-profit housing developer Fundación Santo Domingo (FSD), who was in charge of the genesis and management of the Macroprojects for almost ten years.

The distance between the project's objectives and the realities of those who inhabit those objectives is a distinctive mark of CB. This distance speaks to another singularity I noticed during my first fieldwork visit; the immediate implementation of retrofitting informality that occurs as soon as relocated families move in. Unlike the widespread idea that informality is related to building and neighborhood decay, this process started happening while the project is still under construction. The most affluent families, those who can make an investment in renovating the units, deploy informalization first.

I left my first visit to CB with many questions. Families were very aware of the "dangers" of not complying with the national housing policy regulations. As soon as they move to CB, the FSD team gives them training, handouts, and interviews that explicitly inform them about the ten-year house restrictions imposed by the housing policy to sell or rent their units. The FSD officials also inform about the procedures to carry out a renovation legally, such as presenting renovation plans to the municipality, and about the "responsibilities" of becoming a legal homeowner. Residents also know that without official approval they cannot change the shape of the rooms, open areas, expand into the backyard and modify the facade). Due to the land use regulations approved for the area, families can neither open businesses nor workshops. All this information is provided during the relocation processes to the families. Given this awareness, why would residents threaten the only (formal) capital asset they ever had? Why would the FSD not avoid informalization to protect the families from eviction? Why would Cartagena's local government not monitor and control the biggest housing project the city has ever had? And what does the informalization of the houses mean for the families' socioeconomic wellbeing and their community life? After my first visit, the only answer I had to all these questions was that the informalization of the formal houses seemed to be the "big elephant in the room."

This chapter presents empirical analysis about CB while the project is still under construction. In fact, since 2018, the FSD itself has been under its own kind of construction, carrying out a process of institutional transformation, including change in leadership positions, and the overall vision for its operations. As of 2021 the FSD is still reviewing its community and

urban development model, including the Master Plan of Ciudad del Bicentenario. I focus on the original Macroproject plan and its community building model, acknowledging the ongoing efforts of the FSD to devise new ways to create more sustainable interventions.

Based on a sample of seventy-five in depth semi-structured interviews with low-income residents and ten other stakeholders, my empirical analysis reached two paradoxical findings about the impacts of the national free housing program in Colombia. One concerns the immediate improvement of overall quality of life but the impoverishment of economic prospects. The second relates to the dual social condition of the residents who felt socially and economically isolated but also shared a widespread perception of being "revueltos" or scrambled within the community of Ciudad del Bicentenario itself. Deeply associated with these paradoxes, economic and physical informality grows in a housing project intended to counter the informal settlements in the inner city. These paradoxes reflect more than simple processes of impoverishment of living conditions: they demonstrate how this type of public policy systematically complicates the daily life of relocated families, revealing a new type of peri-urban poverty where the productive informalization of the formal housing is a central aspect of these families' everyday life.

In order to understand how this mega-project shaped the built environment and social realities on the outskirts of Cartagena, it is important to understand the political and social contexts that give life to the national housing policy in Colombia as well as the particularities of the Cartagena context. To do so, I present a contextual introduction to Cartagena City and the structure of the national housing policy that gives life to Ciudad del Bicentenario, including the creation of the 100,000 Viviendas Gratis Program; and the specific role of the actors involved in the production of large-scale housing projects: the national State, the large-scale developers (FSD in this case) and the local governments.

In the second section of this chapter, I present the empirical analysis based on the interviews, my role as participant observant in several meetings with the FSD members board and the Cartagena's City Planning Department, and my field note observations of the built environment. I first present my methods and protocols employed during fieldwork. Then I structure the analysis according to two paradoxical findings that give life to the informalization processes in CB: wealthier but poorer families, and jointly isolated but "revueltos." I finish the chapter by discussing the consequences of these findings, in particular, the consequences of the informalization of the formal expressed in two integrated processes: what I term the "complexification" of everyday life of those already displaced and poor families, and the challenges in governance related to the loss of territorial control in CB.

CONTEXT

Complex realities, big plans, small visions: The convergence of multiple agendas into a unique approach to social housing

National Housing Policy

The genesis and development of Colombia's current national housing policy is strongly linked to the humanitarian crisis of the internally displaced population due to prolonged armed conflict. Forced internal displacement has been since the 1960s a development and governance challenge in Colombia. For over 60 years, there have been numerous and persistent reports documenting the direct responsibility of the security forces and the paramilitaries established by the army as "self-defense" groups, who act with the law enforcement or with your consent. The guerilla groups, especially the National Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the smallest group Liberation Army (ELN), are also responsible for repeated human rights abuses and violations of international law humanitarian (Amnesty International, 2009).

The Report on Global Trends in Forced Displacement of 2018 conducted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conveys that, with a total of 7,816,500 Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), Colombia accounts for almost 20 percent of the global internal displacement ranking first in the world. The consequence of this prologued conflict has been a litany of human rights abuses: forced displacements, homicides, kidnapping, torture, use of children soldiers and widespread sexual violence mainly against women and girls. Surveys of these displaced households indicated that close to 80 percent of them had been exposed to violence (Ibanez, 2007). Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and peasants add up to disproportionate number of people internally displaced persons.[17] Many communities in the areas in conflict has left them no choice but to run away. But the solution also implies danger and difficulties, related to post-trauma, loos of capital and social networks, augmented poverty and all kinds of vulnerabilities. For those communities, whose identity and livelihoods are intimately related with the land on which they live and work, the trauma of displacement is especially acute. About 60 percent of IDPs originate from rural areas in Colombia where their main source of livelihood had been agriculture (Carrillo, 2009; Merteens, 2002).

By 2010 Colombia was suffering from a peak in internal displacement caused by political violence. In 2009, the rural-urban dispersal had affected 90 percent of the municipalities in country in either expelling or receiving IDPs and a tenth of the Colombian municipalities lost as much as a quarter of their population. These migration flows have proven difficult for cities, such as Cartagena, to manage (Carrillo, 2009; Ibanez, 2009). After moving to urban centers, formerly rural IDPs face difficulties in their economic reintegration. Their rural work skillsets

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[17] Indigenous populations make up 8 percent of IDPs while only representing 2 percent of the total country population. A quarter of the IDPs are Afro-Colombians who constitute a little over a tenth of Colombia's population (Merteens, 2002). Carrillo (2009) adds that half of the IDPs are below 18 years of age. Close to 40 percent of IDPs are single-headed households with 91 percent of them female-headed. Merteens (2002) notes that half of the IDPs in Colombia are women, a group that includes widowed women, female-headed households, and victims of sexual violence.

are not immediately transferrable to and competitive in the city (Carrillo, 2009; Ibanez & Velez, 2007).

In this context, the housing challenges for the IDP people are significant and diverse. Upon their arrival at an urban center, IDPs find temporary shelter with relatives, people with the same geographical origin, or religious organizations. Some IDPs proceed to register themselves to governmental authorities and await assistance (Merteens, 2002). However, subsidies from government authorities were and still are insufficient to purchase a home and municipalities often lack land on which to construct social housing. IDPs can therefore resort to building shacks in invaded private or public land, making them vulnerable to health and environmental hazards. With the acknowledgement of the vulnerable populations in displacement, IDPs experience social, economic, and housing-related hardships that also impact their host community. Unfortunately, land and property disputes are common in post-conflict situations and make it more difficult for returning IDPs and refugees to find solutions. When their homes are occupied by others, mechanisms for resolving property disputes are necessary. If property disputes are not properly addressed, this tension can generate new conflict or renew the previous conflict (Achury, 2017).

This new demand for housing, in addition to historical housing deficits, represented a major focus in the 2010's political campaign platform of Juan Manuel Santos, who soon after taking power of the national administration set the objective of closing the housing gap with the construction of one million homes during his four-year term, tripling the spending on housing for the displaced. Influenced by Lula's Minha Casa, Minha Vida program in Brazil, and Infonavit in Mexico, Santos established a national housing policy to intervene directly in the management and execution of large-scale housing projects that are focused on expanding urban land markets to provide homes to 100.000 poor and displaced households every year.

Within this framework Santos inserted his housing policy vision into a larger and preexistent initiative called "Macroprojects of National Social Interest" (Macroproyectos de Interés Social Nacional, MINS) which also involves programs on infrastructure, mining and energy, identified by santos himself as the "locomotives" of growth in the Colombian economy. Conceived within the framework of the Law 1151 of 2007, article 79, (National Development Plan 2006-2010, the program included a "set of administrative decisions and urban development actions taken by the National Government, which link planning, financing and land management instruments to execute large-scale operations that contribute to the territorial development of certain municipalities, districts or regions of the country." (Regulated by Decree 4260 of 2007, partially modified by Decree 3671 of 2009).

Despite Santos's political vision, by late 2010, the Macroprojects were already suspended by the Constitutional Court since the 1151 Law overpassed the competence over municipalities in territorial planning, especially with regard to land use, modifying the powers of the municipal and district levels, in addition to other considerations, in contravention of the provisions of the Political Constitution of Colombia. In Colombia land regulation is based on the Law of Territorial Ordering 388 of 1997, a law recognized worldwide for its innovative and redistributive character. The 388 Law was designed on the principles of the social and ecological function of property, the prevalence of the general interest over the particular, and the equitable distribution of burdens and benefits. It was also aimed at strengthening decentralization and consolidating the role of municipalities in urban development. The 388 Law made possible to

decentralize the environmental, administrative and planning authorities, in the fulfillment of the constitutional and legal obligations to achieve the regulations for the development of large-scale housing –known as Partial Plan. This type of urban interventions was discouraged by limiting the capacity of the municipality/district to make available large extensions of land for the construction of social interest housing (García, 2008; Torres Ramírez, 2009). This action was balanced by mechanisms to encourage intra-urban projects, such as development quotas, fiscal incentives, and plus value taxation. In this sense, the good intentions of the Law 388 became their fragility when Santos decided to include social housing as part of a national-wide program.

Despite of the Constitutional Court suspension, Santos "resurrected" the Macroprojects in the National Development Plan 2010-2014 "Prosperity for All"-- identifying housing within the five generators or "locomotives" of growth in the economy. In this context, the "housing macroprojects" were re-established through the Law 1469 of 2011, which guaranteed the existence of land for development for housing construction projects and relocation of human settlements to address the situation of national disaster and national economic, social and ecological emergency. These projects, called "Integral Urban Development Projects" (PIDU) were conceived with enormous similarities in process and scope to the MISN. Additionally, the National Development Plan 2010-2014 allows the already approved MISN to be expanded to address the housing solutions of people affected by a disaster or living in areas of unmitigated risk.

As for today, the National Social Interest Housing Macroprojects is a planning and management scheme, created as part of a nationwide strategy to increase the units of affordable housing in Colombia, and facilitate areas for affordable housing through adequate provision of public utilities, road system, public space and public facilities. As a solution to avoid long municipal procedures, the national government decided to by-pass localities and partner with large-scale developers who could purchase large portions of land. In light of the national government's decision to ignore the 388 Law legal framework for land use planning to dispose of rural land more quickly, it established lower urbanization standards and partnered with large developers to avoid the obstacles of local development plans (Maldonado, 2011). In this sense, the national government established the MISN as an instrument to mitigate three 'obstacles' in the supply management of low-cost housing: the low availability of land for the development of low-income housing by pushing local governments to reform their zoning codes in the outskirts of cities, the uncertainty and slowness on municipal procedures to approve the housing projects by partnering directly with developers, and the difficulty in the execution of large-scale projects capable to take advantage of economies of scale in housing production by In intervening directly in the design and management (Restrepo and Henao Padilla, 2011; Libertun, 2018a).

The scheme of the MISN transferred the responsibility of land acquisition from the national government to public or private real-estate developers, providing incentives regarding land use regulations, efficiency in the approval processes and taxation. For execution, the MINS law involves multiple National Agencies such as the Ministry of Housing (MVCT) and the National Planning Office (DNP), profit and non-profit private institutions (e.g., Amarilo Developers or FSD). The latter can play the role of developers or "territorial agencies," coordinating the definition of new urban areas with the National Government. As a requirement to apply, interested real estate developers need to acquire land in anticipation. Likewise, the MINS contemplates several legal structures of land ownership, such as agreements between developers and landowners, through the "Contrato de Colaboración Empresarial" (Business

Cooperation Agreement), which sets a special regulatory scheme to transfer land to a trust fund and ensure the land tenure for the beneficiaries. The provision of land for streets, utility networks and public facilities such as schools, hospitals and police stations within the boundaries of the project are classified as "Cargas Locales" (Local Obligations). The share is determined by the local governments and provided by the developers. The construction costs of streets and public utilities is a requirement for the local governments who operate through two financial schemes. The Macroproject law contemplates a financial structure called "Cargas y Beneficios" (burdens and benefits) where the developer assumes the costs of land provision and the construction costs of the infrastructure. In return, the developer obtains higher floor area ratios (FAR) and building density ratios. Once the affordable housing project is completed, public spaces are transferred to the local government which undertakes all the responsibilities of managing and maintaining the infrastructure and public space and tax collection.

The target population of the MISN is composed through two programs. The Vivienda de Interés Prioritario (VIP) are houses for families displaced from rural areas by the extreme- right paramilitary, victims from natural disasters (floods that occurred in Cartagena between 2010 and 2011), and households in extreme poverty. Communities who were victims of displacement and natural disasters have to register to a special municipal census so they can receive access to the national government's social programs. People who live in extreme poverty have to also affiliate to the "Red Unidos[18]" program or to be registered in the System for the Selection of Beneficiaries for Social Programs (SISBEN). People who are in the lowest level in the SISBEN survey "SISBEN III" are the ones with priority to access to the free housing program[19]. These families receive a free-payment house or a house whose maximum price equals seventy minimum wages (us$17.000). Under this program, multi-family apartment buildings have been constructed, with each unit measuring around 35-45m2. The maximum value of a home under the VIP category is currently COP41.26 million ($24,759). Government estimates put the cost of the project at approximately $4.2 billion for 100,000 units (Gilbert, 2013). The Vivienda de Interés Social, are houses for families who earn less than four minimum salaries (us$ 966) and which maximum price equals one hundred and thirty-five minimum wages (US$ 32.618, Ministry of Housing, City and Territory of Colombia 2020 and World Bank 2014). The 'Vivienda de Interés Social' (VIS), has the objective of building 100,000 homes for low-income families at an estimated cost of $583 million. Of these units, 86,000 will be constructed in urban areas and 14,000 in rural areas. In addition, the program is expected to create 100,000 jobs. Under the program, households with incomes up to 150 percent of minimum wage will receive a maximum subsidy of $7,900. Families earning 150 percent to 200 percent of minimum wage will receive a subsidy of up to $6,900. Housing units that can be purchased through this program

[18] Red Unidos is a strategy of the Colombian government for overcoming extreme poverty. It is a network that brings together 26 state entities involved in the provision of basic social services for the population in extreme poverty. Its emphasis is to ensure that the poorest families can access to the programs they are eligible. Currently the National Agency for Overcoming Extreme Poverty (ANSPE) is leading this strategy. That is to say that the members of the Red Unidos are indeed the poorest and neediest people of the country.
[19] The National Ministry of housing (MVCT) and the local government determine the demographic composition of each project, such as how many displaced households, how many families affected by natural disasters and how many households in extreme poverty conditions will be allocated. The demographic composition of the project is reported to the Social Prosperity Department (DPS). The DPS sends a list containing potential beneficiary households for each housing project. The Ministry, through the National Housing Fund, (Fonvivienda) verifies the households. After this process, the DPS returns the list of those who meet requirements. The DPS chooses the beneficiaries according to the prioritization criteria listed above.

can range from 35-70m2, with the maximum value of COP79.58 million ($47,749; Ministerio de Vivienda y Territorio Colombia).

The political will of Santos's administration, embodied in a government program, facilitated the achievement of important advances at the level of housing production as opposed to the traditional management and planning instruments available to municipalities or districts. However, the national policy took shape not without criticism. In Colombia, a number of public and political debates were generated about the nation's competence over municipalities in territorial planning, especially regarding the ways the national government was by-passing the 388 Law –in indeed the localities—in land use regulation. As previously mentioned, the Macroprojects contravened the 388 Law, leading to several lawsuits were filed with the Constitutional Court, leading to its declaration of unconstitutionality in 2010. But this would only have an effect on the new macro-projects. Those that were at some stage of identification, determination, formulation, adoption or execution, such as the macro-projects executed by the FSD, would continue with their normal process (DNP, 2010). Currently, in case a modification of the land use regulations in the local Territorial Ordering Plans (POTs) are necessary, the MISN and the PIDUs require prior consultation with the Municipal Council. However, in the realpolitik of Colombia's urbanization, this only makes the 388 Law and the municipalities even weaker, as the municipal and district level POT's instruments "accommodate" to the national scale projects and not vice versa (Maldonado, 2008).

Another set of criticism is based on the fact that housing policy was conceived as a "locomotive" for economic growth through increasing productivity in construction to achieve the goal of one million new homes (PND 2010-2014). The MISN were in fact proposed and supported by members of the housing production chain to the crisis recession initiated by investment banking in the United States to President Santos. This "neo-corporatist" agreement faced a powerful limitation consisting of the unavailability of urbanized land so, the national government chose to transgress the autonomy municipal in the territorial ordering in order to build the projects "in any place" and submit crucial procedures, such as the licensing of MISNs without adaptation to local standards (Alfonso, 2019). These policy approaches reveal that the background interest of the MISN lie in increasing production in construction, rather than solving the homelessness of the poorest Colombians (Méndez et al., 2014).

In this regard, the execution of Macroprojects contradicts the normative statement of the Ministry of Housing, City and Territory of "not forming ghettos of housing, without any hierarchy" (Méndez et al. 2014; MVCT, 2008). The productive vision of the social housing enterprise had great social and environmental costs. For instance, an investigation on the types of land alienated for the development of MISN projects identifies that 89 percent of the Macroprojects are located in urban peripheries and 44 percent of the MISN projects were implemented on rural and/or natural protection land (private or public).

Housing and developers: Fundación Santo Domingo (FSD)

Fundación Santo Domingo (FSD) is a nonprofit organization in northern Colombia which works with poor communities in housing and microfinance. It was founded by the Santo Domingo Family, one of the richest in the country and the most important philanthropist at a national scale. The work of the Foundation includes numerous social services to strengthen

microbusinesses and produce low-cost housing solutions in low-income areas. For example, in 1987, FSD created a community development program to help 50,000 local families build new houses for themselves. Since 2010, it has partnered with the National Ministry of Housing to build VIP and VIS projects in the north of Colombia. By 2015, they were well along in the construction of two mega projects: Villas de San Pablo Barranquilla, projected to build 18,871 housing units on a 133-hectare site, and Ciudad del Bicentenario Cartagena, projected to host 65,138 houses on a 388-hectare site by the time of their completion (Ministerio de Vivienda y Territorio, 2020). Today, Fundación Santo Domingo is one of the main developers of public housing for the national government, building large-scale, industrially produced neighborhoods. In fact, one of their main challenges is the difficulty of finding cheap well-located land for such large projects.

The relationship between the Fundación and housing began thirty years ago in Barranquilla, when a very large public housing program was cancelled, and some developers were left with large lots. The developers approached the Foundation and proposed to partner in a self-construction housing project with the Universidad del Norte. The Foundation put up a bank of materials, the Universidad del Norte taught the families how to build the houses and the builders put up the urbanized land. The project is today Ciudadela Metropolitana, a low-income community that today suffers from high rates of crime. This is when the foundation's interest in housing begins but "housing" was not a strategy of the Foundation.

In the mid-2000s Pablo Obregon, the president of the Fundación, had some lots in Barranquilla, owned by him and his family. He proposed the foundation to buy those lots from him and make a housing project in the same fashion: self-construction with the assistance of the university. The foundation's re-entry into housing happened due a land opportunity in the context of a social housing deficit in Barranquilla. In the process, the foundation realizes that unlike 30 years ago, it is very difficult for the very poor families to receive housing subsidies. So, the project starts becoming too slow and begins to accumulate costs. The foundation goes to the Ministry of Housing ask for subsidies for the families who cannot pay for the homes. The minister at that time says that the vision of the government is to make big housing projects; not projects of five hundred houses, but 20, 40 thousand units, and that the Foundation could be the representation of this policy in the Caribbean Coast.

Under this opportunity, the Foundation decided to buy more land in Barranquilla and in Cartagena as well. This is when the FSD decided to enter seriously into the business of urban development and changed its direction. With a new civil engineer NGO, the idea of the Macroprojects began. As for October 2008, the VSP project was 20,000 identical houses, printed as a stamp, "just like in Mexico." With already evidence about the Mexican housing failure, its abandoned houses and foreclosure of unpaid mortgages, the FSD CEO looked for alternative approaches. "In the beginning it was just housing: families and houses, families and houses. This development was so big that thinking about families and houses was very dangerous. We had to look up a little bit and see the whole forest and stop seeing the individual trees." In a 2009 board council at the FSD, he exposed in order to make that land "the raw material for the city" the land should fulfill three functions: the social function, the environmental function, and the economic function. That vision involved to create a different model of urban development since real estate development is insufficient. Thus, in 2010, the FSD board created the concept of integral development of sustainable communities to avoid replicating traditional real estate development for low-income populations. The development of

communities included education, health and safety, recreation and sport and commerce. But all these we not included in the Macroproject law. In the beginning no support or subsidies from the State involved a project of such complexity. In some sense, the FSD was able to carry this vision from the beginning due to its philanthropic mission. In order to create communities, the FSD develop the DINCS model.

FSD's DINCS Model

The FSD DINCS model aims to develop sustainable communities with economic, environmental, and social capital. The DINCS model intends to strengthen these capacities through empowerment, support, and training. The underlying theoretical framework is based on the UN's principles for sustainable development, Amartya Sen's capabilities approach, the collective impact theory, and Darcy Tetreault's model of micro local interventions. The DINCS model defines community as "a group of people in constant and dynamic transformation that live in a given territory, generating a collective identity and belonging, through relations with their members, collective leadership, and a search for common objectives towards the improvement of their life's conditions in terms of social, environmental, and economic capital." FSD's model defines social capital as the norms, institutions, and organizations that provide trust, mutual-help, and cooperation; as well as the social resources communities can collectively mobilize to enhance. Environmental capital is defined as renewable and non-renewable natural goods that provide a flow of ecological services that can gain economic value over time. Lastly, economic capital is defined as material needs and personal development.

The DINCS model can be used in two different modes, depending on the timing of the intervention. The greenfield model is applied when there is no existing housing project, thus giving FSD the opportunity to create an urban plan, housing, social infrastructure, and provide social accompaniment for a newly created community – this is the case of both Villas de San Pablo and Ciudad del Bicentenario. The brownfield model is applied when the housing project has already been constructed, and FSD instead of developing housing solely provides social accompaniment to strengthen social, environmental, and economic capital – this is the case of Villas de Aranjuez and Islas Barú. Residents of multi-family buildings in the Macroprojects benefit from 'Vivienda de Interés Prioritario' (VIP), the subsidized housing program for the very poorest.

These subsidy arrangements are built into the DINCS greenfield model in instances where there is no existing housing. In these cases, FSD creates an urban plan, housing, social infrastructure, and provides social programs to support the newly created communities. This is the case for both Villas de San Pablo and Ciudad del Bicentenario. These projects include twelve parameters deemed necessary for integrated sustainable community development. They embrace adequate environments with public and social services that ensure the project is "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." For instance, the "Banco de Tierras" (Land Bank) establishes parameters for buying land, including that land should not be below sea level or subject to recurrent floods. Construction should also follow urban and environmental quality parameters. Housing units must be adequate, enable flexibility for progressive growth, and increase in value over time. Infrastructure within houses is meant to be energy efficient. These parameters are aligned to training in environment conservation of natural resources. The VAAS route program, the implementation framework of the DINCS model, includes an environmental workshop where

families learn to conserve natural resources and one of the DINCS community boards is focused on environmental issues such as community awareness and preservation.

The families relocated to the green field projects such as CB, receive accompaniment and advising from FSD social workers, which provide them a bridge to connect with public and private entities that can offer them support, operationalized in the "*Ruta de Vinculación, Adaptación, Acompañamiento y Salida*" (VAAS- Linkage, Adaptation, Accompaniment and Exit route), a system of sequential steps through which FSD develops a self-sustaining community: linkage, adaptation, accompaniment, and exit. The four components each have a time frame and deliverables, some of which include metrics and evaluations.

Ciudad del Bicentenario

CB is located in Cartagena de Indias, capital of the district of Bolivar, founded and developed as an important port in 1533. During the colonial period, Cartagena played a key role in the administration and expansion of the Spanish empire. It was a center of political, ecclesiastical and economic activity, providing the city with an important cultural and architectural heritage that in 1984 was designated World Heritage by UNESCO. Today, the port is still the main economic activity along with the petrochemical industry and tourism. For the last twenty years the city has attracted a total of 2,034,775 tourists a year (registration 2017), which has generated that the floating population, doubling the resident population (Coporturismo, 2020; IDOM, 2017), creating new jobs based on tourism but also generating other challenges related to affordable access to housing, urban services, equipment, public services, stores in central areas, provision of recreational facilities for residents, etc. The housing affordability challenges are also drive by the large influx of IDPs (about 10 percent of the total population) and the consequent growing demand on the real estate market for low-income population.[20]

The lack of housing affordability is reflected in the socio-spatial distribution of the city and the suburbs: the higher classes are concentrated in the old city, and the coastal areas while the lower income levels are mainly concentrated in the southeast part of the city, away from the main roadways and around the coast of "La Ciénaga de la Virgen", one of the largest bodies of water in the city. Much of the city's informal growth has taken place within the banks and flood-prone areas of the swamp, from the construction of homes in precarious conditions. According to data from SISBEN, 75 percent of the population with Unsatisfied Basic Needs in Cartagena lives in areas at risk of flooding or landslides, mainly in neighborhoods around the Ciénaga de la Virgen, Loma de Albornoz and the foothills of La Popa hill. The 2011 landslide in Cartagena, which destroyed 2,400 homes located in 30 blocks within the San Francisco neighborhood, reflects the critical living conditions in these territories.

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[20] A sample of one hundred surveys of families who were victims of forced displacement registered by Social Action (2005-2006) reveals that only 19.7 percent of the families have access to health and social security. About 56 percent of families report having left abandoned land as owners before the displacement and 85 percent were now tenants and 38 percent reported living in a shelter with family and friends.

Figure 74. Cartagena's socioeconomic "Estratos," informal settlements, and Ciudad del Bicentenario's site (including Phase-1's built-up area Estrato 1) *
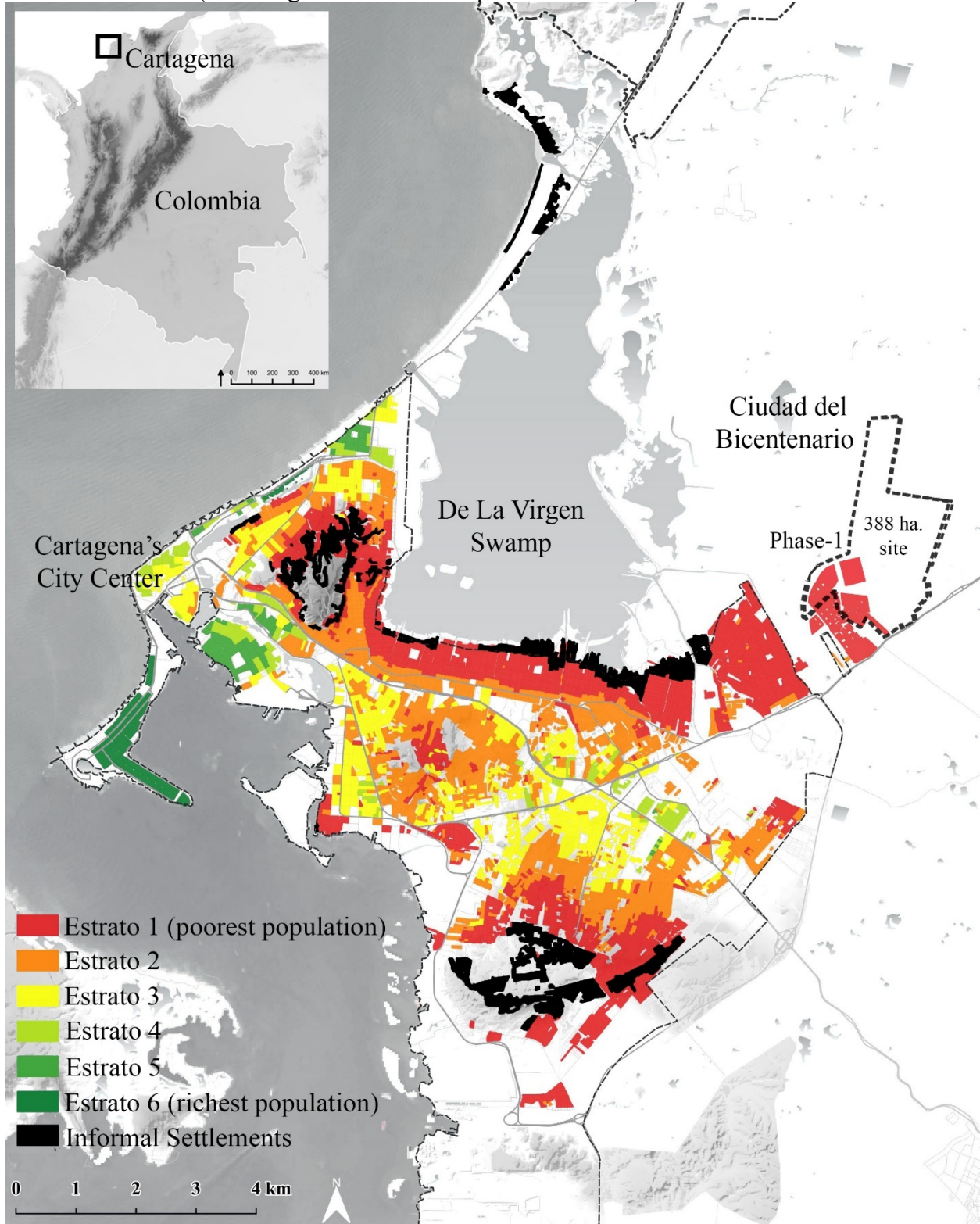
* In Colombia, a socio-economic stratification system was implemented in the 1980's to classify urban populations into different strata with similar economic characteristics. The system classifies areas on a

scale from 1 to 6 with 1 as the lowest income area and 6 as the highest. In 1994, this stratification policy was made into law in order to grant subsidies to the poorest residents. The system is organized so that the people living in upper layers (strata 5 and 6) pay more for services like electricity, water and sewage than the groups in the lower strata. "Colombia - Social Stratification by Law | Ifhp.org," accessed November 4, 2016, http://www.ifhp.org/ifhp-blog/colombia-social-stratification-law.
Source: Andres Achury and Laura Wainer on data DANE 2005, 2018, CARDIQUE y Estudio Huella Urbana IDOM

Considering the scarcity of land in Cartagena, the Macroproject Ciudad del Bicentenario was positioned as a strategic area to channel part or all of the demand for social housing in the city and reduce the spatial patterns of social segregation in Cartagena. According to the 2001 POT, the area where the Ciudad del Bicentenario project is located is within the limits of what is considered "development treatment area." This determines that the urban expansion projects must follow norms approved by the district or the national government. Located 15 kilometers from the historical center of the city, on the edge of the urban area, the Macroproject is a public-private initiative that has a projection to house around 55,000 homes or approximately 220,000 inhabitants, in a total area of 388 hectares according to current regulations.

Currently, 58.49 hectares have been developed with 4,182 houses built and 935 houses under construction. This development has 3 housing typologies: i) one floor houses, ii) two floor houses, which in total add up to 2,837 houses, iii) 1,344 apartments in four floor towers. Until now, all the houses have been built under the VIP (Housing of Priority Interest) subsidy system. Therefore, this project is mostly residential, particularly to serve populations displaced by violence, natural disasters or extreme poverty. To meet the needs of this population the project has developed a series of public facilities such as schools, health center, kindergartens, digital center among others in order to meet these needs. There are also already 95,854 square meters of urbanized green areas.

Figure 75. Ciudad del Bicentenario aerial image

Source: Fundación Santo Domingo

Figure 76. Ciudad del Bicentenario Master Plan of built-up Phase 1 area. Four-story "towers" building and two-story houses

Source: author with Google Earth Satellite Image

Figure 77. Two-story, single-family houses (left) and four-story apartment building units (right)

Source: author for RCHI team

Figure 78. One-story, single-family houses

Source: Francis Goyes for RCHI team

Initial Living conditions in CB

The baseline surveys for Ciudad del Bicentenario illustrate that, at the time of arrival to the new projects, residents were extremely vulnerable in economic terms. Most of the residents did not have a sustained economic activity nor the capacity to build up their savings. In fact, 80 percent of residents reported an income below the minimum salary, 91 percent indicated being unable to save any money, and 61 percent admitted skipping meals because of money shortages. The already dire poverty levels were worsened by barriers to labor market access before families moved to CB. Data from the surveys showed residents' struggle to build capacities and access job opportunities. For instance, although 38 percent of the respondents reported that they "stay at home" (working informally from there or not working at all), only 4 percent were looking for a permanent job. About 64 percent of the interviewees indicated that they had been unable to find any kind of occupation for more than 3 months. Beyond the need to analyze the labor supply in Cartagena, the low level of skills and training of residents is important to note. The baseline surveys reveal considerable challenges on that front: 55 percent of the residents do not have job experience, only 1.2 percent indicated they had a "profession," and just 5 percent had undertaken a "certified" job (formal, skill or expertise related) at any point in their lives.

Structural unemployment and training conditions indicate that many families rely on their combined capacity to engage in temporary informal work. They depend on external income sources--from the state or from other family members. For instance, in Ciudad del Bicentenario, 71 percent said they worked informally, and 85 percent of the families relied on informal activities such as renting out all or part of their dwelling (43 percent), remittances (38 percent) and the state (cash transfers, 6 percent). This scenario suggests that social networks and the local

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informal economy are extremely important for these families, and thereby underscores the threat of losing those during a relocation process.

According to the 2014 baseline survey of Ciudad del Bicentenario, more than three-quarters of the surveyed population had previously suffered from at least one of the following security problems: 74 percent had been victims of personal robbery, 69 percent from house burglaries, and 57 percent with commerce burglary. Furthermore, 54 percent had suffered from gang fighting, 30 percent experienced homicides, and 28 percent had faced transit accidents. Other important findings include 26 percent of the population had suffered from sexual aggressions, 23 percent from illegal drug trade, and 22 percent from extortion. In terms of reporting, nearly two-thirds of families mentioned they report crimes a competent authority. It should be noted that these percentages only account for the households surveyed in 2014, and do not take into account families that entered the Macroproject in 2015The 2015 baseline survey found the greatest problems within the population to be commercial burglary (72.8 percent), extortion (60.7 percent), and gang fights (51.1 percent). Furthermore, homicides (38.3 percent), transit accidents (30 percent), drugs (29.1 percent), and sexual aggressions (28.5 percent) were also preoccupations. Of surveyed families, fully 93 percent claimed to be victims of one of the aforementioned crimes. In sharp contrast to the 2014 responses, within the 2015 surveys, only 1 percent of respondents claimed to have reported these crimes to the police. While it was not possible to explain the origins of the contrast between the two data sets, it is feasible to address it to the different neighborhoods were the CB lived before relocation. The 2014 survey does mention 29.4 percent of responding families are at the lowest poverty level or have been victims of displacement. The 2015 survey shows 24.6 percent families living in the same conditions. From the baseline data, it is clear that the two surveyed populations were in contact with multiple faces of violence. There seem to be high discrepancies between the identified problems from 2014 to 2015. This is possibly due to differences between where the two population groups had been previously located.

From baseline data of 2014, it is impossible to tell how many of families had been displaced by the ongoing "Colombian war" or victims San Francisco's landslide catastrophe. Although I did not have access to the Red Unidos database due to its confidentiality, this large number are reflected in the overall conditions of families arriving at CB. Half of the families who arrived in CB by 2017 reported experiencing one or more environmental risks or environmental stress at some point in their lives. Flooding and avalanches were cited as the most frequent events: 30 percent of the families had experienced flooding and 29 percent had experienced avalanches. Most families lived near rivers, canals and streams, and half of them reported poor environmental conditions due to waste, while almost a third faced other sources of pollution. Only one in ten families reported that streams near their homes were clean and in good condition. Households also reported various problems with the quality of public spaces and infrastructure in their previous neighborhoods. The most recurrent and important problems include disruptive noise (41 percent), air pollution (41 percent), rodents, insects and flies (59 percent), foul odor (36 percent), sewer overflows (29 percent), and water stagnation and garbage accumulation on the streets (36 percent).

Discussion

The political will of President Santos's administration, embodied in the Macroprojects government program, facilitated the achievement of important advances at the level of housing production. However, the national policy did not take shape without criticism. The Macroproject Law has intentionally made local governments weaker by by-passing their urban regulation capacities established in Colombia's Territorial 388 Law of 1997. In particular, the national government dismantled local land use regulations and other powerful planning tools such as local-based environmental protection and participatory planning, to allocate large portions of land in the urban peripheries, and lower urbanization and architectural standards (Mendez et al., 2014). The development areas are still far from the sources of work, such as the industrial complex in Mamonal. This situation may change with the construction of the new airport, the transfer of the Bazurto market and the completion of the development of Serena del Mar. These three major projects, plus the expansion of the Transcaribe system can change the relative location of C.B. with respect to the centers of economic activity in the city, bringing the site of C.B. closer to points of job supply, commerce and productive development. However, these projects are still under development.

Another set of criticism says that this housing policy was conceived as an agreement between large-scale developers and the national State to increase productivity in the construction industry, overlooking the real housing needs of the poorest Colombians (Méndez et al., 2014). As a result, the housing Macroprojects reproduce industrial-like neighborhoods located on the outskirts of cities that rely on homogeneous design and cheap construction technologies which fail to create socio-economic inclusion of the bottom-end of the pyramid (Libertun, 2018b). Achury (2017) adds that resettlement processes that simply aim to reduce the deficit in housing units fail to address the full set of risks resulting from forced displacement. The productivity approach to social housing also carries great environmental costs, as 89 percent of the Macroprojects are located in the urban peripheries, and 63 percent of the projects are advancing on risk/threat/vulnerability zones defined in the regional POT Territorial Plans (Arango Escobar, 2008; Ramirez Rios, 2011).

The analysis of the context and the creation of Ciudad de Bicentenario yields important guidelines for studying the impacts of the policy on the lives of the relocated families. One of the most important contextual characteristics is the profound socio-spatial inequality of Cartagena, marked by an international elite (tourists and very powerful families) that occupies the ocean coasts and the central areas with better urban services, and an "invisible" periphery towards the interior of the territory, where the most vulnerable populations live in conditions of socio environmental risk. Of course, this polarization also occurs in economic terms. The city has the second highest level of social exclusion in Colombia. The richest person earns 184 times more than the poorest person, and at least half of the employed people work informally (DANE, 2018). Social inequality and the high indexes of socioeconomic vulnerability of a large part of the Cartagenera population limit the impact of the city's economic growth since they are not fully inclusive. In addition, displacement and poverty in the rural areas of the Caribbean region have generated an increase in the inflow migration that must deal with post-violence trauma and relocation crisis. This problem has put pressure on the supply of affordable housing, which exceeds the capacity of local institutions to meet the demand. This socio-environmental vulnerability makes Cartagena one of the cities with the most displaced people by natural disasters in the country.

With this background, the national State and the FSD conceived the idea to produce large housing projects, as massive scale enterprises capable of solving multiple demands: the humanitarian crisis of the displaced populations, the housing deficit in a city with an increasingly inaccessible real estate market, the agenda of productive recovery of the construction industry, and the philanthropic agenda of the foundation of one the richest families in the world (the only institution that carries the family surname, Santo Domingo).[21] The genealogy, design and development of CB reflects in many aspects the tension between such diverse and even contradictory agendas. The experience worked as "a laboratory where the private sector, the State, and the third sector learned to execute large urban interventions." These are the words of the former FSD's CEO, who during our interview, said that the reason why this experiment did not end up being "a debacle like the Mexican case" is because the FSD has a more holistic vision about "building communities and not just houses with the DINCS model."

The DINCS model undoubtedly establishes a profound difference with other housing projects, such as CB's neighbor, Villas de Aranjuez. The model guarantees the FSD a follow-up and a permanence in the territory, even after delivering the first phase houses. The intellectual creators of CB were very well aware of the flaws of the Macroproject housing policy; they repeatedly mention that it is a similar scheme to Mexico's program which ended up with millions of abandoned houses. However, the DINCS is a system of support and accompaniment for the community, and it does not necessarily attempt to resolve or alleviate the structural problems that the macro housing project policy presents, such as the distance from sources of employment, the creation of socially homogeneous neighborhoods, and the low quality of the built environment.

Despite that CB has been built by a non-profit developer, its location and material conditions are notably similar to any other "low cost" project developed by a for-profit developer, such as its neighbor Villa de Aranjuez. As many other Macroprojects in Cartagena, CB reproduces the socio-spatial inequality of the city, its territorial distribution of wealth, and damages the ecological structure of the southeast urban area of Cartagena, already affected by the indiscriminate expansion of the urban sprawl. The main difference between CB and projects such as Villas de Aranjuez is that the FSD "stays" in the territory performing social assistance services through the DINCS model, such as employment exchange, seed capital for entrepreneurs, community monitoring, educational programs, among others. But, with these actions, the FSD creates a model of assistance and citizen representation that runs outside the existing institutions of the local State, which has been systematically "erased" in the project by the national public housing policy.

In this sense, the institutional architecture of the MISN was designed with a corporatist spirit, that is, a private alliance between the national government and the large private developers and landowners. Particularly in cities of the Caribbean region, which is marked by high inequality and colonial legacies of power and wealth redistribution, it is the economic elites that define the development of the city and not the democratically elected local governments (Alfonso, 2019). My research on the genesis of Ciudad del Bicentenario finds a direct relationship between the changing philanthropic vision of the FSD in the 2000s and the fact that members of the families owned underdeveloped land on the outskirts of Barranquilla and Cartagena. While the MISN bypasses the local government in terms of planning, land use regulation, environmental protection and participation, the FSD also bypasses the local

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[21] See Forbes list https://www.forbes.com/profile/julio-mario-santo-domingo-iii/?sh=749b14896ee8

government by creating a paternalistic model of assistance and civic representation that replaces the citizen-local government relationships.

In addition, as Ciudad del Bicentenario was approved through the figure of Macroproject, which is a national initiative, the Ministry of Housing is the competent entity to approve its urban and architectural proposal. Under the rules of the national government, the Secretariat of District Planning of Cartagena, has no competence to approve or deny issues related to the urban structure and urban and architectural regulations of the Macroproject. However, all housing, commercial or industrial projects that are designed within the Macroproject Ciudad del Bicentenario once completed are the responsibility of the District Planning Secretariat of Cartagena and must be approved by that entity. These overlapping responsibilities generate grey areas that will be developed further in the research.

This complex matrix of agendas, power and planning rationalities defines a particular material and institutional landscape that entails many contradictions. For instance, the housing policy goals are determined by a productivity spirit and --at the same time-- it aims at solving the humanitarian crisis in Colombia. Also, the Macroprojects aim to solve the housing crisis in the cities, but --at the same time-- the same policy bypasses the municipal governments taking away their management power over the projects' territories. In Cartagena, although the development of affordable housing in the eastern part of the city has been very dynamic, it also presents several challenges, such as those related to the distance to the city's productive centers, low density and poor accessibility to the advantages of urban agglomeration. The development areas are still far from the sources of work, such as the industrial complex in Mamonal. This situation may change with the construction of the new airport, the transfer of the Bazurto market and the completion of the development of Serena del Mar. These three major projects, plus the expansion of the Transcaribe system can change the relative location of C.B. with respect to the centers of economic activity in the city, bringing the site of C.B. closer to points of job supply, commerce and productive development. However, to take advantage of the potential that derives from the new relative location, the master plan of Ciudad del Bicentenario must have a vision of how to integrate its urban structure with the surroundings. A special effort of the empirical analysis focuses on how these contradictions shape the everyday lives of the relocated families who arrive at CB in already extreme vulnerability, families who depend on social networks and the local informal economy, and thereby underscores the threat of losing those during and after a relocation process. As I later demonstrate, housing policy impacts these living conditions in significant ways.

EMPIRICAL ANALISIS

In CB, the informalization of the built environment is not a slow process that emerges through time as the buildings and material conditions of the neighborhood decay. To the contrary, it is an almost instantaneous response to the living conditions imposed by the Macroproject. The informalization of the formal is an indication of families trying to retrofit their livelihood mechanisms, their productive practices and their family traditions as soon as they are relocated from their previous neighborhoods. Even though this project had been built to counter the densification and expansion of informal settlements in Cartagena, the growth of economic and physical informality in Ciudad del Bicentenario shows a deeper dependence of

these families on the informal logics that is not simply solved with houses, urban infrastructure and property titles.

Even more, the conditions created in CB, such as remote location, material restrictions of the houses, and differentiated land use regulations, indirectly encourage people to find alternative solutions to their livelihoods. The hyper austere characteristics of the physical project, a product of the combination of modernist principles and low-cost traditions, in addition to the remoteness and social isolation imposed by the peripheral condition, unleashes informal processes of all kinds. Economic, physical and organizational informality emerge soon after (in periods of less than six months) for those who have sufficient financial, knowledge and logistical resources to invest in developing an economic activity or carrying out a construction project. Informalization practices are deployed in a wide variety of initiative and interventions: from the transformation of some sector of the house into a commercial space, the occupation of backyards to expand residential space, as well as the organization of neighbors to provide a system of garbage collection.

As I demonstrate in this section, the informalization of the formal in CB is not a process that can be exclusively focused on the residents. The State and the FSD participate in the process by actively encouraging it and –at the same time-- penalizing it. As partners, they both deliver houses that are never finished inside: non ceilings, non-wall and floor finishing, exposed pipes, and no doors. I will also show that in CB, the FSD and the developers re-designed the units incorporating ideas borrowed from incremental approach and explain the transition from the one-story to the two-story single-family units. However, the FSD prohibits people from modifying the facades, which are finished and painted in the same yellow and white FSD's colors, during a period of ten years. Despite the great effort that families invest in retrofitting their livelihoods into the austere conditions of the Macroproject, informality also brings up unimaginable extreme decisions, such as "keeping" horses and cooking-over fires inside of upper floors apartments of the "towers," and building henhouses in the towers' roofing, exposing the residents' physical safety and causing conflict among neighbors.

In this section, I will analyze the informalization in CB, why it emerges, how its practices are carried out, as well as its consequences. The research reveals how informality is a by-product of unexpected and paradoxical consequences derived from the national State's asset-based, hyper-standardized approach to building low-income urban environments. In particular, the informalization of the formal shows that the vast majority of respondents in my research do not experience a 'simple' process of enrichment or impoverishment. As first-time homeowners, they become wealthier and overcome lifelong rental stress and evictions threats. However, given the austere, highly standardized regulations and architectural forms in peripheral location, residents simultaneously become poorer from a livelihood standpoint. I also find a second, dual social condition. While moving to the outskirts of the city isolates the families socially and economically, they also share a widespread perception that they have been thrown into a mixture of different people: 'revueltos' (scrambled) within CB. The project's architectural typologies and the rival self-governance initiatives proposed by both the State and the FSD exacerbate this dual condition. Rooted in these paradoxes, and in order to overcome austerity and isolation, the residents re-introduce informal practices based on their past lives' city-making experience in informal settlements and rural areas.

Wealthier-but-poorer first-time homeowners

As I explained earlier in this chapter, the lives and contexts of those arriving at CB is already marked by marginalization, difficulties and displacements. By the time of my fieldwork (2016-2017) most of the interviewees had experienced some kind of displacement before coming to CB, either due to armed conflict, natural disaster or extreme poverty. In this process, many lost everything they had, including properties and personal items. Thus, for them, housing ownership was one of the main priorities; having a house deed represents an enormous improvement in their quality of life and security condition. The securitization of their new house meant both a real and symbolic step forward in concretizing a stable and safe life project. For some, the journey to CB has been deeply transformative:

> In that [former] house, I only had water and electricity, I had no sewer system nor gas. With the natural disaster in 2010, the government evicted me and put me in a rental assistance program until they gave the house here in CB. After the landslide, I lived two years in the neighborhood Pablo VI and then two years in La Paz. Thank God, after four years of going from one place to another I moved to CB. I have been living here in CB for three years. I feel safe now that I have my house deed. With that in my hands I have nothing to worry about.

Others faced an even more tortuous path back to homeownership.

> I owned a house in Carmen de Bolivar, but we were displaced by violent groups. 15 years ago, we moved to Cartagena ... we came in 2002. From Carmen de Bolivar we went to the Boston neighborhood, from Boston to El Libano neighborhood, from El Libano to El Pozón and from El Pozón to CB. In Boston we stayed for 7 years. In el Libano we stayed for 7 months, that neighborhood is very dangerous, and we left it for safety reasons. In the Pozón we lasted 7 years. In all the neighborhoods we lived after Carmen de Bolivar we were renting until we arrived at CB. It took ten years to get this house in CB.

The perceptions about quality of life are intrinsically related to this stress reduction. To many who have been displaced by multiple causes, a shift from renting to the perceived security of owning a home is crucial. No one feels threatened by political violence or natural disaster displacement in CB. However, despite moving to an owned house, which reduced the economic stress of renting and provided secure tenure, job opportunities became scarce. Workers now live very far away from central areas, so it is still difficult for residents to create a local economy beyond survival strategies at CB. For instance, respondents stress that CB concentrates a poor population, including themselves, who are unable to launch businesses, create employment opportunities for others, or spend money on non-essential consumption.

The general perception is that the neighborhood needs more people with the capacity to "push" the local economy forward. Out of 75 respondents, twenty-six women and eleven men reported themselves as unemployed. From this total of thirty-seven unemployed, fourteen interviewees reported that someone else in their family has a temporary or stable job, and sixteen respondents said that no family member works. Four out of these sixteen unemployed receive a government pension (retirement, disabilities) and six occasionally commercialize some kind of

stock (processed food, stationary, homemade food) as a means of survival. None of these six interviewees said that these activities cover the monthly expenses of the family. The remaining thirty-eight respondents reported having an employment in some of formal or informal, temporary or stable economic activity. However, nine of the thirty-seven people who reported to be unemployed also reported a transitory, informal job (four in CB, five outside of CB). All respondents are working or willing to work and they reported that it is more difficult to find jobs in CB than in their former neighborhoods. This applies to both formal and informal jobs and affects skilled workers as well as people without any kind of training.

Economic isolation is also reflected in perceptions about the concentration of poverty. Lack of stable income reduces consumption levels. People only have money to buy food and supplies for their children's education. Handcraft, decoration, or beauty products shops do not last long because they cannot keep stable customers. In other words, people cannot get out of Ciudad del Bicentenario to find a job, nor can they create an activity in the neighborhood because they live in a "poverty trap." As one respondent comments,

> There are no jobs in CB because we are all poor living here. If you want a job, you must get out of CB and search for it anywhere else. I am a waste recycler. I have a cart and take it up to where my strength allows.

She and many other people collect recyclable material and bring it on foot to a storage room in El Pozon, located about 3km from CB. When the stock room is filled, they call a truck which collects the material and pays by weight. The payment is divided among the people who participate in this informal cooperative system. She insists that finding a job in CB is very difficult. Thus, while most of the interviewees responded that their life quality has improved because they are now homeowners, and because they have access to water and electricity services and very good education and social services, they also questioned the sustainability of this improvement in the long term. This dual process of improvement and impoverishment is complex and perceived as contradictory even for the FSD employees who work directly with the residents. As a social worker explains:

> About 67 percent of the population living in Ciudad del Bicentenario has monetary poverty and 26 percent has extreme monetary poverty. These indicators are above city levels. However, we are struck by their [residents] perception of poverty. When you ask them if they feel poor, they respond they do not because they own a home. A roof over their heads makes them feel that their lives have changed. I would say it is not only the house with its four walls but the social facilities such as schools, clinics, etc.

Why do residents feel that their overall quality of life is better while having fewer economic opportunities? One of the main reasons is related to the peripheral location of CB and the distance to economically active areas. When interviewed in 2016 and 2017, all respondents at CB, regardless of their economic status or place of origin, reported that they would spend between two and four times as much on bus tickets as they did before moving to their new homes. During an early interview I carried in 2016 with the former FSD CEO, he said that job creation for CB residents was a main objective for the FSD. The original plan was not to create jobs within the neighborhood but through connecting workers with businesses and industries in Cartagena. The expectation was that workers would "import wealth" into CB and consequently

they would trigger a local economy of services for the working families. The idea of "importing wealth" through wages was proposed to FSD leaders by Ricardo Hausmann, a very famous Venezuelan economist and Harvard professor who was then an external adviser. Based on his guidance, the FSD opened an employment office in CB and the DINCS model incorporated training courses, support in job searches, agreements with private companies and other actions that aimed to match residents with jobs within the city. The empirical research I present in this chapter demonstrates the flawed assumptions that undergird the idea that CB could function as a dormitory suburb capable of providing services to an employed working class. This argument ignores the multiple challenges related to structural poverty and how relocation and displacement impacts already-vulnerable families negatively. In particular, Hausmann and the FSD board ignored that people relocated to CB have no income and they lack of any kind of professional education--conditions that cannot be resolved through short training courses and counseling. The vast majority of people come from rural and informal areas and have therefore historically lived from informal economies (rural or urban). In fact, there is a correlation between the negative or positive perception regarding economic opportunities and the cause that precipitated a particular respondent's move to CB. For instance, displaced populations from rural areas have more difficulty in developing an economic life beyond mere survival, as they also perceive that they have less economic opportunity than in their original towns or villages.

Since many of these households were displaced victims of political violence and paramilitary terrorism, they must overcome losing all their sources of income such as land, machinery, social networks and tools. The abrupt rural-urban transition is reflected in the lack of employment skills relevant to urban areas, the need to become dependent on a monetary economy in contrast to their previous non-monetary sources of livelihood, and the absence of relationships of trust, associated with smaller, rural settlements. These have different logics, capacities and requirements from the formal economy. Hausmann's ideas also ignored the fact that, due to the remoteness of CB, the cost of travel to work centers is so high in relation to income that it would be impossible to maintain a job or even seek work in the center of Cartagena. Finally, the notion of "importing wealth" by replicating sub-urbanization processes of Latin America's middle and upper classes missed the salient fact that the most that the CB population could "import" would be a minimum wage or daily wage payments, which even in an aggregate way could not launch a service economy in the area.

My analysis suggests that distance from active economic areas is the most important reason why people feel economically isolated and therefore report fewer economic opportunities. Long commuting time and high costs prevent people from having a more proactive attitude through job seeking. Income levels are so low in relation to the cost of transportation that people must make constant trade-offs between leaving Ciudad del Bicentenario for a daily job or using the money for other purposes, such as paying bills or buying better quality food. All interviewees, regardless of their economic status or place of origin, reported that they spent between two and four times as much on bus tickets as they used to do before moving into CB. The quality of public transport service is also very poor: buses are always packed in rush hours; the service ends between 8 and 9 p.m.; and is also unavailable in the early morning. Five people also testified that they abandoned their jobs and education because they could not afford the transportation costs and could not bear travelling more than four hours per day. Besides the costs and time, getting in and out of CB in very early or late hours is dangerous. Female respondents complained about robbery at the bus stops or on their way to the stops.

This scenario has improved somewhat since Transcaribe, the Integrated Bus System of the region, extended their routes and incorporated stops at CB in 2018. Since then, residents at least do not pay multiple bus tickets. However, FSD's social workers acknowledge that the Transcaribe ride fees are too expensive for the majority of the residents. In 2019, Cartagena reportedly had the most expensive public transportation service in Colombia; the monthly cost for a weekly roundtrip journey represents --at least-- ten percent of the minimum salary, equal to about US$241 (Ahumedo, 2019). Although the development of affordable housing in the eastern part of the city has been very dynamic, it also presents several challenges, such as those related to the distance to the city's productive centers, low density and poor accessibility to the advantages of urban agglomeration.

Income levels are so low in relation to the cost of transportation that people must make constant trade-offs between leaving CB for a daily job or job-seeking and using the money for other purposes, such as administrative procedures. In some cases, choosing to commute can even require leaving children locked at home.

Women, in particular, argued that in previous neighborhoods they could not only walk to their job, but they could also rely on family members to look after children and could share workshop spaces and machinery with other neighbors. In the rural towns, many families relied on trust and kinship relationships among community and family members. As soon as they moved to CB, they lost these safety networks. such as money lending, family support and sharing goods. The lack of solidarity and trust constraints the development of informal economies. As a female resident from rural areas suggests:

> I lived in the countryside with my mother. We lost our chickens, our pigs… we had a parcel of land and we lost everything. […] The village life was easier. Everything is more difficult here. In the city, you need money for anything, and everything is expensive. I am unemployed but still have to pay all the bills. In my village, I had my family who was always helping when things became difficult, but to count on that is more difficult here.

This structural condition that overlays remoteness and the lack of a local economy diminishes the capacity of the FSD's DINCS programs. All the FSD employees I interviewed between 2017 and 2020 stated that the socioeconomic prospects of the families did not get better in CB. There is a widespread agreement about the relevance of the DINCS models in creating local leaders and helping the families in the transition towards their new homes, but they also see that the DINCS model failed in "changing people's lives." Even those employees who work in employment and economic development, admit that the economy of CB is "stuck," that most of the economic activities are survival strategies and that the socioeconomic conditions are "the same—if not worse."

The impoverishment or stagnation of families has not occurred without significant efforts by the FSD to develop productive development strategies. In CB, there is still an employment office where FSD officials work with companies and private actors in Cartagena to employ residents through agreements with companies to match labor demand and supply, and skills training programs. The results are not satisfactory for the FSD, which finds it very difficult to "place" the residents in jobs, nor for the residents who take courses and invest time in DINCS training, put together CVs but then "no one ever calls them." Lack of skills is perceived as an

impediment to attaining better jobs. Skilled people nonetheless do not necessarily have more economic opportunities since finding a job requires travelling out of CB, which is difficult given distance and commuting times. This is also a problem in CB, where skilled workers cannot find a job within the neighborhood. Respondents with professional degrees (a total of four among the 75 interviewees) and technical skills also emphasized that they find no comparative advantage at CB because job opportunities do not demand higher levels of education or specialization. To the contrary, employers look for unskilled, cheap labor in construction work or other kinds of service provision. Female residents also perceive a gender bias because the available job positions are mostly in the construction sector, and they are left outside.

> I worked until last year out of CB. I am unemployed now. I am a teacher in arts and informatics. Last year the FSD came with the La Salle school (located in Cartagena city) representatives. They organized a meeting with the local teachers, and we delivered our CVs. But they did not take us into account. Not even one of us. They said they called us and almost nobody replied, and those who did rejected the offer. Those are lies. I spent the days next to the phone and they never called. They just did not take us into account and hired teachers from outside the neighborhood. I don't get why they hire people from outside that don't know the staff or the children of CB. I think the same will happen with the new school they are about to open.

Local residents with expertise in the construction sector could be workers and monitor the quality of what it is done, but this seems to be one of the reasons why contractors do not hire them. One respondent conveys the connection between economic livelihood and the environmental quality of the homes; construction contractors resist hiring skilled workers because they have higher salaries.

> The construction companies that work in CB do not trust local people living in the neighborhood, so they don't hire them. I am an experienced plumber and worked in the construction of the new school nine months ago. But the bad administrators of these companies preferred unskilled, cheap labor instead of skilled workers. Also, people from other neighborhoods and professionals do not care about the quality of the construction and whether these buildings are done properly, but we do locals do. So, we complain when we see that things are badly executed, as happened in the new health center. We discussed employment opportunities at the community halls but, still, there are much fewer job opportunities here than in other places.

Over the years, the FSD progressively changed its ideas of "importing wealth" towards wishes to support resident entrepreneurialism and local production. They created an office focused on creating productive initiatives for alternatives to formal employment. Beyond the good intentions, the results have not been satisfactory for various reasons. Among many shortcomings, the projects turn out to be too sophisticated for the capacities of the residents; they propose associations that lead to conflict among the participants; the associations are neither able to develop sufficient autonomy nor can they scale up the production to be financially sustainable; the projects impose practices and knowledge that are not rooted in the knowledge and practices of the people. The following story told by the leader of the productive development office about a failed hydroponic production project illustrates the dimension of the challenge:

We [the FSD] created several productive projects, but none of them worked. Together with the UNDP we had a hydroponic lettuce project. We created an association of 24 resident neighborhood growers to produce organic lettuce and spinach and sell it to food chains in downtown Cartagena. The project costed around US$200,000. The UNDP and the Foundation collaborated with 50/50. After a year of support, we closed it. We realized that the project was not going to scale-up neither be as "healthy. When the growers joined and formalized, problems began to opposition. They were not able to deliver enough lettuce for the retailers' demand. The production was inconsistent. There was disagreement on how to work, the schedules, and the roles. This exercise and its failure helped us [the FSD] make decisions about what type of initiative may work in CB. We rejected the creation of partnerships and our confidence in entrepreneurship. The productive projects here must have scale, low technological level, and must not involve associations between neighbors. Instead, we need external leadership of a company or a person with experience that guarantees an income for the people.

To some extent, these difficulties are not specific to living in CB; they are an outcome of poverty, which leads to a lack of access to education and training. Other challenges seem to directly result from moving into CB, such as the burden that the characteristics of the built and normative environment impose and the limited solidarity among neighbors and economic isolation. Distance to job opportunities is just one determinant for diminishing economic opportunities. The economic isolation is reinforced by the stigma associated with living in Ciudad del Bicentenario. When residents try to find a job in the city center, employers pay close attention to their addresses to make judgments about "what kind of employee is applying to the job position." To live in a poor urban neighborhood designated at "Estrato 1" such as Ciudad del Bicentenario, has negative connotations. Also, employers fear a potential employee living in CB would arrive late to work, often due to the poor quality of the public transport. One respondent explained:

The neighborhood where I live influences the kind of job I can get in Cartagena. When I take my CV to the employers and I say I am from South Olaya (Olaya is a town and municipality located in the western region of the Department of Antioquia), they look at my profile and then psychologists' interview to evaluate if I am a dangerous person. When I say I come from a rural area I don't have much trouble as when I say I come from a Estrato 1 neighborhood. That shouldn't matter but it does. Thus, to get a job you need a 'palanca', a contact.

This prospect is also exacerbated by the economic burden of formality. CB residents are now more dependent on money and constrained by regulations and timetables for service bills and taxation. Many residents pointed out that money "was not such an important thing" in their former neighborhoods--especially in rural areas and low-income neighborhoods where cash is not the main mechanism for accessing food. The dependence on money is particularly concerning when residents must pay water and electricity bills to meet basic needs. These come on a fixed monthly schedule that is incompatible with their own cash-flow and the structural logic of their livelihoods. Thus, the impossibility of maintaining the formal infrastructures on a regular, scheduled basis creates a snowball of problems related to lack of maintenance, increasing costs to repair damages, and infrastructure abandonment.

We have issues with the water system of the towers. Someone has broken the roofs of the water pumps rooms. They have also stolen the storm water drainpipes of the buildings. The administration of the buildings claims that we the residents should pay when there is a damage. A person who lives at those towers over there told me that they cut off the water pumps from 10pm to 9am. I don't know if that is because the water pumps are damaged or what. I know that we will have a serious problem with the water system in the long term. At the meetings, the FSD told us that this system was good, and I saw it as something viable. They told us that as this was an autonomous water system, if there was a general cut in the city, we would still have water at our homes. I thought that was something good because these apartments are so small that water is more necessary. But most of the people here do not pay the water bills. I haven't paid for the last 5 months either because I have been short financially, thus, I do not have pipe water at my apartment now. I must collect it at the ground floor. But I am conscious that I should pay. Other people do not see that in the same way. I wonder what will happen when the FSD leaves this place, and we stay alone here. Who is going to repair the water pumps? How will we get the water? Nobody pays attention to that.

Given this context, CB residents suggested that being a homeowner is an unfulfilled opportunity because the lack of income constrains the family's progress and broader life-enhancement projects, such as improving the interiors of the house that the FSD delivers unfinished and investing in their children's wellbeing. As the FSD officer in charge of CB pointed out, "residents are still poor, the difference is that now you don't see it because they live in a proper house." However invisible to an outsider "you," poverty persists. Finding a job or developing a successful business is one of the main concerns for the residents of Ciudad del Bicentenario. As one respondent put it:

First and most, I want a life change. Now I have my house, but I do not have employment. I want to do many things, like improve my house, make it nicer and provide better support for my children at school. I presented my CV on every single job board, but nobody called me. I feel tired and desperate because I really want to work. I am very stressed.

Many respondents emphasized that given the choice between remaining in CB and returning to their former neighborhood they would stay because they are now homeowners. However, most of the respondents also added that if they could own a house in their former neighborhood, they would move back immediately because of the job opportunities factor. Along these lines, many respondents acknowledged the 10-year restriction on sales and renting their housing units but indicated they would like to sell their homes and buy a house in a better location closer to jobs. A former FSD employee explained the findings:

The study found that as soon as the 10 years that the macro-project law requires beneficiaries to stay were over, they would leave their homes, either by selling or renting the unit. The study also showed that residents do not see housing as an asset either. They wanted to return to where their family is, in the area where they had always developed. The hardest thing for the focus group participants was to move from the rural to the urban: because of the housing system, because

of the transportation system, the socioeconomic system, and not finding job opportunities.

These findings align with the findings of a focus-group process that the FSD carried out in 2017, aimed at understanding the residents' feelings towards their new homes and their belonging to their new community. Researching in my interviews about these findings, I found many comments related to their house as a use asset. People highlight "pragmatical" values, such as not renting, relief about not depending on a landlord's will, and stop feeling threat of eviction or displacement. Many residents also comment on the symbolical value of becoming a homeowner "I cried for days after receiving the keys of my home; sometimes I look at them and cry again." Despite these many refence to use value I could not find any comment about the exchange-value of the house, such as the value of (formal) wealth increase for the family, the possibility of accessing to formal credit and the mortgage system or plans for resale in the medium-term future after restrictions are due. This lack of vision of the house as an asset undermines many of the theorical assumptions of asset-based homeownership previously presented in the literature review, in particular those that remark wealth transfer, social mobility, and access to the credit system.

The lack of perception about the exchange value of the property may be related to several factors: the ten-year restrictions on sales and rentals imposed by public policy, and the temporal absence of a formal real estate market due to the restrictions. Also, findings from studies in Colombia or Mexico (Ward, 2014) on consolidated informal settlements mentioned earlier in the literature review, illustrate that tenure traditions where property passes from hand to hand within the generations of the families. Homes are rarely sold thus there is little interest in its exchange value. This dynamic may replicate in the Macroprojects. These combined variables suggest that families will need to adapt their units to changing needs over time, and that housing investments are not related to an asset strategy but to the needs of the daily life. It also indicates that, although families may be aware that the informalization of the dwelling possibly impacts negatively its exchange value in the formal market, the opportunity cost of following the legal procedures required by the municipality of Cartagena do not pay for the benefits of continuously adapting the house to changing needs and the administrative costs and time of legal processes. In the next section, I present an analysis of the reasons and conditions under which informalization arises in CB.

Retrofitting practices in response to the wealthier but poorer condition

Since having access to job opportunities outside of CB is so difficult, and since private, commercial real estate development is not allowed within the VIP residential areas of the Macroprojects, residents have attempted a variety of occupations from home. Most of the respondents have transitory, short-term jobs: 24 have reported to have an informal job out of CB, while 14 reported to have an informal job in the neighborhood, and 20 people stated that they worked at home, revealing that the home can be a site of complementary economic activity. A study carried out in 2016 and 2017 by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2017) analyzed the demand and supply of trade and production in CB. It reveals that CB has an informal market capable of supplying the existing population with a wide variety of occupations such as food retail, clothing manufacture, hairdressing and other beauty treatment services,

leasing personal and household goods such as washing machines, and financial services. The UNDP study identified 487 productive units within Ciudad del Bicentenario, all of which are establishments of different scales developed within the informal sphere. This number was ratified in 2019 by a census carried out by the consultancy Planos Vivos, which found 490 economic units. According to the FSD employability manager, the high rate of informality results because few residents have the capacity to develop a small-scale business, with capital investment, the availability of full-time dedication and potential for economic development. Only forty business are partially formalized or are on their way to formalization, which means that they have legal administrative status, even though they do not qualify as commercial/ workshop space since that falls outside the urban regulations for areas within the Macroproject.

Gender patterns also emerge when assessing the characteristics of informal activities. We interviewed twice as many women as men, and they responded similarly in most ways. However, female respondents evinced much greater concern about the availability of informal employment inside CB, likely due to the characteristics of the labor demand. Informal employment activities occur in the construction sector and street vending, both male-centered occupations. Interviewees find informal employment out of CB as moto-taxi delivery people, as construction workers (temporary or self-employment such as air conditioning maintenance) and daily helpers at the Mercado de Azurro or El Pozón for men, and as cleaners in family houses or cooks in private houses for women. Formal employment in CB is almost non-existent. Only two respondents out of seventy-five reported a formal job within the community: one works for a private security company as a paid guard and the other sells internet services for a cell-phone company. Eighteen people reported formal employment outside CB. These jobs are in the construction sector, or as low skilled service providers such as garbage collectors or security. Those who consider themselves unemployed mostly work in the construction sector as well. All of the respondents are men.

The majority who work at home treat this as a temporary solution while seeking a job in some formal or informal sector outside CB. They are aware of the regulatory frameworks and the law of use of the macro-project that does not allow commercial or productive use of residential lots, however, as the leader of productive development of the FSD indicates, "people still develop their businesses, in a decisive and risky way without having clear regulations." Despite the resident's hope about having a formal employment in the mid-term future, the empirical evidence shows that the informality levels are very high, above the Cartagena's level that reach 50 percent. Planos Vivos data shows that 64 percent of the population depends on informal work. However, it is not clear what the methodology considers formal and informal work and whether the sample is statistically significant. From my interviews with FSD employees, they argue that informality may reach 80 percent / 90 percent of the economically active population because this is the only possible option for the families living in economic vulnerability. They also suggest that the lack of opportunities will never change, and informal strategies will increase with time despite the FSD encourages them to become formal.

The DINCS model plays an important and positive role in people's perception of informal economic opportunities. Professional training and workshops almost always yield very positive comments: respondents appreciate the encouragements to learn new skills and to develop their own activities as well as the opportunities to socialize with other members of the community. In fact, many people ask for more scheduled workshops so that they can attend after their workday. They also call for better publicity about course offerings and generally praise the

topics of the courses. There is a widespread perception that the FSD's delivers the courses among their leaders, disadvantaging those who are not as involved with the DINCS activities. Those who have "palanca" (a contact) at the Foundation always have better information but do not share it with the community. However, many find it very difficult to transform their takeaways from the DINCS courses into real, sustainable, and entrepreneurial projects. The lack of access to formal finance systems does not allow them to pursue upfront capital investment to buy tools, materials, and machinery. One female resident illustrates this well:

> I had a small business. A foundation provided me with a display case and some towels and bed sheets, but, as people do not have a stable employment here, nobody buys those kinds of things. So, I failed. I really liked that business. I wish I could have the opportunity to start it over again.

Although access to formal finance is limited, there are several private informal lenders that offer loans at interest rates of 20 percent. Reimbursements can be made on a day-by-day fashion, as cash becomes available, and lenders are forgiving of late or incomplete payments. People take on these higher interest rates because no other options are available. Banks do not accept their applications because they are perceived as "too risky borrowers." Respondents also pointed out that they do not know how to organize and develop their entrepreneurial ideas and lack knowledge about, for example, how to calculate inventory and potential demand for products.

> We [FSD] give them training, but not everyone wants to be formalized. There are a few with whom we have been able to work by offering seed capital, but they were obliged to formalize in order to receive the benefit. There are about 40 formalized businesses in a universe of 490 businesses. In fact, from the experiences we learned earlier, we identified that a large part of the will not formalize. […] People do not have the resources to have an installed capacity that allows them to have such a business. The majority or people who are looking to generate income in some way, without having a clear, concise idea, an idea that really makes them fall in love because they are really very weak ideas.

People use their home as space for commercial and productive activities. The RCHI team interviewed approximately an equal number of families living across CB's three house typologies (one-story homes, two-story dwellings and four-story apartments). Many of the divergent responses about economic activities status correlate closely to the type of house. This does not suggest a kind of environmental determinism but may instead by a proxy for other conditions. For instance, 2/3 of the people that reported to have an informal economic activity live in the towers, while the other 1/3 of the respondents are equally divided between one and two-story houses. Of the 75 interviews, 39 respondents self-described as unemployed - meaning that they lost their previous jobs or failed to develop a small business. Only 9 of these live in the four-story "towers," while 30 reside in the single-family houses. Of the 24 households that work at home, most lived in the single-story houses and ground floor units of the apartment buildings, probably because it is easier to offer a service or sell goods when neighbors have direct, ground floor access and windows facing the street. The work done from home translates into a wide variety of occupations. The main activities are cooking, sewing, hairdressing, and food sales (generally processed products such as snacks and sodas). These activities exhibit a wide range of development. In food retail for instance, some families simply use a fridge in their living room

and re-sell stock while other families go as far as renovating the façade or one of the rooms in their house to promote their business. This range illustrates the differences between people who have decided to develop a business, involving investment and full-time commitment, and those who work at home as a temporary solution until they can get a new job. FSD employees who work or worked in employment and productive projects remark the case of an entrepreneur who is not a resident but arrived at the neighborhood from Antioquia, looking for commercial opportunities. He had know-how in managing groceries markets, so he rented the ground floors of one of the best located corner houses in CB and opened his store. He rapidly expanded to the neighboring house. He, like other entrepreneurs, has the financial capacity to open shops.

The development of economic activities within the houses implies the remodeling of the original unit. The most successful businesses involve sacrificing entire rooms to build a local or workshop space. As mentioned above, working at home is more common among those living in the one-story houses. Home-based work happens at half the frequency in two-story houses, and those in four-story apartments are almost four times less likely to work out of their homes. This pattern seems related to two key factors. On the one hand, the typology of the one-story house supports development of economic activity. By contrast, apartments do not support the development of entrepreneurial activities because of their lack of direct access to public space and the fact that their small dimensions cannot be expanded. This impossibility to develop a business within an apartment is one of the main reasons why people in those dwellings say they would like to live in a more house-like typology.

Figure 79. Informal shops in CB. Full-front local market shop in one story house

Source: RCHI team

Figure 80 Informal shops in CB. Supermarket in the ground level of two-story house

Source: RCHI team

Figure 81. Informal shops in CB. Miscellaneous shop in the ground floor apartment

Source: RCHI team

On the other hand, the differences may be related to duration of stay in the community, given that most of the families living in the one-story typology have been in CB for a longer period of time. This may indicate that these families are more established socially and economically and therefore may be more capable of investing in a business or developing an economic activity on their own. In general, respondents reported many downsides to home-based work. It disrupts the family dynamics by overlapping the activities – studying, watching TV, working -- of different family members in one single space. It also disturbs the intimacy of the family members when strangers (customers) come in and makes it difficult to manage a working-hours schedule, since people feel forced to extend working hours because they are at home.

Physical informality also arises from the need for material support from economic informality and from the limitations of the project itself, mainly regarding the inadequacy of the design decisions with respect to the diverse needs of the families that are relocated to CB. The most problematic aspect about the relationship between the design of the houses and the quality of life of the families is the overcrowded conditions that families face as soon as they move to CB. No matter the type of house, around 40 percent of the interviewed families live in overcrowded conditions as established by the Department of National Statistics of Colombia. To estimate this figure, I made a simple calculation: an overcrowded unit has more than six persons living in the house. All the housing units in CB, no matter their type, size or location have two bedrooms. According to the National Census Methodology published in 2005, up to 3 persons per room may be considered a healthy environment. Based on our analysis of 71 interviews for which we have data about the number of people living in the unit, nearly 40 percent of households in each of the three housing types accommodated more than 3 people per room, with the highest rates overcrowding occurring the on the one-story houses. However, this simplification does not consider the diversity of the family composition living in CB. Many households include elderly members, more than three children that share one room, or contain children who grew up and already have their own family and still live with their parents. Other families host semi-permanent relatives. Thus, this simple picture could be actually overlooking a more serious overall overcrowding condition. One respondent makes clear that the opportunity to live in CB brought considerable discomfort:

> I would have chosen a different type of house because my family is large, and this is very small, very narrow. We are glued in here and we feel very unconformable in the apartment. But when we moved in nobody asked us what kind of house we preferred. It was more like "take it or lose it." Nobody actually asked if we wanted an apartment or a house, but, if you don't take what they offer, you may have to wait another 20 years more.

Another resident tells a similar story:

> I already spent seven years waiting for the house under conditions of displacement. One day they called and told me that I was a beneficiary of the lottery and there was an available house for my family. At the beginning, I didn't want to take it because of the size. I told you my family is large, and I knew we wouldn't fit in here. But they told me I should take the house because there was not any other option, so it was this or nothing. Otherwise, they would put me on the waiting list once again.

The lack of satisfaction with the units delivered by the FSD and the perception about the house quality and size is related to the previous living conditions of the families, not related to the typology where residents are living now in CB. Given this comparison, respondents were about equally divided over whether the move to CB represented an improvement in their housing. One respondent weighed the many upsides and downsides. On the one hand, some people say that "it's better to rent a house because a house that is yours is more expensive, [and] more to manage, because you need to think about the paint, the services, [and the price of] everything goes up." With a rental, "I pay and that's it, I don't have to worry about anything else." CB, however, came with a bathroom and "water that comes from pipes. There you had to buy the water, and you thought it was easier, even if you paid more. Here it's different. There's a bathroom, you can go to the bathroom without a problem." In [her] former home, "you had to go in the open, you had to buy the water, the light came through little cables that were badly connected, you had to lend electricity to the neighbor." On balance, CB represented a marked improvement over "very bad" conditions: "I give thanks to God that I got this little house."

Figure 82. Housing renovations. One-story house with added second unit on the upper level

Source: RCHI team

Figure 83. One-Story house original typology and types of reforms deployed by residents

ONE-STORY ORIGINAL HOUSE
(as it is delivered by FSD)

- patio
- bedroom
- kitchen / dinning area
- bedroom
- outdoor terrace

Backyard: outdoor area with no finishing on walls and floor

Bathroom comes with finishing, toilet and washbasin

kitchen area has no finishing, floor or appliances

only doors delivered are the two exterior doors and bathroom door

interior walls are unfinished with exposed concrete bricks

no floor finishing only underlayment

Outdoors area in the front house

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with pottery workshop

- patio

Backyard area is reduced and used for pottery oven

A new bedroom is built in the backyard area for elder kids

bathroom remains as originally designed

instead of oven many families install carafes with stoves

kitchen remains as originally designed

curtains for rooms division

medium / large fridges do not fit in the kitchen area

potter's well for handcraft making

handcraft showcases

Rooms are used as designed

Dinning area is shared with pottery workshop appliances

walls extention dividing from neighbors' s outdoor space

Fenced outdoors area is used as outdoor living room

New fence in the entrance

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with retail shop

A new bedroom is built in the backyard area for second room

bathroom remains as originally designed

medium / large fridges do not fit in the kitchen area

entrance form shop to the house

living area and one bedroom is used as a grocery shop

outer space is used to exhibit merchandise and freezers

counter

merchandise

public space in the corner is taken as part of the house extention outdoor, fenced area

New fence in the entrance

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with taylor /seamstress workshop

Laundry area in backyard

bathroom remains as originally designed

instead of oven many families install carafes with stoves

medium / large fridges do not fit in the kitchen area

taylor /seamstress machinery, inputs and worktables

curtains for rooms division

Dinning area is shared with business space

clothing rack

Fenced outdoors area is used as outdoor living room

New fence in the entrance

Source: Laura Wainer based on fieldwork observations

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Figure 84. One-Story house showing reforms deployed by residents

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with church space

backyard area is roofed and used as a multiple purpose space: sleeping, laundry and dinning

bathroom remains as originally designed

bedroom is used by parents and kids

kitchen and living area is reduced

living area and one room is used for church services

outdoor area remains open (not fenced)

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with blacksmith workshop

Laundry area in backyard

bathroom remains as originally designed

kitchen area is reduced

medium / large fridges do not fit in the kitchen area

curtains for rooms division

blacksmith workshop machinery, inputs and worktables

Fenced outdoors area is used as extention of workshop

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with second unit on the second floor (ground floor)

Laundry area in backyard

house layout remains as originally delivered by FSD

new fence for outdoor area

new stairs to access second floor unit

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with second unit on the second floor

bathroom is larger than in the groundfloor unit

new units replicates the original house layout

new fence for the upstairs terrace

new stairs to access second floor unit

Source: Laura Wainer based on fieldwork observations

Figure 85. Expansion at the backyard of two-story house

Source: RCHI team

In many ways, the renovation of the houses is induced by the design and parameters of the housing policy itself. Not only because the state gives away unfinished homes but also because they are such poor quality and so small that families perceive them as a risk and need to modify them to feel safe. Many interviewees expressed dismay over the unfinished state of the houses they were given, stressing both health problems and poorly communicated policies. FSD promises raised high expectations regarding these houses, since--before families moved in--the Foundation showed them finished houses. At its core, this aspect of management--the distribution of responsibilities--is a matter of governance, an issue that will be explored in greater detail in conjunction with that topic. The health-related complaints from residents centered on leaks, dust from the cement blocks and other incomplete construction. Interviewees that suffered from asthma or pulmonary problems said that living in the Macroproject had made their symptoms worse. For some, the unfinished nature of their house jointly brought health concerns and reminders of their financial precarity:

> I'd like to have more space for the living room, so that it can be more open, but there's no money. If you come here and you have a good credit, you're good. But I don't have anything, not even cement for the rooms upstairs. It's affected my health; the dust of the unfinished house has affected my throat.

Figure 86. Interiors: Unfinished houses delivered by FSD and post occupation improvements at apartment units

The quality of the houses and apartments is also a source of social and psychological stress due to forced intimacy among family members as well as with other neighbors, threatening both visual and acoustic privacy. Since houses are not provided with interior doors, and the majority of residents cannot afford to pay for door installation, they resort to using bed sheets or just having every space open, leaving household members without any personal privacy. Lack of privacy was also prevalent between neighbors and seems to be a significant deterrent to creating positive relationships.

> In the houses you hear everything, one resident observed. We had a problem with the neighbor because we could hear everything… I have no privacy in my patio. As a woman, I need privacy.

There's a general feeling that depending on other residents to keep common spaces clean is almost impossible, and that embarking on any community project faces insurmountable barriers. Most concerns center on the tower typology, where residents share responsibility over the water pumping system, electricity and maintenance of interior and exterior spaces (hallways, stairs, exterior green spaces). Many tower residents are unable or unwilling to pay administration costs, which in turn impact the ability to keep stairs and walls clean, let alone maintain shared infrastructure like the two water pumps, which supply water to the 28 buildings. Shared responsibility to cover costs when the pump breaks down or fails to provide sufficient water pressure has proved to be difficult, since it also entails proactively paying for maintenance. "We haven't done any maintenance yet," one respondent observed. "We need to come to an agreement with the administration [to] raise the funds and pay a diving group so they can clean everything (in the tank)." Essentially, many residents are unprepared, financially and socially, for the particular kinds of interdependencies that come with shared multi-family living. One respondent explains the problem:

> Whoever doesn't take care of his apartment in his tower affects all the other towers. Each house (apartment) is dependent on the entire block. It's not like we were given our own house, our plots of land. Where if there's a problem there, it's your problem. Here it's everyone's problem; that's why I don't like the towers model.

When analyzing the physical aspects of housing and the design decisions of the unit in CB to understand whether or not the regulatory and the built environment induce informality, I found that the older units offer less possibilities for renovation and expansion, while the newer two-story houses accommodate better the incremental possibilities of the house. The oldest units are individual, single floor houses built with a PVC construction system. While this system is beneficial from a maintenance standpoint, and because it does not require significant finishing work, remodeling or expanding the units is very difficult. Several of its residents, who are also the oldest residents in CB, are unhappy with the fact that they cannot open doors or windows on the walls, nor can they add a second floor. With the PVC system, these simple construction tasks are very difficult to perform, especially without qualified labor in this construction system. Facing the dissatisfaction of the families with their homes, the FSD decided that the second batch of units would be built with traditional materials and techniques. Although the design of the house remained the same, remodeling the houses turned out to be easier. In these areas, there are some two-story houses that some residents were able to build themselves or by hiring local labor.

Most of the residents come from neighborhoods where the economy is dominated by construction, so they are the masons, and they build their homes themselves or hire a neighbor. Of course, they make the arrangements in a very partial way. Today they put up one column, the next year they put up the other... and there little by little they build their house.

Even so, FSD employees who worked in the field saw that the families were not "transforming" their homes in the expected time and scale. Mainly, they did not add second floors, even though the construction company claimed that the houses were structurally suitable for this evolution in height. The neighbors I interviewed did not agree with this statement. To the contrary, they say that the houses could not withstand a second floor, so the investment to expand the house in height is enormous. Consequently, most of the expansions of these houses occur by occupying the backyard (partially or completely) and consequently breaking through and blocking the back façade of the house. This created a lack of natural ventilation and lighting that the FSD suggested to avoid. Those corner houses expanded the unit by taking over public space. In this sense, the one-story houses do not have any design-thinking about the evolution of the house: there is no provision for stairwell space, or a supporting slab where to build a superior floor. Incremental design was incorporated with time, as FSD officers realized that residents would change their homes anyways and at very high health- and safety-based costs.

CB has a regulation that states that only after eight years of living in the house families have the freedom to change facades and make renovations. But in reality, all the people who are given a house soon after setting up a place, the bars, they reduce the spaces to make more rooms ... (…) These are homes that have very little space and by putting a room for a business, it is a room that a child no longer has to sleep. This generates overcrowding, the kind of overcrowding that the macro [meaning the state] does not seek. We [the FSD] understand it from another perspective, that of multidimensional poverty: although the family has already solved the housing issue, it must also solve the issue of income and families have no other way than to set up a productive unit in the house.

By observing these initiatives, the FSD understood the advantages of providing housing that –in their own words, "is easier to modify" and where the evolution of the self-building is moderately controlled to avoid overcrowding, lack of ventilation, and the construction of uninhabitable spaces according to the construction regulations of the Macroproject. That is why the FSD changed the one-story typology to a two-story house with the possibility of vertical growth. The L-shaped layout of the floorplan allows for the creation of two new rooms either on the first floor and on the upper level without the need to modify the structure, reducing expansion costs, as well as the technical and technological requirements to carry it out. In fact, the Foundation developed a series of expansion models, that is, constructive and design solutions so that the families could carry out their projects in the best possible way.

The FSD has a team that provides technical to in the remodeling of their homes at no cost. They are legal professionals, architects, builders and engineers who advise on the design of the house and on the legal process for obtaining permits, guardianship and authorization. But only some families use this service, there are many people who build their homes very independently.

Figure 87. "Towers" apartment with original typology and changes performed by residents

APARTMENT UNIT in TOWER BUILDING
as it is delivered by FSD

APARTMENT UNIT in TOWER BUILDING
with outdoor area

bedroom

bedroom

balcony

living / dinning area

entrance

building staircase
and shared areas

kitchen

public space is fenced as used
as private outdoor area

new entrance through balcony
living area is shared with shop appliances such as
freezers and showcases
entrance door is blocked to avoid contact with neighbors

bedroom is used as dinning /living area

living area and one bedroom
is used as a grocery shop

balcony is transformed in
a terrace for the shop

retail stock storage

new entrance through balcony

public space is taken to create a
retail shack under tent area

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with pottery workshop

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with retail shack in public space

Source: Laura Wainer based on fieldwork observations

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Figure 88. Two-story house original typology, with proposed reforms by FSD and other types of reforms deployed by residents

TWO-STORY ORIGINAL HOUSE
(as it is delivered by FSD)

patio

outdoor area with no finishing on walls and floor

Only bathroom comes with finishing, toilet and washbasin

only doors delivered are the two exterior doors and bathroom door

stairs comes with no finishing

fridge space

interior walls are unfinished with exposed concrete bricks

kitchen / dinning area

no floor finishing only underlayment

living room

kitchen area has no finishing, floor or appliances

oven space

small exterior area in the front house

TWO-STORY HOUSE EXTENTION PROPOSED BY FSD

patio

outdoor area remains with no finishing on walls and floor

Laundry area is built in the original patio

Bathroom remains in its original place

Kitchen moves to the back of the house, in a separate area built in the original patio

Big dinning area remains in the original kitchen area

Living area remains as originally designed

Exterior area remains as originally designed

TWO-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with small retail shop

patio

a section of the patio area is roofed with corrugated sheet

laundry area with washer

dinning table is moved to the covered patio area

bathroom remains as originally designed

kitchen remains as originally designed as moving it implies a big investment

instead of oven many families install carafes with stoves

living area is shared with shop appliances such as freezers and showcases

outer space is used to exhibit merchandise

TWO-STORY HOUSE RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with big families

foldable swimming for kids

patio

covered patio area with corrugated sheets

bathroom remains as originally designed

laundry area with washer

kitchen remains as originally designed as moving it implies a big investment

living area is used for bed space if the family has disabled, elderly members or many kids

instead of oven many families install carafes with stoves

Source: Laura Wainer based on fieldwork observations

Figure 89. Two-story house showing reforms deployed by residents

HOUSE with MAYOR INTERVENTIONS PERFORMED by RESIDENTS
with hairdresser salon

- Laundry area on the back of the house
- bathroom remains as originally designed
- new dinning table area
- finishing in kitchen area
- kitchen remains as originally designed as moving it implies a big investment
- living area is transformed in a hairdresser salon
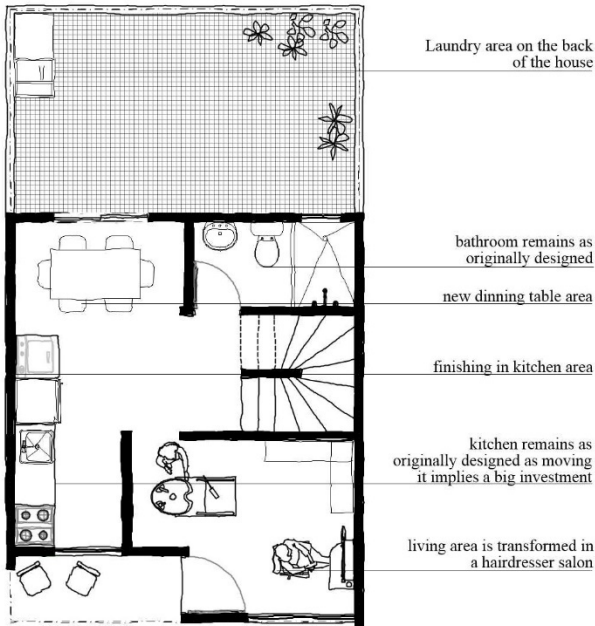
HOUSE with MINOR INTERVENTIONS PERFORMED by RESIDENTS
with full scale retail shop

- Laundry area on the back patio which is reduced to a minimum size
- Kitchen and dinning area on the back of the house
- Bathroom window do not ventilate outdoor space
- bathroom remains as originally designed
- stock and goods storage
- counter top
- living and kitchen area is transformed in a shop
- outdoor space is used by the shop's clients

HOUSE SECOND FLOOR
(as it is delivered by FSD)

- stairs comes with no finishing
- no doors at the bedroom entrance
- interior walls are unfinished with exposed concrete bricks
- no floor finishing only underlayment

bedroom 2

bedroom 1

HOUSE SECOND FLOOR EXTENTION PROPOSED BY FSD

- new bathroom on the second floor
- new bedroom

bedroom 3

bedroom 2

bedroom 1

Source: Laura Wainer based on fieldwork observations

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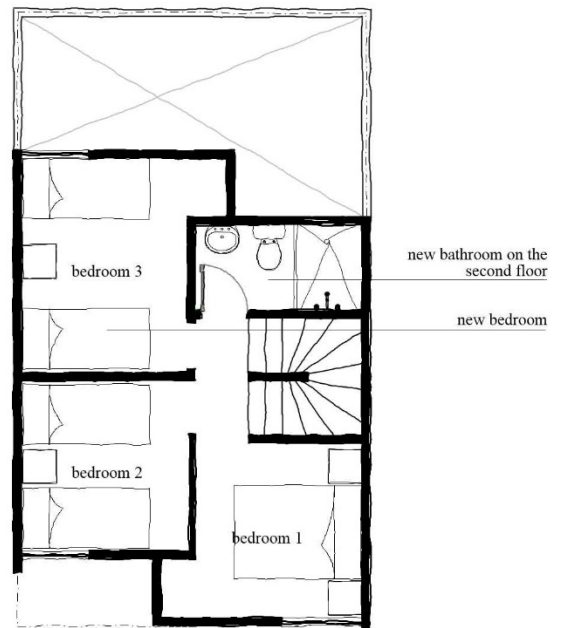
The FSD offers this support no matter if the family decides to remodel their home legally or not; this also applies to cases where the family decides to make modifications that are not permitted by the Macroproject Law or the FSD's regulations. Even though families remodel their homes - and the Foundation accompanies them - for residential or commercial purposes, it is not clear what the role of the rental market is in these processes. Informal house rental seems to be an important economic activity in CB, but it is difficult to track. Interviewees were understandably reluctant to answer openly about their rental status because it is classified as an illegal activity by the government and by the FSD. It is difficult to determine if people rent out their houses because they do not want to live in CB, or if they move somewhere else to have an income source from subletting. Many people reported that at least 1/3 of the houses of their block are rented. Besides the difficulty of controlling illegal renting by regulating the relationship between landlords and tenants, renters are perceived as a bad influence by CB residents because they do not care about improving CB. They fail to respect other neighbors and do not contribute to the overall development of the community. Some people also argued that most of the rented houses host illegal activities (e.g., drug sales) that make the overall environment more dangerous.

Socially isolated but jointly "revueltos"

FMD's 2014 and 2015 baseline surveys had just one question related to governance, which asks whether the family belonged to a community organization within their former neighborhood. According to the results for CB, both in 2014 and 2015, 37 percent of residents self-identified as previously belonging to a community organization. Given that data regarding community development in the previous living conditions are scarce, the majority of questions in our own interviews sought to identify residents' use of existing community programs and structures within the Macroprojects. Perhaps the most difficult theme to address is the residents' widespread perception of being revueltos (scrambled) and its consequences for community building and self-governance initiatives.

> They (FSD) talk very nicely but… We're all "revueltos" (mixed). There are people that come from places that never paid for utilities-- they threw garbage everywhere. So, for them, abiding by the coexistence rules is too complicated.

Another respondent explained that "We're all revueltos here," so social relations "have to do with where people come from." The empirical data uncovers a rich and complex social fabric in CB, revealing that the people in this Macroproject do not share any sense of a single community and –at the same time—create multiple "micro" communities" based on relationships of family and neighbors. These micro-communities perceive each other as rivals, fragmented both by place of previous residence and by where they now live within CB. This feeling persists regardless of where in the Macroproject a respondent lives. The majority of respondents assert this idea of an inharmonious mix of classes and behaviors. The perception of which sector in CB is more problematic seems related to the sector in which the respondent lives, a perception exacerbated by contested territorial control over public space, often awarded to young people's "gangs" involved in illicit activities such a drugs sales and robbery. The overlap between rival sub-sectors of CB is typically related to the building typology, gang control of public space, and spatial configuration. This is perceptible in responses such as:

> People who live in the towers are known as being problematic. Gangs come from that area. I guarantee you that from this corner to the next one I do not have any complaint about anyone who lives here. However, the towers are a 'little bit' complicated.

This is a shared perception with the FSD employees:

> In the blocks 79 and 72 of two-floor houses, we have families who bought the house with a mortgage [they did not receive it for free]. The [social] environment is different there, similar to the oldest parts of the barrio.

Still, while residents from the one-story and two-story houses claim that the insecurity problems come from the residents of the towers (which were built later), the people who live in the towers argue that those from Villas de Aranjuez (the housing project next to CB) constitute the most problematic neighbors. A resident of the towers comments:

> They (two-story residents) come from a low social class and are used to other things, like having the stereo system loud. They make too much noise and have no cohesiveness. They start fighting between them, drink alcohol. I understand that they're displaced, others are victims of natural disasters and they come from a bad-mannered culture. We need to tolerate the neighbors across from us.

Residents perceive a strong relation between insecurity and lack of economic opportunities, especially as it related to the youth. With so many young people in the streets, without jobs, training or education, it is difficult to maintain the safety of public spaces. Although most respondents contend that security is better now than before, it is also one of the main concerns among residents in CB. Some people claim that security levels improved in CB in comparison to their previous neighborhoods which are considered "impossible" (impossible to live in). Some of these families come from areas where armed conflict produced traumatic life experiences. And even when they feel safer from that kind of violence, new threats opposition in relation to violent confrontations between gangs in the public space and the vacant land that has not been urbanized yet. There is a general consensus between residents and employees that gangs are the main factor of insecurity in CB. Respondents also concur that most of the gang members are teenagers who are more vulnerable to join those groups due to lack of opportunities (jobs and education). Mothers, in particular, are afraid about leaving kids alone in the streets, parks and playgrounds because they can be coopted by the gangs.

While having formal tenure at CB plays an important role in securing housing, and displaced populations do not feel threatened by natural or armed conflict in CB, the violence associated with robberies and gang fights remain major concerns for residents. The most frequent perception of risk is related to the social environment. Even as new residents feel a great relief regarding the conditions of the built environment, they frequently express sensitivities to danger and risk due to crime in public space. This forces people to stay "locked-in at home," thus resulting in residents' displacement from public spaces perceived as dangerous. This social isolation prevents the creation of community ties and limits the communication between neighbors. This disconnection also leads to constant conflicts of coexistence. Interventions that focus on recovering the idea that public space can be a place of gainful encounter rather than fear seem vital to break the cycle of physical and social isolation that many residents of CB currently

experience. Even though residents developed alternative ways to take care of themselves, such a paid public space surveillance, because of weather conditions, insecurity, and poor urban design many residents also feel displaced from public spaces. Mothers prefer that children do not go out of the house, and many respondents even consider that being in the public space is a signal of "bad social behavior." To stay at home is a sign of being a good citizen. As a consequence, physical isolation is common among residents in CB where people are afraid of using public spaces. More optimistically, some respondents living in the older areas of CB indicated that learning how to handle the scramble just takes time:

> It's gotten better, but when we began it was cruel. Because people would move in, and we didn't know 'who was who.' And any moment there was a problem. But as the neighborhood began to know each other, each person, things calmed down. It all has changed a lot.

Figure 90. Public Spaces in CB

Source: RCHI team

Figure 91. Interventions in Public spaces including fenced "privatized" gardens and backyards in public sidewalks

Source: RCHI team

This perception is linked not only to how much time people lived in CB but also to the role of DINCS in the linkage stages of the VASS Route that are implemented when families are relocated to the neighborhood. According to the staff responsible for the area and my comparison of residents' perceptions of the first and subsequent phases of relocation, the VASS Route became less effective as relocations accelerated and residents began to arrive in greater numbers and more assiduously at CB. FSD employees and older residents stress that the linkage stage of the VASS Route was of great importance for the new neighbors to be able to imagine themselves in this new urban environment, that they can believe in the possibility of social change at a personal and family level, that the family understands their new community context where the behavior or action that each one of them has will influence positively or negatively in the coexistence and development of the neighborhood. To the contrary, newer neighbors do not see the value of this process. After the delivery of the first houses (2011-2013), the FSD entered the process of revising the macro-project and the housing typologies. After this phase, the FSD decided to collect data and implemented the first baseline survey in 2014. It took two years to build the second-phase houses and therefore to bring new families into the area. Thus, the social workers team was able to work with these residents for much longer than with families who arrived later to top CB.

> We were able to work more, closer and more often with the families that were there and in fact the difference between the first phases and the following phases is very noticeable. The people conserved a lot [of the neighborhood] and had a lot of respect for the street [public space], for the norms of the FSD's coexistence manual. Thousands of families came to us each year, and it began to be more difficult to work on the adaptation of each family and coexistence. It takes time and that was not the time we had, as we had with the first one, with the first families.

From this perspective, the viewpoint of the neighbors on the role of the FSD in the bonding process is not uniform and varies according to which area of the project the person lives. Regardless of the typology residents lived in, there was overwhelming support for the coexistence meetings FSD organized, as well as for FSD staff. Out of 31 respondents, all but one assisted the FSD meetings. Of those that assisted, the majority said they were helpful for learning about coexistence and the Macroproject rules. However, many respondents believed that their neighbors or others living in the Macroproject didn't follow the rules they were taught during the meetings. Paradoxically, more than half of the respondents also admitted that they had never read the manual or had never heard of it.

> Yes, the meetings helped me learn about coexistence. They (FSD leaders) go to the towers to talk about coexistence, garbage, space management… But people don't value what they're given.

With regard to FSD staff, the majority of interviewees were familiar with them and thought they were a positive influence on the neighborhoods. Their rationale was that FSD had contacts with the State and municipal authorities, carried out events regarding education and health, and provided scholastic and housing materials. The few respondents voicing disapproval of the FSD's work claimed that they offered employment opportunities but ultimately did not deliver any help.

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> Yes, my mom talks with them [FSD staff]. Sometimes I see them go by with their orange shirts. They seem willing to assist, but they haven't helped me at all. They have recreation programs but very few people go. For example, the young adults in block 13 would go, but I wouldn't because I had just arrived. One time they told us they'd take us to the movies in Buenavista Mall. They told me but I was left dressed up, since the bus had left. I also took my CV to them so they could help me find a job, but I haven't gotten any response.

Many interviewees said that they used to know FSD workers, yet once those employees left, they did not get to know the new ones. In particular, respondents from the one-story structures frequently indicated that they stopped going to the FSD because of the staff changes. Some of the differences may be explained by the greater length of residency in CB among one-story residents. Many interviewees appreciated the DINCS community meetings prior to moving into the Macroproject, saying they were helpful both for moving into the neighborhood and for getting to know each other. However, other residents said their neighbors didn't apply what they learned or that they didn't go to the meetings at all. Some residents expressed anger, saying FSD had lied about how the Macroproject was going to be during the initial meetings (primarily in terms of security and physical design). As with the earlier comments on FSD favoritism, it is important to address these perceptions if the FSD wants to increase trust with residents. Interviewees had primarily negative or indifferent perceptions about the community leaders. Many households interviewed were not familiar with community leaders, nor with the DINCS coexistence manual. People that were familiar with the DINCS manual repeatedly said that while coexistence "looked good on paper," applying it in reality was very different. Residents that felt this way said that coexistence is something you learn when you're young, or something that's impossible to change in people. These perceptions are expressed in many ways. The contrast is shown in the following interviews:

> They helped me a lot because we learned how to live in a community; the meetings are useful for the ones that can appreciate and follow the rules, but many people go just because they force you to if you're taking a house; (…) I blame FSD because they sold us a Macroproject that didn't exist and didn't fulfill the expectations they sold us.

> Yes, it's good. If everyone followed those rules everything would be fine, because I've read it and it has good things. But not everyone abides by the laws that are established, they do what they want.

> I've had the papers in my hand and that's it. But when you have principles, when you interact with professional people, you already know how to behave.

> Yes, if someone realized (the significance) and read the little book, there are many good things. The trouble is that people don't apply it. But I think it's a good book for coexistence. I would do the right thing, I'd try to. But if I, do it and others don't?

Residents that relocated from Cartagena's San Francisco neighborhood face discrimination from other residents of CB. They often get labeled as "trouble markers, gangsters or problematic people." Despite many criticisms of leaders, when asked to compare CB with the

neighboring community of Villas de Aranjuez and other Macroprojects, many residents said they believed CB was better because of FSD and the community initiatives, as well as other reasons, including architectural and urban design. While this dichotomy is puzzling, it might be due to perceptions – while many residents have not been involved directly with FSD or the DINCS process, they are aware of their presence and see it in a positive light in an impersonal level. A respondent from a one-story portion of CB opined that

> This sector is better because there's more help. They're more attentive of things, maybe because Santo Domingo has their offices here. They help with courses; they help low-income people. They make programs to help, and you see good things here. Here there's a lot of good things the government has provided.

However, it should be noted that this perception was not the same throughout residents of towers believed Villas de Aranjuez was better, principally due to the low-rise architectural typology. As one respondent put said,

> There's disorder there and there's disorder here. The difference is that over there the neighbors are next to you and not on top of you like here.

The perceptions within CB are reinforced by the perceptions of the upper and middle classes of Cartagena towards the low-income population who live in informal settlements and housing projects, all reproducing cycles of stigmatization, and socio- racial discrimination that deeply affects the lives of the residents.

Overcoming such external and mutual mistrust seems vital for CB's future, a challenge that hasn't been addressed by the current governance models. The themes of empowerment and social capital development through governance is a fundamental part of FSD's DINCS model, which aims to develop sustainable communities with economic, environmental, and social capital. One of the main actions proposed by the DINCS model's first tier has participation, leadership, empowerment, and self-help as the four main components in the creation of a sustainable community. For instance, the VAAS route's main purpose is to hand over the Macroproject's governance to community leaders. The DINCS model created a system for the organization of collectives through "territorial leaders" and "community committees" for economic development, education and urban affairs, but this overall operational approach channeled community-building aspirations through strategies centered on individuals and entrepreneurial capacities. The "territorial leaders" are not chosen through democratic deliberation but by the FSD officers. According to the DINCS model, residents within Macroprojects are able to vote for their community representatives for the communal action board. However, all FSD employees say these leaders are selected by the FSD.

Perceptions of FSD, the role of the DINCS model and the position of community leaders seems to be similar throughout CB. Generally, interviews showed that residents benefitted from FSD community meetings before moving into the Macroproject and viewed FSD social workers and staff in a positive light. However, some residents said that FSD showed favoritism when giving out free materials or favors, complaining that the organization did not let community-led initiatives function properly. Interviewees that said FSD showed favoritism voiced this quite strongly, so it is possible these actions have alienated a significant number of people. Interviewees had primarily negative or indifferent perceptions about the community leaders. Many households interviewed were not familiar with community leaders, nor with the DINCS

coexistence manual. Residents generally complained about their lack of action, saying they didn't get anything done, and had little or no influence over the Macroproject. Other residents said leaders were like politicians; they had groups of people they helped yet ignored the rest. Lastly, many residents were not familiar with leaders, or said they knew them previously but not anymore. Many interviewees said leaders' initiatives were quick to fizzle out, and groups usually disintegrated before getting anything done. A resident of a one-story home commented:

> Yes, (I know) the president. They're people that come, want to be leaders, and they get the votes, they go up and then you never see them again. It's precarious, you give them the vote and you never see them again. If they're leaders, they should be mindful of the community but for them it doesn't exist. They do their things to stay in power and nothing else. Politics.

Another respondent underscored the favoritism and variability of leaders:

> On one hand they help sometimes, but others are selfish and want everything to themselves. They have their people, and they only tell them about projects for women-headed households. I never had the chance. But that comes from FSD, they have their group of people they give things to.

A respondent from a two-story portion of the site sees leadership as tied to forms of corruption:

> ... We were already consolidated (as a communal board) but I left because there was no seriousness… The board resulted to be pure fiction, they spent all the money; they created a bingo event and all the money from it dispositioned.

A tower-based respondent holds more positive—if more distant—views:

> I don't know their names [but] They get things done. They've done many things, they've fixed the electricity, they cleaned the water tank.

All the FSD employees agree that the communal leaders established by the DINCS model are positive to the community, and that the leadership role enhanced their individual capacities. These citizens never exercised this kind of role before and the DINCS assistance worked as a platform for their personal development. However, the same FSD employees admit the leadership committees never worked, addressing the failure to the lack of autonomy and self-management. The FSD employees highlight that the leaders were never able to acquire independence from the patronage of the FSD. From the interviews it is also evident that the FSD also wants to retain some level of control on the leadership.

> The tendency of the foundation is to be very supportive. With respect to the issue of leadership and participation, which was what the foundation aimed for most in the social component of DINCS, I would say that it worked. However, self-management was not enough to ensure that the programs and public offerings reached the territory, which had to be done through the development committees.

This leadership system overlaps with the Junta de Acción Comunal (Community Action Board, JAC), which is the basic and public unit of social organization in Colombia since 1958. The JAC, which is democratically elected with each municipal administration, has legal status to

promote development and collective well-being for the communities they represent, such as seeking funding and negotiating with public and private entities (Ospina 1985). While the residents positively view the community leaders established by the FSD, they also perceive them as rivals. One of my interviewees, the vice president of the JAC, believes that the Foundation intercedes in matters that do not concern him and does not give "enough freedom to the Junta de Acción Comunal." According to this gentleman, the FMSD holds meetings and makes decisions through its allied leaders without the input of JAC; "the FSD does not work together with the Junta de Acción Comunal," he stresses. According to two FSD employees who worked attending the residents demands, instead of collaborating with the CB's JAC, the leaders and committees compete with them for popular support and local power.

> They [the committees] worked to consolidate the leadership of certain the people in the territory, but they never managed to join the Community Action Board, which is the legal administration figure in the community. The JAC should choose the committees, but they are selected by the foundation instead. Since they are not legally recognized -- and the Board is -- there was a lot of fight for protagonist roles… "that I bring this, that I go there, that I follow that one," so-and-so. They never reach to agreements (…) The JAC should have been the head of all development committees and they should have made the decisions. But they went this way, and the committees went that way, and the Foundation supported the committees more than the JAC. So those things could never make a match.

Within this context the FSD choses to support its leaders and disempower the JAC. They perceive as the JAC leaders as "negative to the FSD" and "opposition leaders" because "they never agree with what the FSD does." The FSD does not completely trust in their own leaders because they fear of the direction they could take, so it deploys significant effort in both controlling the leaders and the JAC. For instance, the foundation appropriates the competencies and mandates of the JAC, for example, by taking the initiative to elaborate the diagnosis and the community vision of CB that the JAC must present to the City of Cartagena for quadrennial updating of the Territorial Ordering Plan (POT, Law 388 of 1997). The FSD employees justify the take-over of this task as something necessary since the JAC "does not have the technical expertise to carry out this report."

> (DG) "We accompanied the Community Action Board in the city's Development Plan. Of course, like everything else the community does, it just stays in a document and has no interference. They don't assign a budget, nothing happens. The previous development plan, they failed to manage with the Mayor's Office. They don't succeed."

However, some FSD employees realize the wrong direction the FSD has taken regarding leadership and community empowerment. According to the FSD employee who was in charge of producing the last POT community report, that is a task the FSD unrightfully deployed.

> The JAC should work towards a formulation of the Development Plan. In fact, the last Development Plan was out of focus because the foundation formulated the document [instead of the community itself]. We [FSD] should not do that, but they [JAC] rarely, if ever, committed themselves to that task… so we did it

in parallel. I formulated it. We have the equipment, we can make a technical document, we know the language. However, the raison d'être of a community development plan is that it should reflect its own context, that it should be its word, its dialect [of the community]. I had to put on the shirt of 'the people' to be able to express to them [the JAC] what the FSD was doing. I tried to make it less technical and more colloquial. I felt that they had to do it, but we were finishing it anyway. We were taking that role then, but we will always need the Community Action Board because it they have the legal representation power and consequently, they are the ones who present the neighborhood development plan to the local government.

Alternative modes of "do it yourself" organization

As a result of the overlapping and contesting systems of representation and leadership, instead of "building communities" the model may have unintentionally exacerbated individualism and rivalry. This contesting leadership overlaps with self-created leadership duties that revolve around management of security measures (private security, cameras, installing security bars), public space beautification (Christmas' and Carnival street decorations), and maintenance (water pumps, common space cleanliness) as neighbors organize themselves to compensate for an overall lack of municipal services. Self-initiated governance happens throughout the Macroproject, but it is apparent that leadership duties in the towers revolve around security measures and building maintenance. In fact, we found more examples of self-created leadership bodies, primarily building administrations responsible for maintenance, than FSD-established alternatives.

The form of self-initiated governance in the towers was much more complex than those of one or two-story houses, simply because tower residents share many more communal resources. In the two-story and one-story houses, self-governance centered on security agendas (civic police) and cleanliness (keeping sidewalks and front lawns clean). In both cases, CB neighbors organize themselves to replace the lack of service: daily garbage collection, public spaces' cleaning services and police patrolling. The cleaning service works as follows: an unemployed neighbor offers a neighbor-sector or a block to collect every day the houses' garbage and take it to the disposal bins. He/she also cleans the disposal bins areas. For instance, a group of neighbors can offer door-by-door garbage collection or public-space night surveillance services to a sector of CB (often two to six blocks) for a weekly tip between 700 and 1000 pesos (US$0.19 to 0.28), varying on the families' capacity to pay. It is apparent that one of the main difficulties of self-initiated governance initiatives, that also include Christmas' and Carnival street decorations, is the lack of funding available to implement long-term services and the lack of trust in other neighbors for collecting and managing the money. For the security services, one or a group of neighbors surveil a sector. If they notice "something suspicions" or see a crime, they call the police. Some residents said this security system does not work because many times those neighbors are also robbed and attacked by gangs. In the towers, some neighbors also organized alternative administration systems due the "lack of response and capacity" of the administration offices imposed by the FSD. A resident from one of the towers describes some of these initiatives:

> We created an independent manual for cohabitation so that each person could sweep, clean the hallways, lower the volume by 11pm, and maintain the gardens. There's a specific day when the towers get cleaned. Other towers realized what we did-- for example, we put the security bars up first--and they copied us.

Another respondent describes additional strategies for shared governance.

> When they gave us the building, they didn't put bars in the front door. So, before we moved my husband proposed to the neighbors to put up the bars so that it could be safe and closed. They organized, bought the ironwork, and as he knows about ironwork, he installed it. Other towers saw that and copied it. … We also set up video cameras.

It is apparent that one of the main difficulties of self-initiated governance initiatives is the lack of funding available to implement plans. This is particularly true with security and cleanliness projects. Many interviewees told us that they would like to collaborate with these initiatives but are unable to due to their tenuous economic status – residents sometimes need to decide whether to pay utility fees or buy groceries. Residents that can afford contributing to self-initiated services are frustrated when they are no longer available, and some would be willing to pay again in the event it returned. Some interviewees living in the towers also had the perception that administrators are unable to reach a consensus for building operations, and/or are connected with political parties that breed clientelism. In other cases, neighbors distrusted the way funds for communal projects were being used and did not want to contribute financially. A resident from one of the two-story homes describes a different failed effort at self-governance:

> We created a board for a security group. We had to raise funds, and we did. But then the woman that became president collected the money and then disappeared. The board members changed, and the security group dissolved. The board vanished and they went their own way. There weren't good results.

The ability of neighbors to engage in self-initiated governance also depends on the broader set of community relationships. Although the towers have more examples of self-initiated governance interview respondents also share the most negative perception of their neighbors, compared to the other two typologies. Tower-based governance seems more forced, while in the other two typologies residents seemed to engage in governance with more willingness. As a social worker of the FSD explains:

> We [FSD] receive in two years about 1344 families who moved to the towers. The towers imply a different construction system, a different way of living together, a different set of rules. Although these families lived before houses in high-risk areas, these houses were spacious, they had some land --at least a patio. Those weren't the best conditions, but they had more room. In the apartments people must share common areas, must take into account the neighbor. It has not been easy and the issue [to manage] the horizontal coexistence. We worked strongly, we achieved some results, but it still ends up being quite complex.

Although these initiatives are important for governance, neither the FSD nor the local government support them. The main finding about this section is that when moving into the new

Macroproject, social capital is lost but families have the potential to re-organize and practice basic levels of self-governance and community building around specific agendas.

CONCLUSIONS

The literature on national large-scale housing projects and policy-driven relocations indicates that when families are displaced to peripheral housing projects, they become poorer, more isolated, and suffer from the material conditions of their new built environments--including homogeneity, lack of identity, and poor-quality construction (Cernea 2003; Lall et al., 2012; Campbell 2013; Buckley et al., 2016; Turok, 2016; Libertun, 2018b; Smith and Brown 2019; Nikuze et al. 2019). The findings of this chapter are consistent with these arguments, but I found fuller and more complex explanations for the effects of being relocated to these urban peripheries.

Families were not merely impoverished; rather they became wealthier-but-poorer. We have presented empirical evidence that reveals the paradoxical effects of providing new housing amenities to low-income residents while simultaneously placing new limits on their access to resources (in terms of money), time (in terms of schedules and commuting), practices (in terms of norms and regulations) and means of livelihood (in terms of economic prospects). This asset-regime creates wealthier households from an asset-based perspective, but poorer families from a livelihoods and social standpoint. Relocated to the outskirts of cities, they struggle with the incompatibility between the economic informality of their past domestic lives and the punitive rationality of their new, hyper-standardized and austere environment that, coupled with remote location, have recombined to yield a context of unprecedented scarcity in their daily lives.

Residents feel homogeneously isolated from the city but also socially 'revueltos' or scrambled. The standardization also entails the forced homogenization of diverse social groups in terms of previous living arrangements, economic status, and urban-rural lifestyles. While moving to the outskirts of the city isolates the families socially and economically, they also share a widespread perception that they have been thrown into a mixture of different people. The widely shared 'revueltos' perception undermines the idea that the incoming residents to the low-income housing projects are a monolithic social group just because all are low-income. Our research uncovered a rich and complex social fabric in CB that entails multiple "micro" communities" based on family and neighborly relationships that sow intra neighborhood rivalry and lack of solidarity.

The emergence of wealthier-but-poorer families living 'revueltos' in remote isolation leads to retrofitting informal practices in hyper-standardized environments. Families develop alternative physical, economic and organizational practices to manage the contradiction between the logic of their new house-asset and the logic of their livelihoods. In economic terms, they create commerce, workshops and other service provision shops in their houses, despite having no formal qualification, no access to finance, and no formal employment opportunities. In architectural terms, families renovate their homes to make the original unit accommodate diverse family needs or productive activities. In addition, alternative forms of social organization emerge, often related to the provision of urban services (security, water, garbage collection) but also due to efforts to control public spaces and crime within the neighborhood.

In the following section, I discuss in detail the outcome of the informalization of the formal in Cartagena, focusing on two main findings. The first shows that while selected informalization offers a livelihood solution, it also produces a systematic complexification of the lives of poor families who already must bear histories of violent conflict, displacement, and socio-environmental vulnerability. The second argument speaks to the problems related to governance and control when multiple actors with divergent visions impose their own governance agendas and practices in CB.

The complexification of urban poverty

The lack of recognition of social differences generates great social tension among neighbors. Instead of creating communities, this lack of acknowledgment of differences generates divisions among those who feel that all the incoming people are treated as equal by the Foundation even though they actually have quite divergent needs. In a sense by homogenizing and standardizing the lives of relocated families, the Macroprojects Housing policy and in particular the CB housing projects, make the lives of already vulnerable groups much more complex.

The housing targeting system overlooks cultural differences, life stories, family composition and other non-monetary social determinants such as level of education or wealth. As a result, highly standardized housing projects do not give full consideration to the actual quantitative and qualitative housing deficit, neither to the real needs of the relocated families. For instance, all the units are two-bedroom, but many families are large and extended, thus at least half of the families live in overcrowding conditions as soon as they move into CB. The strict regulations of the housing policy and the FSD's regulations of the built environment standards constrain the development of more efficient and socioeconomically supportive typologies. The quality of the houses and apartments is a source of social and psychological stress stemming from forced intimacy among family members and with other neighbors due to the quality of construction materials and density of houses, threatening both visual and acoustic privacy. Nearly half of respondents reported problems with the quality of construction of their houses. This represents not only a risk but also a source of anxiety. To get things repaired is a complicated process for residents, who must negotiate with contractors and the FSD. Furthermore, it represents a financial burden, as families must spend the little money, they have on repairing the home they received.

Housing renovation is not only driven by the standardized and unthoughtful design of the houses but primarily by the need to develop an economic activity. Since having access to job opportunities outside of CB is so difficult, and since private, commercial real estate development is not allowed within the Macroproject, residents have attempted a variety of occupations from home. A study carried out in 2016 and 2017 by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2017) reveals that 487 productive units inside of homes make up an informal market capable of supplying the existing population. In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, these practices facilitate the partial compliance with regulations established by the national and local governments. The FSD employees are well aware of the extreme vulnerability that these populations face during the scourge of the novel coronavirus. They understand how certain aspects of the housing project, such as the small size of the houses and the impossibility of traveling long distances to get a daily job, carry dire consequences for families during the

pandemic. This reality underscores recent debates that highlight how the current sanitarian crisis further reinforces uneven geographies of urban health and diminishes the lives of those in marginalized urban environments (Franco et al. 2020; Salamanca and Vargas 2020). However, interviewees also demonstrate how the same informal practices often punished by the State can provide direct responses to the COVID-19 crisis: residents invent local businesses that do not exist in the formal Macroproject and the informal expansion of minimum-standard houses to incorporate extra rooms facilitates stay-in-shelter practices.

While the physical informalization of the built environment is a source of concern for the FSD and the government, the economic informalization is not. In fact, it is something expected to happen. Although the DINCS model is focused on entrepreneurship it does not support the logics of the informal economy. The results of the interviews indicate that many of the DINCS programs are not working residents are unable to find long-term employment through the FSD, classes do not lead to greater employment opportunities, training for developing skills and introducing new ideas for entrepreneurial development do not get materialized, and residents find significant constraints in transforming those new capacities into real entrepreneurial solutions. Most importantly, many respondents found it very difficult to transform their takeaways from the DINCS courses into real, sustainable, and entrepreneurial projects. This is because the DINCS model still expects people to operate under the logics of a formal market and employment instead of analyzing what are their real needs. As a result, only forty business are partially formalized or are on their way to formalization with support of the FSD, meaning that they have legal administrative status, even though they do not qualify as commercial/ workshop space since that falls outside the urban regulations for areas within the Macroproject. Informal shops are more expensive, and they cannot scale up as a business model, thus most of the commercial economic activity remains at a survival level. The lack of affordable grocery markets within the Macroprojects and the significant transportation costs to buy groceries in the city was also a point of frustration for residents.

First-time homeowners struggle more than ever to achieve basic livelihoods. These contradictory physical, economic and collective environments create wealthier households from an asset-based perspective, but poorer families from a livelihoods and social standpoint. Relocated to large-scale housing projects on the outskirts of cities, they struggle with the incompatibilities between the economic flexibility of their past domestic lives and the punitive rationality of their new, formal, urban environments.

Despite the great capacity of some residents to overcome the economic austerity of their new place of residence, the research discloses how working and developing businesses informally brings with tension within the family, between neighbors and with the local authorities. Many people adapt their houses to host other economic activities, building unsafe renovations, and families lack privacy because they overlap their private and working worlds, which ends up undermining family and community ties. Moreover, the lack of regulation for the development of businesses and entrepreneurial projects generates conflicts among neighbors and undermines community relationships. The story of a resident I re-named Maria, illustrates the problems related to the double standards:

> I opened a cantina, but I didn't have money to register it. In CB, it is prohibited to open a business anyways. I used to turn the music on so people could enjoy my cantina better. My neighbor was very upset with that. He reported to the

municipality that I had opened an illegal cantina. The public officers understood my situation; I need to have a business because I do not have employment. Thus, they proposed that I open an alternative business. So, I opened a fruit and vegetables vending shop. The FSD people taught me to put the merchandise outside of my house, with a table and a sunshade. My neighbor reported me again because he said I was invading his home's façade. So, I stopped. One day, a person proposed that I sell pork meat and I thought it was a good idea because I could cut the meat in my backyard and sell it inside of the house. Then my neighbor built a second story at his house, with a window facing my backyard (authors' note: this second story was also built informally). He took pictures of my pork business and reported me again to the municipality. This time the justice ordered me to close the business. Now I have neither the business nor any privacy because of that window he built. I went to the Defender, the prosecutor, the police, the housing consul…[T]hey told me they were going to help to solve my problem because I am a single mother and the economic support of my family. But nothing happened. I don't have a job and he did not close the window after all.

Many interviewees faced conflicts with other neighbors due to housing modifications, leading to high levels of stress. Feeling unprotected and alone, residents feel threatened by the "law of the more powerful," or are made even more vulnerable by the conflicts, particularly in female-headed households. A FSD employee illustrates the in and out of the informal economy in CB,

People tend to look for ways to generate their income, it ends up being a little difficult when they move to the project, because they were used to having inside the house the business, selling, beer, selling bolli [candies], bucket or something. And suddenly the project sometimes is not so easy for them to do that type of business, but we still see that many of the houses have been transformed, they have modified them to adapt them to a business that the families have. There are still conflicts, especially when the business is playing music or a lot of people are gathered, because the houses are not equipped for this type of activity.

Most of the interviewees responded that conflicts are solved "between the neighbors," showing both autonomy and lack of institutional channels that regulate communal social life. For example, conflicts arise when people develop businesses in their houses that bother other neighbors: from cantinas that make the block unsafe because many times they host illegal activities such as alcohol and narcotics vending, to food production that is noisy and smelly. In the meantime, mixed messages abound; developing a small business in the house is illegal yet is partially encouraged by the FSD, as they provide seed capital to those entrepreneurs who get the commercial qualification but still do not follow the land use regulations and turn a blind eye for those illegal renovations in the houses but provide construction materials in discretional ways. At present, conflicts usually get resolved in a non-institutional manner, which raises conflicts between neighbors. But neighbors ask for the creation of a market area not only because they could reduce their expenditures for food and other basic consumption goods, but also because they seek a safe place for recreation and encounter, a community building space. Working spaces have a similar purpose, as one of the interviews highlighted: they are the place where people can

be mates instead of enemies. However, the feeling from the residents and the FSD is that the neighborhood needs "a different Estrato," referring to a higher social class group to "push" the local economy forward—those who can open shops, workshops, support and organize entrepreneurial initiatives, and hire local residents. In a way, this expectation about an external agent or the idea that the solution comes from outside either by "imported wealth," as Hausmann argued, or by people with more purchasing power does decenters the efforts of the FSD from the internal capacities of the neighborhood and to focus on solving the social conflicts that arise from developing economy and practices that are encouraged and punished by the authorities.

Control and Governance

The social conflict overlaps with tensions with the State authority, which progressively loses control along with the physical transformation of space. In 2017, I observed significant tensions aroused in meetings between the Urban Planning Department of the Cartagena city government and the FSD when the responsibility for "illegal" post occupancy construction was discussed. The local State does not wish to assume practical accountability for the informality emerging within CB, instead referring "the problem" to the non-profit developer, given that the project is still under protracted construction. Conversely, the FSD argues that they already delivered houses and property titles; thus, the responsibility about what happens next falls under the local government's jurisdiction. Neither offer a clear solution.

In this sense, neither the FSD nor the government have a clear vision of how to face the challenge of informalization, since they constantly navigate the contradictions between "the legal" - that is, what is established by the law on Macroprojects, and the gray spaces of the "real," that is, the actions that the FSD must take in order to maintain the governance of the territory in order to continue developing its project in a peaceful manner. Legally, both the FSD and the government have tools to assign responsibility to each other. The FSD argues that once the house and the property titles have been handed over, the responsibility for private property and public spaces belongs to the administrations of the buildings and the local government. As an ex-employee of the Foundation points out:

> The philosophy of the FSD is that, once the house is handed over, each person is responsible for it, so that the buildings are under the jurisdiction of each administration, which are now responsible for making the supervision, and that certain standards are met.

However, the FSD delays up to seven years in delivering property titles to the residents. As early of 2018, most of the residents that have been living in CB for less than two years did not have housing deeds. The capacity for homeownership, and its attendant financial and psychological benefits, is touted and perceived as one of the main improvements in the quality of life of Macroproject residents. But, in this context, many fear not gaining property rights title quickly enough and argue that this is both unfair and a threat to the stability of their neighborhood. This also adds to the "grey legal areas" experienced by the families from the moment they move into the houses and when they are legally responsible for the property. As Ciudad del Bicentenario was approved through the figure of Macroproject, which is a national initiative, the Ministry of Housing is the competent entity to approve its urban and architectural proposal. Under the rules of the national government, the Secretariat of District Planning of

Cartagena, has no competence to approve or deny issues related to the urban structure and urban and architectural regulations of the Macroproject. However, all housing, commercial or industrial projects that are designed within the Macroproject Ciudad del Bicentenario once completed are the responsibility of the District Planning Secretariat of Cartagena and must be approved by that entity. Because these delays and the fact that the Macroproject is still under construction – in de-facto jurisdiction of the FSD-- the local government does not take the legal response for monitoring the appropriate exercise of the ownership rights.

In its de facto control, the FSD that has an office that operates as if it were the local government. FSD employees offer services for claims and administrative procedures, social workers' assistance, collection and systematization of information about the neighborhood, training programs and workshops, and an employment center, among many other comprehensive and cross-cutting state-like civic roles. This role of the FSD is well accepted among the community. Many of my interviews thought the FSD is the local government. However, none of the diverse range of FSD employees we interviewed wanted to perform this role or saw it as a correct approach. They all argue that in the end, the DINCS model was transformed into a paternalist assistance model in practice, where the residents are increasingly more dependent on the FSD, rather than more autonomous.

As the conflict around the informalization of CB grows, the local government moves away its legitimate leadership and gives the FSD more space to perform local authority functions. The lack of a regulatory system to monitor and support how people can renovate their homes in this otherwise overregulated environment leads to judgments about what is allowed and what is not, often fall into grey areas because the national State -through the rigid regulations of the Macroprojects law-- and the FSD -by intervening as the local authority and enforcing broader State mandates-- opposition to both support and punish informal activities using unclear double-standards. For example, the national government resists incorporating mixed-uses into the houses but, at the same time, wishes to support informal economies by delivering seed grants, goods for retail and capacity training to small entrepreneurs through the National Learning Service agency (SENA).

> I had a small business. A foundation provided me with a display case and some towels and bed sheets, but, as people do not have a stable employment here, nobody buys those kinds of things. So, I failed. I really liked that business. I wish I could have the opportunity to start it over again.

This loss of control over material and institutional processes is superimposed on the complex power agenda that the national government imposes through the very politics of macro-projects, specifically, the political will to transfer local governments in corporatist type agreements with developers who are ultimately the landowning elite and leaders of the construction industry. These anti-institutional practices even survive defining instances of the Supreme Court, which, while declaring macro-projects unconstitutional, did not affect the projects in the portfolio that continued to be developed "normally". In the practice of local realpolitik, these power gaps are also expressed in extremely complicated regulatory situations. CB is "populated" with irregularities. For example, according to a former FSD employee, by mid-2018 the foundation "discovered" that the company that built the buildings had never submitted the urban planning plan to the City's Urban Planning Council. As a result, the entire

sector of the towers does not have the corresponding authorization, not even the building inspections required in any construction.

> Now there is a lot of discord and complexity to formalize all the tower areas (its land uses and urban project). Within the dispute the municipality found many constructive defects. They did like a study of how the conditions of the buildings were internally, the conditions of infrastructure and services. Many buildings are in poor condition and the municipality requires repairs to be made. But the problems are big, there are people who by remodeling and have removed structural walls. It's quite delicate and complex, and the foundation doesn't keep track of the houses as it used to.

This network of irregularities adds to the FSD's desire to impose its own normative agenda on issues of governance, civic behavior, and the leadership system. The DINCS model created a system for the organization of collectives through "territorial leaders" and "community committees" for economic development, education and urban affairs, but this overall operational approach channeled community-building aspirations through strategies centered on individuals and entrepreneurial capacities. This leadership system overlaps with the Junta de Acción Comunal. According to a former FSD employee who worked attending the residents demands, instead of collaborating with the CB's JAC, the leaders and committees compete with them for popular support and local power. The foundation also appropriates the competencies and mandates of the JAC, for example, by taking the initiative to elaborate the diagnosis and the community vision of CB that the JAC must present to the City of Cartagena for quadrennial updating of the Territorial Ordering Plan (POT, Law 388 of 1997). This contesting leadership overlaps with self-created leadership duties that revolve around management of security measures (private security, cameras, installing security bars), public space beautification (Christmas and Carnival street decorations), and maintenance (water pumps, common space cleanliness) as neighbors organize themselves to compensate for an overall lack of municipal services.

The ins and outs of informalization

This chapter has investigated how housing policy both helps and hinders the capacity of low-income residents to navigate the transition from their multiple and diverse worlds into the constrained uniformity of peri-urban, social "free" housing. I charted the disruptive transition from informal settlements, popular 'barrios' and rural towns in the Caribbean region of Colombia to new homes in CB on the outskirts of Cartagena. The conditions that such Macroprojects impose, including the burden of formality, remote location, rigidly standardized built environments and loss of social connections, have unexpected and severe consequences. Taken together, these result in populations that are wealthier but poorer: first-time homeowners who struggle more than ever to achieve basic livelihoods.

These contradictory physical, economic and collective environments create wealthier households from an asset-based perspective, but poorer families from a livelihoods and social standpoint. Relocated to large-scale housing projects on the outskirts of cities, they struggle with the incompatibilities between the economic flexibility of their past domestic lives and the punitive rationality of their new, formal, urban environments. By failing to identify the diverse

needs of these re-housed low-income residents, housing policy makers and planners have inadvertently generated diminishing economic opportunities. I presented empirical evidence that reveals the paradoxical effects of providing new housing amenities to low-income residents while simultaneously placing new limits on their space, time (in terms of access to amenities), and means of livelihood. The findings also show that these incompatibilities not only affect the means of social reproduction but also systems of social organization and initiatives of self-governance. The widely-shared 'revueltos' perception undermines the idea that the incoming residents to the low-income housing projects are a monolithic social group just because all are poor.

The informalization of the formal, product of these contradictory processes shows a systematic complexification of the lives of poor families who already must bear histories of violent conflict, displacement, and socio-environmental vulnerability. In this mega-project, the new complexity of the poverty is expressed in the incompatibility between informal livelihoods and regulations imposed by an hyper-standardized built environment, by the need to calibrate contradictory norms imposed by the FSD and the national government, by the trade-offs involved between expenditures, commuting and ensuring the physical security of the family, and by navigating the contradictions between the opportunity to own property while lacking sufficient resources to exercise property fully and freely.

Although the families make efforts to re-introduce more socio-economically supportive aspects of informal livelihoods into the more austere conditions of formal mega-projects, these also bring significant problems related to community building and livelihoods. Conflict emerges between those neighbors who take advantage of the informalization synergy and those who cannot do that, due either to the restrictions of the built environment itself or to their having more limited socio-economic circumstances, especially women and migrants from rural areas. The lack of a regulatory system to manage double-standards leads to judgments about what is allowed and what is not--often falling into violent disputes where those families with fewer resources are subject to the 'law of the strongest', loss of resources, and personal/family stress. Maria's story well illustrates failed attempts to develop a dignified livelihood. Despite the multiple efforts at developing an economic activity in her house, she could not reconcile the State's land-use regulations with her family's economic needs. She could not follow the requirements of the FSD entrepreneurship programs without invading public space or taking over family space in the house. She could not resolve how to use her private backyard without interfering with her neighbor's plans for house renovation. This impossible cycle is –in her own words— "making her life impossible." The complexification shown in Maria's life gets scaled up to a systemic complexity in the reproduction of the economic, social and organizational strategies of families in CB. The peri-urban poverty of Cartagena thereby reveals a far more complex sociology than is commonly considered.

The social conflict and fragmentation within the "revueltos" residents of CB parallels additional tensions with the State authority, which progressively loses control along with the physical transformation of space. In practice, the lack of a clear institutional position or vision regarding the growing informality in CB led the FSD and the local government to, confusingly, both punish and support the initiatives created by the residents. As a result, the complex relationships among the built environment, behavioral norms, and State expectations get expressed as a variety of tensions: between formal and informal strategies in the built environment; between demands of entrepreneurial initiatives and lack of economic support; and

between entrepreneurship goals and the physical restrictions that the houses impose. In this sense, the informalization of the formal presents a paradox in the extent to which informal practices, places and economies lead by social solidarity also bring excessive transaction costs, discretionary decision making, environmental effects representing both benefits and threats (Simone and Pieterse, 2018). The new informality, far from regression back to an immature stage of urban development, is instead a sophisticated set of entirely rational coping tactics and strategies. While these practices empower the residents to carry out their everyday lives, their clash with the hyper-standardized, austere State's regime induce problems related to community life and neighborhood governance.

The loss of territorial and institutional control is expressed in the consolidation of liminal spaces and practices that juxtapose such divergent city-making cultures: the hyper-standardized, asset-based regime proposed by the national housing policy, and the informal livelihoods strategies of the families. I find that instead of operating as a mediator between the divergent city-making logics, the local government retreats from this tension giving space to the FSD to play the role of local authority. However, rather than balancing power and decision making, finding alternative solutions and spaces of ameliorative encounter, and supporting conflict resolution, the FSD imposes its own rationality, vision and model of "community building", such as DINCS. This model creates an extra layer of parameters, standards, norms and aspirations within CB. This, in turn, affects the relationships within the community (by dividing those who are reached by the DINCS model and those who are not), between the community and its leaders (by imposing alternative systems of civic representation to the Community Action Boards), between the community and the State (by supporting self-building with construction materials but disengaging from ad-hoc conflicts), and within different levels of the State (by acting as the local authority at their social services office). In this context, the residents not only must create coping mechanisms to retrofit their livelihoods but also deal with the increasing social conflict created by the clash of city-making cultures.

CHAPTER 7. THESIS

INTRODUCTION

This final chapter sets out to summarize both the conceptual and practical findings on how poverty is governed as a spatialized problem and how the poor resist, mobilize, articulate, and negotiate housing government programs. I base my arguments on the study of three paradigmatic cases in Buenos Aires (Argentina), Cape Town (South Africa), and Cartagena (Colombia). These cases invite us to acknowledge the vitality and importance of self-managed spatial practices and the role of local governance actors in sustaining the political, social, and physical stability in the urban peripheries of the Global South. Likewise, these cases encourage us to reflect on the risks of innovation --who assumes them, when it is accurate to measure the failures and successes of any housing policy, and the role of housing in the economic and social dynamics of the working and *popular* classes.

Although this dissertation does not aspire to be a strictly comparative exercise, studying these three cases in depth allowed me to think and reflect on the complex reality of city-making for and from the *popular* sectors. I cannot detach these cases from my intellectual and personal education during my doctorate studies. Along with these places and their people, I acquired methodology, theoretical understanding, empirical knowledge, and sources of reflection that structured what I understand today about Southern urbanism. In particular, I have learned more about why urbanists often consider these peripheral, large-scale housing projects a failure, and what challenges and opportunities their unintended consequences, such as informalization, may bring.

As I explain in the introduction of this dissertation and will further develop in the analysis of this chapter, I refer to the urban periphery as a relational category and not a static geo-localization in the city. Some study cases I analyze are not strictly situated on the urban outskirts since their relative location has changed over the decades. Nevertheless, the idea of peripheral projects persists due to their neglected nature. In particular, informalization becomes a hidden reality even if pragmatically visible. The periphery is, in this case, a construct that operates through norms, symbolism, and practice and sets different parameters of administration, regulation, order, and legislation rule for purposes of spatialized poverty management.

The focus of this last chapter is the cross-case analysis of these examples of city-making to look at the multifaceted and complex dynamics of informalization. I first summarize the conditions under which informalization emerges and develops in Presidente Sarmiento, Joe Slovo, and Ciudad del Bicentenario. Then I cross variables from the three cases focusing on common patterns that give shape to the phenomenon: the alternative physical-legal apparatuses imposed by the national State, the contextual property regimes and expectations for improvement in the neighborhoods, and the emergence of de facto managers with no legal-administrative jurisdiction over the sites. I then briefly summarize the expected outcomes of informalization, touching on three metrics: permanence and displacement threats, livelihoods and reproduction of life, and social conflict and violence. In the following section, I evaluate the specifics of informalization housing practices, touching on design and programming of both private and public spaces. In the last part of this chapter, I introduce *informalization of the formal* and its multiple manifestations: *Anchoring* people and organizations to their territory, *individualizing*

land to self-manage urban space, *incrementing* houses to serve the families' needs, *unlocking* the local economy, and *stabilizing* tensions and social conflicts of urban management.

The origins and dynamics of informalization practices

The deep socio-spatial analysis of Presidente Sarmiento, Joe Slovo, and Ciudad del Bicentenario yields exciting reflections on the projects' internal and historical-contextual causes of informalization. Some of the findings point to the shared dynamics of this heterogeneous but unique phenomenon. The most critical finding reveals the multi-level causes of informalization. My research indicates that the families' adaptation of unsuitable architectural designs and policy decisions, such as the location and size of the housing complex, can only partially explain the phenomenon. Informalization as a city-making culture emerges from a complex, multilateral impulse to undo the norms and forms imposed by the national governments. The undoing refers to the physical, economic and institutional practices deployed by residents, local governments, NGOs, and foundations to establish practices of city production and reproduction of life capable of making these housing complexes socially and politically sustainable. These situated agents find in informalization an immediate solution to the demands of urban transformation that the rigid legal-formal apparatuses of housing policies do not allow.

In the following section, I summarize the conditions under which informalization emerged in each study case, considering the role of the different situated agents. I also recap some critical variables that the study cases share: the legal-formal architecture and institutional design (intrinsic to the project), the location of the projects in the Spatio-temporal context (relative to the city), the intergovernmental and political role of housing policy (external).

Presidente Sarmiento

The informalization of Presidente Sarmiento has enhanced its use-value to residents and solved the inconsistencies between the assumptions of the policymakers and architects and the families' needs. However, the architects' misreading of the popular classes' realities does not fully explain why informalization became the main activity for production and life reproduction. A series of interrelated conditions gave rise to the informalization process, which did not emerge as an immediate "post-occupancy" response of families to the apartments, nor as a direct consequence of the decay of the buildings and public spaces over the years. Informalization emerged embedded in the legal-physical forms imposed by the national government's regime, the changing needs of a population that chooses informality for its comparative advantages, and the political needs of the new local government with its rights-guaranteeing agenda.

The informal adaptation of the buildings first emerged to incorporate community and economic uses ignored in the original project intended as a "dormitory neighborhood" for an upwardly mobile, salaried, working class. The physical-legal land regime of the housing complex structured in one privately-owned parcel for 1.172 apartments managed by a single administration imposed substantial barriers to the transformations demanded by the residents experiencing downward mobility. By the mid-1990s, these were experiencing the effects of economic neoliberalization and the productive restructuring of the metro Buenos Aires area: unemployment, deindustrialization, abandoned factories and industries, drop of formal

employment, and privatization of basic services (transportation, water, electricity, gas among others).

Resident families were not the only ones who found it impossible to channel their transformation needs through formal procedures. Successive local governments were unable to make room for the demographic growth pressures due to the barriers imposed by the physical-legal structures of the PEVE policy (private ownership, single parcel project, rigid architecture, among others). In this context, informalization also emerges serving the changing local politics in the municipality that shifted from neglecting the residents' demands to committing to addressing their housing rights. The new local administration led by Martin Sabbatella (1999-2009) exemplified its commitment to the poor by urbanizing the NHT *casitas*. This improvement of the neighborhood living conditions triggered the increasing expectations of development for the residents. Informalization as a systemic and singular phenomenon in Presidente Sarmiento emerges within a complex contradiction. While the local government commits to solving the housing needs of the most vulnerable population, it also generates growing expectations that its administration cannot address. The lack of financial and technical resources at the municipal level, and the legal-jurisdictional model imposed by the PEVE displace the local government from its managing capacities. However, for this progressive administration, the political commitment supersedes the legal obligations. Therefore, the municipality performs transversal strategies that allow, support, and at times participate in the neighborhood's informalization to respond to the social and urban demands.

The inadequacy of the housing and public space design in Presidente Sarmiento only makes sense within an extensive historical-contextual analysis that exposes the contradictions between the socioeconomic expectations for the relocated families and their long-term needs. In the 1980s, the first adaptation experiences driven by the community in partnership with the local government established a precedent for large-scale informalization two decades later. Rather than an organized action, the latter informalization is driven by the individual choices of families who experienced changing demographic and economic needs of extended families. Although the project's modernist architecture ignored the families' background and attempted to change their social and cultural behaviors in a "civilizing" project, the two, three, and four-bedroom units worked well in the short term. Many long-term neighbors remarked that "in the beginning, the apartments were big and nice." Looking backward, it is evident that the policymakers and the architects made a flawed reading of the families' socioeconomic conditions, which worsened in the successive fifty years along with the impoverishment of the Argentinean working class. PEVE and the STAFF assumed that the families would benefit from upward social mobility, that children would become professionals and employees, and that beneficiaries would be able to sell the apartment unit in the local real estate market.

In this sense, Presidente Sarmiento was designed with a different future in mind for the *popular* classes, one of full employment and formal salaried work in the industrial area of the Buenos Aires metro area. In the early 1970s, Argentina had seven percent of poverty, one of the lowest percentages in Latin America (Altimir et al., 2002). The economic policies of the military regime (1976-1982) led the Argentine economy into a crisis aggravated by three concurrent factors: the accelerated erosion of public regulatory mechanisms (as a result of the deliberate dismantling and the increased capacity of private actors to sabotage them), the quadrupling of the external debt that compromised the country's financial possibilities, and the progressive speculative reorganization of the private financial system (Cavarozzi, 2001). At the time of the

inauguration of the NHD apartments in 1978, Argentinean workers were experiencing the loss of real wages: 30% during 1976, 13% in 1977, and 5% in 1978 (Minujin & Anguita, 2004). In 1980, some studies began to mention the phenomenon of the "new poor," illustrating the process of economic decline that led middle and working-class families to have incomes below the "poverty line" (Minujin, 1989). STAFF's optimistic social vision began disarticulating with the military dictatorship of the '70s and then continued through the economic crisis of the '80s and the neo-liberalization of the economy in the '90s. The State lost its redistributive and regulatory capacity, which, together with the fall in real income of broad sectors of the population, produced a generalized process of downward social mobility. Between 1991 and 1994, the increase in the average productivity of the economy was very significant, GDP grew by 25%, but employment grew by only about 3.5% only in specific sectors and for certain levels of qualification (Beccaria and López, 1996). Between 1980 and 1990, the percentage of the poor population doubled from 8.3 percent to 21.5 percent, which quadrupled between 1980 and 2000 and reached the record figure of 53 percent in 2001 (49.7 percent in Buenos Aires metro area). Although Argentina experienced a decline in poverty and inequality between 2004 and 2014, the structural patterns of impoverishment resurfaced in 2015. In 2021, the Permanent Household Survey (EPH) of INDEC reported that poverty rose five and a half points in one year and affected 40.9% of Argentines in the first half of the year, the hardest hit by the deepening of the economic crisis driven combined with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indigence jumped almost three points and affects 10.5% of the population, the worst poverty rate since 2004 when Argentina was still emerging from the worst economic crisis in its history.

The slowdown in the creation of formal employment, the decrease in real wages, the increase in labor precariousness, the opening of the wage gap between the skilled and the unskilled, and the increase in income concentration characterizes the entire economic period from 1975 to the present in Argentina (Beccaria and López, 1996; Bonfiglio, Vera, and Salvia, 2019; Cavarozzi, 2001; Minujin & Anguita, 2004). The disarticulation of a salaried social class into informal economies and unemployment, the dismantling of a social mobility project, and the growing problem of urban housing affordability marked needs for growing families. This macro context added to the changing spatial patterns in metropolitan Buenos Aires, linked to deindustrialization in localities such as Morón, where the traditional factories in industries were dismantled (Cravino, 2009; Cravino et al., 2010). The productive-territorial logic of the city changed, and so did the relative location of Presidente Sarmiento, created to house workers of the factories and their families. To a large extent, women became the heads of families through domestic work in upper-class homes located in the city's center, and men became day laborers with no specific location (Cerrutti, 2000; Courtis & Pacecca, 2010).

The informal economy found space in the hybrid, communal areas, and the first adaptation actions, incorporating absent uses and re-functionalized communal spaces. STAFF designed the "*hollows"* for community-oriented uses to support social relations. The very first occupations were not carried out by individual families but by organized neighbors responding to community demands, such as first-aid room and the offices of the complex's administration. These occupations set a precedent in the barrio, where residents also had their individual or family needs. These needs were not only for residential but also productive space. Older neighbors acknowledge that before the ground-floor occupations, businesses already existed within the apartments. Over the years, and in a context of growing unemployment, numerous

small businesses also appeared in the *hollows* of the *monoblock*s, such as groceries, vegetables, and bakeries.

The increasing demographic needs of the neighborhood exposed the lack of capacity for transformation of modernist architecture in a context where "leaving" is not an option. The neighborhood leaders attribute the phenomenon of housing expansions to population growth within the critical economic context of early 2000, where the new families could rarely afford to buy or rent a new home, and the only alternative was to stay. However, "No exit from the neighborhood" is a metaphor for the permanence of extended families living in extended houses as a conscious choice related to the importance of territorial belonging for the popular classes. The *popular* territory is also a space of access to State's resources for life reproduction, exceeding the limits of the informal economy. To anchor to this territory seems especially important for long-term and new residents who rely on State's social assistance and depend on localized political connections, social workers, local administrators, and clientelist relationships. Today, almost two-thirds of households count on contributory family allowances and conditional cash transfers given by the national government.

While the hybridity of the rigid forms imposed by the State and the need of the families and the community initiated the improvement process, more conditions determined the triggering of the informalization at scale, involving the massive appropriation of public (privately owned) land and the systemic undoing of PEVE's rules and forms. This appropriation and undoing of norms required the local government to transversally support and even participate in informalization. The families' needs overlapped with the needs of a new local government with a progressive agenda on housing rights. Mayor Sabbatella's political agenda created commitments to protect housing rights and rejected past policies of eviction and militarization of public spaces.

According to public officials of the time, Presidente Sarmiento went from being a neglected territory to becoming the principal target of Morón's municipality. The operative agenda centered on the re-urbanization of the NHT *casitas*. The new houses built by the municipality, the paved streets, and green public spaces with playgrounds and furniture, induced the valorization of the neighborhood in monetary and symbolic terms. These physical improvements produced a radical change in the local government's relationship with the residents. The local government also explicitly committed to curtailing displacements, offering the informal tenants a safety network by guaranteeing that they would not be displaced from their neighborhood even if they took the *lungs* land. In this context, the local government's stance towards the informalization of the *monoblocks* was ambivalent, supportive at times but never punitive. This solid but confusing municipal presence in the *barrio* marked a different approach to the territory and changed the inhabitants' expectations about their future. It could feel closer to housing improvement. Rather than eliminating informality, the re-urbanization of the NHT *casitas* created the space and the conditions for the site to "reabsorb" it triggered by increasing expectations of the *barrio's* future

Joe Slovo

In 2004, the South African national government launched Joe Slovo redevelopment as an exemplary pilot project of the new BNG national housing policy. However, in the political urgency to show managerial performance, the national government officials decided to transform an inclusionary post-Apartheid welfare-state policy into an exclusionary housing design, causing

political contestation among the informal settlement's residents. As a result of an extended community struggle, the development of Joe Slovo's phases changed its original path. In a context of displacement threat and lack of institutional responses to guarantee the rights of the original residents of the area, Joe Slovo residents organized the rent boycott of the JS-1 apartments, the occupation of the freeway, the reblocking, and the census replication carried out by the community (EFR). All these exemplify informalizing spatial practices that influenced the project's redesign, including the housing architecture, the type of public space, the tenure regimes, the beneficiaries target, and the landscape but also the political landscape of the N2 Gateway. These informalization practices that are still in force controlling the decision-making, represent a political device of resistance and control in the face of unfulfilled promises.

The informalization process did not occur gradually and in a disorganized manner as in Presidente Sarmiento; it was a succession of premeditated acts triggered in a short time after the redevelopment project began. Conditions for informalization emerged through displacement and evictions carried by the government, leading to territorial anchoring strategies led by community groups; that is, strategies that would allow people to stay in their own place. Informalization as anchoring practice took place within simultaneous deteriorating and consolidating relationships. The deteriorated relationships between the different community factions and government agencies in charge overlapped with deteriorating intergovernmental relationships. These made space for strong relationships to emerge between residents and other governance actors (mainly NGOs) who base their power capacity on improving housing and public spaces within the informal spheres. As one NGO leader points out, "working within informality is to us a comparative advantage since we do not need the government's approval; thus, we manage time, rules, and design decisions." In other words, these NGOs operate in parallel to public policy actions and acquire goals by taking advantage of the margins of informality. In informality, they build their political action and develop their organizational capacity to produce immediate improvements for the members of the associated communities.

Forced displacement accelerated the implementation of Joe Slovo informal settlement redevelopment by exposing the contradictions between housing policy and housing politics. This revealed the critical role of party politics in the institutional and operational definition of the housing projects. As Millstein (2010) highlights, the N2-Gateway project was and is politically driven and politically sensitive. The changing institutional forms taken by the political-technical leadership of the project reflect the centrality of party politics and intergovernmental tensions. While the creation of an intergovernmental agency such as the M3 (National Minister of housing, the Provincial Minister of housing, and the Executive Mayor of Cape Town) intended to correlate with the narratives of decentralization of housing policy, this model only worked as long as all government level belonged to the ANC. After much controversy, including accusations of irregular tender processes and overspending, just before the DA came to power in in 2006, the City of Cape Town was excluded from the N2 Gateway project. Tensions between inter-governmental level got publicly exposed as Thubelisha reported that the Minister countermanded the Provincial Government of the Western Cape reversing instructions on density, urban layout, and architectural types of JS-3. The Western Cape, in turn to these allegations, canceled payments to Thubelisha Homes (De Satgé & Watson, 2018).

While the N2 Gateway was supposed to relieve political tensions, bureaucratic procedures, and limited local capacity, centralization and limitations to the municipal administration instead characterized the project. The decision to exclude the City of Cape Town

as project manager reduced their role in one of the largest urban development projects in the city. At the same time, the controversies of the N2 Gateway and the tensions with higher spheres of government significantly weakened the legitimacy of the city's political leaders, often blamed for the lack of service delivery (Millstein, 2010). Decision-making got centralized at the national level under the premise of fast-track execution and delivery of housing solutions. Paradoxically, this urgency ended up making the implementation process a much slower and more complex experience as decisions based on "urgency" dismissed other actors with territorial power beyond the local government. As a consequence, while the national government "removed" the local government from its territorial control over Joe Slovo, forced displacements created political space for alternative governance actors that ended up taking partial control over the implementation process informally, such as Joe Slovo Task Team and the N2 Gateway Tenants' Association.

The first step towards a change in the housing project management and the territorial control proposed by the State was the boycott of JS-1 rents. The living conditions experienced by the tenants motivated a rent boycott, a self-organized action to stop paying rent because "JS-1 does not worth paying the rent of these apartments." The N2 Gateway Tenants' Association said it started its rent boycott in 2007, hoping that the government would address its concerns. The Housing Development Agency (HAD) authorities and representatives of local and provincial governments acknowledged the techno-political failures in the processes of awarding works to incompetent companies and the poor controls of works capable of guaranteeing the habitability conditions required in buildings of this type. Beyond the failed modernist design of the apartments, JS-1's evolution suggests a misreading of broader realities and possibilities of the backyarders. In other words, it seems to have been wrong to think that because they were informal renters and not "mere" squatters in informal settlements, backyarders could be beneficiaries of a formal subsidized rental policy. As indicated in Chapter 3, the nature of backyarding goes beyond the purely monetary issue. Backyarding has comparative conditions marked by the contractual circumstances, the time and modalities of payment, the temporality of the stay, the personal relationships with the owners of the RDP houses, among others. It can also be challenging to generalize the effects of housing across different social groups because their experiences vary widely, from migrant workers to more affluent families. Still, empirical evidence suggests that backyard tenants are more similar to informal settlement residents than to people living in formal housing (Scheba & Turok, 2020). Whether the boycott was a strategy to get the government to fix construction flaws and structural problems in the buildings or a sign of the inadequacy of the contractual conditions for the beneficiary population, the JS-1 rent boycott signified the Tenants Association's takeover of the management of the buildings. The loss of State control over the administration and management of the buildings made the development of an informal rental market possible. JS-1, which displaced informal settlers to the city's peripheries to eradicate informality, contributed to the emergence of one of the hottest informal market hubs in the city within a formally planned space.

Other community fractions also deployed creative examples of "design from below," such as a prefabricated bridge and reblocking. The rent boycott organized by the Tenants Committee gathered public attention in the JS-1 flats in mid-2007 when the residents of Joe Slovo informal settlement also organized a Task Team to represent their interests. The Task Team coordinated protests at both Langa and the CBD, including two marches to Parliament demanding RDP, rather than bonded houses and rental units, for the following phases in Joe

Slovo. According to community leaders and activists of the Anti-Eviction Campaign, a political group that partnered with the Task Team in the political protests, the community tried many institutional channels to claim their right to "stay in our place." By 2008, participatory and judicial processes were not working as expected, so the community decided to change the method of struggle, shifting from protests and legal actions to information production and negotiation. NGOs such as the Community Organization Resource Centre (CORC), the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP), and Slum Dwellers International (SDI) introduced practices performed in informal settlements, such as community enumerations, reblocking, and bottom-up design practices. As a community leader highlighted, when the reblocking process started, the community understood that the design of a new layout and physical transformation of space offered the opportunity to establish control over the land. The community saw re-blocking as a new form of struggle as it generated internal learning about the community's political capacity to control the course of the housing redevelopment.

The empowerment of different community factions and the informalization of the housing project process forced the State to take a different stance on informality. JS-3 housing design reflects a necessary calibration between the formal and the informal for the seeks of the project's continuation. The architectural typology informally allows for commercial activities on the ground floor, mainly food sales and miscellaneous or sewing and shoe repair shops. However, while the new typologies, unlike the apartments, "admit" other types of informal economic activities, they restrict the possibilities of backyarding, a source of income for low-income families. This decision to "liberate" certain aspects of housing to informality, such as livelihood generation while restricting others, such as informality of residence, also occurred at the institutional level. The State officials felt the need to calibrate the formal and informal spaces for negotiation and empowerment to continue with the progress of the construction works. Pragmatically, the State maintains institutional channels, such as the steering committee, and, at the same time, reaches discrete agreements on specific conflicts, such as who is in charge of security at the construction site. This intertwined network of negotiation, representation, and individual empowerment created opportunities for patronage. This space captured by local intermediaries with influence on access in the development is manifested in the acquisition of housing, contracting for the execution of construction, security and surveillance, transportation of workers and materials, among others. Complex micro-struggles have marked the current phase to try and secure access to the opportunities offered by the state scheme of improvement and avoid displacement by rival claimants.

Ciudad del Bicentenario

In Ciudad del Bicentenario, the informalization of the project takes place almost as soon as the families move into their new homes. Families are aware of the "dangers" of not complying with the national housing policy regulations, the procedures to carry out a renovation legally, and the "responsibilities" of becoming a legal homeowner. Residents also know that without official approval, they cannot change the shape of the rooms, open areas, expand into the backyard and modify the facade, neither open businesses nor workshops. The speed and scale of informalization give a clear idea about the nature of the phenomenon. It cannot be associated with the buildings' decay or lack of maintenance but with the structural conditions that the project imposed since the beginning. These are mainly the far distance to the sources of informal and formal work, the scale of the project, and the normative/design characteristics of the units

and public spaces (size of housing, land use, architectural typology). CB's highly standardized housing does not fully consider the actual quantitative and qualitative housing deficit nor the relocated families' real needs. The strict regulations of the housing policy and the FSD's built environment standards constrain the development of more efficient and socioeconomically supportive typologies. In this context, first-time homeowners struggle more than ever to achieve basic livelihoods. Thus, housing renovation is not only driven by the standardized and unthoughtful design of the houses but primarily by the need to develop economic activity. Since having access to job opportunities outside of CB is tricky, and since private, commercial real estate development is not allowed within the Macroproject, residents have attempted a variety of occupations from home.

Informalization in CB is also associated with the absence of the local State managing the peripheral lands of Cartagena and the property regimes for low-income groups imposed by the national housing policy. This absence, promoted by the central government through the institutional design of the social housing Macroprojects policy, overrides local capacities to build and manage social housing and cedes the management of large plots of land (388 hectares in the case of CB) to "territorial agents." For these, the socio-territorial management of housing projects relies on a real estate development goal rather than a public agenda. The scheme of the MISN transfers the responsibility of land acquisition from the national government to public or private real-estate developers, providing incentives regarding land use regulations, efficiency in the approval processes, and taxation. In light of the national government's decision to ignore the 388 Law legal framework for land use planning to dispose of the rural land more quickly, it established lower urbanization standards (lot size, street with, and surface of public spaces) and partnered with large developers to avoid the obstacles of local development plans (Maldonado, 2011). The institutional architecture of the MISN was designed with a corporatist spirit, that is, a private alliance between the national government and the large private developers and landowners. Particularly in cities of the Caribbean region, which is marked by high inequality and colonial legacies of power and wealth redistribution, it is the economic elites that define the city's development and not the democratically elected local governments (Alfonso, 2019). My research on the genesis of Ciudad del Bicentenario reveals a direct relationship between the FSD interest in developing social housing and the fact that members of the Santo Domingo family already owned underdeveloped land on the outskirts of Barranquilla. Despite that CB has been built by a non-profit real estate developer who committed to build better housing projects, its location and material conditions of the houses are notably similar to any other "low cost" project developed by a for-profit developer, such as its neighbor Villa de Aranjuez. Like many other Macroprojects in Colombia, CB reproduces the socio-spatial inequality of the city, its territorial distribution of wealth, and damages the ecological structure of the southeast urban area of Cartagena, already affected by the indiscriminate expansion of the urban sprawl.

While the MISN bypasses the local government planning, land use regulation, environmental protection, and participation, the FSD also bypasses the local government by creating a paternalistic model of assistance and civic representation that replaces the citizen-local government relationships. The DINCS model developed by FSD to support community building within the project undoubtedly establishes a profound difference with other housing projects and "territorial agents". The model guarantees the FSD a follow-up and permanence in the territory, even after delivering the first-phase houses. The FSD "stays" in the territory performing social assistance services through the DINCS model, following the Ruta VAAS (Linkage, Adaptation,

Accompaniment, and Exit route), a system of sequential steps through which FSD develops a self-sustaining community: linkage, adaptation, accompaniment, and exit. Each step has a time frame and deliverables, some of which include metrics and evaluations. Within its de facto control of the housing complex, the FSD has an office that operates as if it were the local government. FSD employees offer services for claims and administrative procedures, social workers' assistance, collection and systematization of information about the neighborhood, training programs, workshops, and an employment center, among many other comprehensive and cross-cutting state-like civic roles. This role of the FSD is well accepted among the community, while the local government does not take the legal responsibility for monitoring the appropriate exercise of ownership rights. Many of my resident interviews thought the FSD was the local government. However, none of the diverse FSD employees we interviewed wanted to perform this role or saw it as a correct approach. They all argue that in the end, DINCS is a paternalist assistance model in practice, where the residents are increasingly more dependent on the FSD rather than more autonomous.

In this blurry quasi-governmental role, the FSD facilitates the development of informalization as a stabilizing strategy. From the change of one-story typologies with prefabricated panel systems that do not allow modifications to units designed for incremental improvements, including layouts indicating design options for future expansions. As the economic needs of the relocated families on the outskirts also become evident, the FSD provides seed capital for the development of economic activities inside the houses without the need for municipal authorization, allows larger construction works without reporting the lack of construction permits, and even provides technical assistance to those who need it. These actions supposed an important shift from the FSD's first vision for a dormitory city for inner city employees, as suggested by Ricardo Hausmann in its advising role during the genesis of the project. This shift shows remarkable differences with the Argentina and South African case I will further develop in this chapter.

Labor informality of the families in Ciudad del Bicentenario is not only due to the remoteness of the project from job sources and the city center but due to the labor structure of Cartagena for low-income families. According to the analysis presented in the study, "Cartagena Free of Extreme Poverty in 2033" and data from Cartagena Cómo Vamos (2018), labor demand is mainly for low-skilled and low-quality workers. The city has a high informality rate of 55.3% and low-quality employment. Labor informality rates are above the national average at 47.2%, a number that includes rural areas with more proclivity to informal work. In this context, activities such as motorcycle cabs and street vending represent an essential source of income for families in Ciudad del Bicentenario, where 38% of those surveyed after relocation reported that they "stay at home," either working informally from there or not working at all. Barriers are imposed by lack of access to tertiary education and professional training, poor accessibility to formal job sources - in terms of distance and cost - and lack of financial and logistical capacity to develop formal productive enterprises. The FSD baseline surveys reveal considerable challenges on this front where 55% of residents have no work experience, only 1.2% indicated that they had a "profession," and only 5% had done a "certified" job (formal, skills-related, or experienced) at some point in their lives. In other words, even when better located, the economic structure of the families would continue to be informal daily activities and those that take place within the domestic sphere.

The actions by which the FSD supports the informal economy within CB, of course, take place informally. Apart from the oral testimonies of my interviews, the FSD does not provide documentation that shows that it supports the informalization process. Although the DINCS model focuses on entrepreneurship, it does not openly support the logic of the informal economy. In papers, the DINCS model still expects people to operate under the logic of a formal market and employment instead of analyzing their real needs. In this sense, the DINCS is a system of support and accompaniment for the community, and it does not necessarily attempt to resolve or alleviate the structural problems that the macro housing project policy presents, such as the distance from sources of employment, the creation of socially homogeneous neighborhoods, and the low quality of the built environment. However, it is possible to reconstruct the narrative of employees who assume that informalization (particularly the development of economies, businesses, and workshops within the houses) is a fundamental factor for the social stability of the neighborhood.

The property regimes in the Caribbean region of Colombia, particularly the concentration of land in the hands of large landowners, define the development of cities beyond the capacities of local governments. With the support of national housing policy, this corporative agreement defines a fundamental condition for informalization. In the hybrid jurisdictional space of Ciudad del Bicentenario, the FSD imposes its own agenda based on the combined purpose of real estate development and philanthropy operationalized through DINCS. For FSD employees, advancing along with the steps of the VAAS Route to the last "exit" stage implies fulfilling the purpose of generating economically stable and self-managed communities through the system of DINCS leaders and committees. For the FSD board, "exiting" the project means finishing the development of the remaining 330 hectares. The "two exits" imply social stability that informalization provides, both for CB to be an attractive place for investors and a philanthropic flag for one of the world's wealthiest families.

Informalization of the Formal: shared patterns

Physical-legal apparatus: undoing forms and norms

Architecture, urban design, and norms established by each project's legal, physical apparatuses play an essential role in the emergence of adaptation, renovation, and improvement practices that later trigger informalization. As I have analyzed in the three case studies, the projects were created from a modernist bureaucratic perspective, seeking resource efficiency parameters: space, land, construction costs, and standardization that facilitate the construction and logistics of large projects. Spatial standardization seems to be especially important for the operationalization of public housing policy at a massive scale. Standardization is also essential for families due to its effects on imposing lifestyles and social behavior. For instance, in Ciudad del Bicentenario, the standardization of housing typologies is of such magnitude that almost half of the families experience critical overcrowding as soon as they move in, as the number of rooms delivered does not correspond to the number of family members. In Joe Slovo phase 1, where the size of the apartment corresponds to "what each family can afford to pay in rent," signs of critical overcrowding are also evident in the short term. Presidente Sarmiento is the only example where two-, three-, four- and even five-bedroom apartments were delivered to meet the needs according to the size of the families. In all cases, the architects adopted a middle-class family house or

apartment typology to the budget restrictions of low-income housing. Floor plans were reduced to the minimum possible standards to maximize the ratio of surface area to the number of units delivered.

Shrinking typologies is a recurrent practice within national housing policies, where builders and developers are granted with "special standards" to maximize their profit within the subsidies per unit established by the national government. Ciudad del Bicentenario is undoubtedly the least articulated project from the design point of view. The fact that there is no architectural firm claiming authorship indicates a complete lack of interest in the quality of the built environment. By contrast, Presidente Sarmiento and Joe Slovo's projects were at the time "model" designs of a new way of solving high-density social housing. In opposition to individual single-family housing, these projects attempted to bring an image of sophistication, modernity, and efficiency to social housing. However, according to interviews with residents, high-rise collective housing is the least desirable relocation scenario. The executing agencies had to discard this typology for the subsequent development stages of the housing complexes. In JS-3, the discussions between the government and the community focused on fitting the maximum number of families in individual houses. In CB, the FSD discouraged the construction of four-story "towers" as a sustainable model for the relocated families. In Presidente Sarmiento, the redevelopment of the NHT casitas took shape in individual two-story typologies, although a denser project would have solved a greater housing demand on the site.

From a planning perspective, the failed design of the housing is not the only reason for informalization. In Presidente Sarmiento, Joe Slovo, and Ciudad del Bicentenario, the lack of diversity of uses is a crucial cause for undoing norms and urging a new kind of city-making. Families, local governments, neighborhood associations, foundations, and NGOs invested resources in these places, including mixed uses, intermingling community centers, stores, churches, and workshops within the residences. The lack of diversity of legal land uses is not exclusively an architectural design flaw but a requirement imposed by the housing policies, where subsidies are applied exclusively for residential development. Joe Slovo and Presidente Sarmiento architects and FSD employees expose this "flaw" to national policymakers. These in turn claim that the administrative processes for awarding credit lines and financing for housing construction impose the conditions and restriction for incorporating other uses within the same residential lot of the housing solution. This macro-policy condition in all three housing policy norms is partially solved by situated agents transversally undoing the legal uses of the sites. Local governments, residents, and agents incorporate these uses in an alternative way, or tangentially to institutional procedures, making the floor plans of the houses more flexible, placing doors and windows so that they serve as showcases for products to sell, and designing spaces that are sufficiently hybrid so that families can develop their economic activities without the corresponding legal authorization.

These actions of flexibilization to undo the norms and forms imposed by national housing policies are significant when it comes to families finding and developing their economic livelihoods. As I reviewed in all three cases, the role of the informal economy and the territorial anchoring related to livelihoods strategies are vital in cities such as Buenos Aires, Cartagena, and Cape Town. The informal backgrounds of the families relocated from informal settlements to these projects indicate that families carry their traditions and strategies to the new locations and that know-how and investment capacity are essential. In Presidente Sarmiento, neighbors say that changing the house is a comparative advantage over other dense areas of the municipality. In JS-

1, the former backyarders created and maintained an informal market that respects the logic of the backyard over the logic proposed in the social housing policy. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, families from informal urban settlements often develop businesses and modify their houses, while rural families do not have the economic capacity or expertise to do so. These examples exemplify the required capacities for informalization to establish itself as a sustainable practice of city-making.

Property regimes: distance and expectations for improvement

As I indicated in the introduction to this dissertation, the three projects enjoy different relative locations, and these locations have also changed relatively over time. Ciudad del Bicentenario is a peripheral project, disconnected from the urban fabric of Cartagena and far from sources of employment and the comparative advantages of the urban agglomeration. Joe Slovo enjoys a good location, a fundamental cause in the dispute over the decision-making process of the redevelopment process: who would stay and who would not, how many people would live per hectare, what density the buildings should have. In the late 1970s, Presidente Sarmiento was built in a relatively peripheral site but with strategic proximity to the Posadas Hospital and the Acceso Oeste highway, landmarks which meant a convenient location over the years. The analysis of the relationship between informalization and location shows that, while remoteness may be an important factor in determining relocated families' social and economic difficulties, location plays a more complex and dynamic role. My research findings indicate that more than the mere distance to sources of employment, the relative location improvement and positive expectations about the neighborhood are determining factors in the process. This finding provides interesting insights into the dynamic nature of the location of these projects and how to manage and regulate their expectations for growth.

To analyze these findings in-depth, let us take the most obvious case of remoteness, Ciudad del Bicentenario. The distance to sources of work, the non-affordability of public transportation, and the hours of travel to the city center isolate residents, who develop survival activities within the neighborhood: street vendors, motorcycle cabs, and commercial premises within the dwelling. However, as I show in the study case, not all of these survival strategies lead to a productive venture or even a renovation /a adaptation of the house. Minor strategies do not undo the norms and legal forms imposed by the housing policy to re-establish rules and spaces. The results of the interviews and baseline surveys say that these families depended on an informal economy before arriving in the neighborhood, indicating that remoteness does not necessarily trigger an informal market; perhaps, on the contrary, it reduces markets to a subsistence level since investment and spending capacity are lacking. The lack of commercial, productive, and service uses in this large, homogenous site leads families to create an informal local economy capable of supplying the neighborhood-scale demand (hairdressers, food stores, mechanics, and blacksmiths). Presumably, if Ciudad del Bicentenario had been located closer to the center of the city of Cartagena, people would have more access (in terms of lower cost and transportation time) to sources of day labor. Many families would not depend on survival strategies such as street vending or selling miscellaneous items inside their homes, and residents would have more expenditure capacity due to their higher income. Even so, the new places would lack of small-scale stores, private community services (churches, hairdressers, laundry) and services often demanded in popular neighborhoods. This counterfactual thought is exemplified by the processes happening in Joe Slovo and Presidente Sarmiento, better-located

projects where economic informalization within the dwellings is the central aspect of economic life.

By comparing CB with PS and JS, I suggest that positive expectations about the place and growth demands lead families and situated agents to undo legal land uses to create a different spatial-economic logic in the neighborhoods. For example, from my interviews with FSD employees I noticed that the incorporation of the Transcribe Bus stops partially facilitated access from and to CB. Although the costs and travel times are lower than before, they are still unaffordable for many of the resident population. However, the new Transcaribe stops did improve the expectations of residents and developers. FSD sold more parcels of land to private developers of VIS and VIP at speeds unimagined by the marketer. Simultaneously, development expectations triggered a process of building densification linked to increased investment capacity of residents, either to incorporate commercial uses or to build new high-rise rental units. In Presidente Sarmiento, the increase in the speed and scale of informalization once the local government began the redevelopment of the NHT *casitas* suggests that the public works and the gradual improvement of the location brought new dynamism to the informalization process. In Joe Slovo, the expectations about the site and its preferential location to other social housing locations in the city marked the bidding for the space and those who would benefit from the project. Informalizing actions were triggered when old, and new residents felt the fear of forced displacement. These actions were aimed at anchoring residents in a highly contested territory. The relative location of Joe Slovo also enabled the creation and growth of the informal rental market in JS-1 as one of the "hottest" sites in Cape Town.

In sum, my research findings show that, rather than a product of poor location, informalization is a product anchoring needs to territories with location improvement expectations. As public transportation extends over the city and the growth of the urban sprawl gradually corrects the condition of remoteness, the informalizing pressure on the built and institutional spaces (in terms of decision making) increases. In this sense, it is the lack of non-residential uses within large, extensive, and homogeneous projects that mainly triggers the undoing of the norms and forms imposed by housing policies.

Institutional design: local management vacuum

One of the most significant findings of the research relates to a common modus-operandi of national States regarding the territorial management of large-scale housing complexes. The management models established by centralized decisions, the intergovernmental relations, and the role de-facto managers are closely related to the development of informalization as a city-making process.

The national States' modernist developmental agenda reflects an indivisible relationship between legal and formal architecture for these massive housing projects, expressed both in the built environment and the institutional landscape of the places. In the three study cases, the State "fails" with former experiences of spatialized poverty management, which end up in early criticisms to the RDP program in Cape Town, the exponential growth of slums in Buenos Aires, and slow rates of social housing production in Colombia. In search of a different and better housing solution, the State attempts to create models that imply alternative urban management schemes spatial-administrative orders. National public policy displaces local states to implement large-scale housing projects at their political service in corporatist partnership with landowners

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and large developers. In Presidente Sarmiento, the national government created a unique-large scale condo administration and a "total unit" morphology developed by STAFF. In Joe Slovo, the government designated Thubelisha Homes as the regulator of urban phased development, the administrator of the leasing system, and the mediator of social conflict. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, the State transferred the development of the housing project and the territorial management to the Santo Domingo Foundation, a non-profit developer. In these alternative models, the hyper-standardization of the built environment couples a legal-administrative architecture that imposes rigid rules and relieves local governments from managing these--their-- territories.

In Presidente Sarmiento, the PEVE was coordinated by the Secretaría de Vivienda de la Nación and operated by the Banco Hipotecario Nacional in the land that land belonged to the Martínez de Hoz family, one of the most powerful families in Argentina and close ties to the de facto governments. In a centralizing fashion, rather than developing a housing complex that the Moron municipality would later manage, the PEVE instead established an autonomous legal-physical apparatus. In this alternative urban management model, the national government displaced the local government from managing their territory, including the administration of services, the definition of urban regulations, and the capacity to manage public and private space. The central government established that all PEVE large-scale housing projects would be "self-managed" privately thus registered the land's complex as a single parcel in the provincial cadaster. A single consortium of thousands low-income beneficiaries were assigned responsibility for maintaining public spaces and infrastructure networks along with garbage collection among other duties.

In Ciudad del Bicentenario, the political will of President Santos's administration, embodied in the Macroprojects Law, has intentionally made local governments weaker by by-passing their urban regulation capacities established in Colombia's Territorial 388 Law of 1997. In particular, the national government dismantled local land use regulations and other powerful planning tools such as local-based environmental protection and participatory planning to allocate large portions of land in the urban peripheries and lower urbanization and architectural standards (Mendez et al., 2014). Although local governments are supposed to take over project authority as soon as the developers complete the project stages, the transfer process is confusing. In transferring management power to the "territorial agents," the national government did not establish a defined mechanism for transferring jurisdiction from the developers to the local governments once the projects are completed. It is difficult for local authorities to determine the completion of a project such as Ciudad del Bicentenario, with more than 300 hectares yet to be developed. In addition, the titling of housing takes several years to be executed, thus the developers take several years to transfer the public spaces to the municipal treasury, and the projects remain in regulatory limbo where the jurisdictions are, at least, unclear.

In Joe Slovo, partisan differences between the local and national levels of government and the urgency in demonstrating that a new type of housing policy (BNG) is feasible caused the Ministry of Housing to displace the city government from the decision-making committee. Although the implementation was initially in the City's hands, Minister Sisulu assumed a central role in the conceptualization and direction of the N2 Gateway. In preparation for her 2005 budget speech, much emphasis on the N2 first phase focused on ensuring 'visible progress' as part of the "marketing and branding of the Joe Slovo site" (De Satgé & Watson, 2018). After the DA took power in the City's local administration, the national government, which remained ANC,

dismantled the tripartite project steering committee and took away the implementation from the City's responsibility. The Minister appointed Thubelisha Homes, a non-profit company, as an extension of the national government to manage the project. Thubelisha had no institutional experience working with informal settlements, managing social housing or construction projects at the scale of the N2 Gateway; however, its mandate included institutional coordination, budgeting, programming, construction, and administration.

Despite the explicit actions of national governments to displace local authorities from managing their territories, it is not laissez-faire that gives rise to informalization. Beyond the power vacuum to local governments, local situated agents persistently commit to actively manage the conflicts and socio-spatial relations that govern these large territorial extensions. In Presidente Sarmiento, Mayor Martin Sabbatella positioned Presidente Sarmiento in the center of the municipal agenda as a sign of his new political leadership committed to attending to the needs of the poorest population groups in Moron. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, the FSD remains in the territory, attending to neighbors' interests and daily demands in a paternalistic, corporative fashion. In Joe Slovo, the residents' organization partnered with NGOs expert in informal settlements improvement to control the decision-making of the future redevelopment.

No matter whether these situated agents belong to governmental structures or not, they do not have institutional capacities, legal jurisdiction, and administrative tools to successfully manage these territories. The municipality of Morón encounters technical-financial constraints arising from the mismatch between the scale of the challenges in Presidente Sarmiento and the local administration resources. More importantly, as the local government does not have legal jurisdiction over the site, which legally belongs to the consortium of owners, it faces innumerable barriers to devising and implementing a comprehensive public policy. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, the FSD implements the DINCS model with a particular social agenda, based on their philanthropic approach for low-income people, which often contradicts the local public agenda, as in the case of the DINCS Leadership Committees rivaling the city's Community Action Board. Also, since the FSD does not enjoy the formal legal and administrative capacities to administer the site, its ability to plan and manage the CB territory (the built and the unbuilt) is limited and subjected to its philanthropic-real estate role. In Joe Slovo, the empowered community leaders can be sharply critical of one another, and many are suspected of using the project as a channel to empower themselves. The rivalry between multiple organizations representing different groups, such as the Tenants Association, the Task Team, the Residents Association, the Langa's backyarders, and Informal Area Residents fragments territorial control. Those who acquired power in the contestation for space must sustain conflict with the State and rival organizations to accumulate control in the housing construction process.

The combination of managing local demands and urban growth and the lack of legal-administrative tools of situated de-facto managers lead these to adopt informalization as a strategy for socio-spatial management in the housing complexes. Since the national government establishes rigid legal and formal frameworks to create and regulate the development of these massive housing projects, these situated agents, diverse in their agendas and nature, must undo the forms and norms imposed by the housing policies. In this context, informalization emerges and develops as a tool for socio-spatial management, capable of guaranteeing the political-social stability of the peripheries to which these housing projects belong.

Expectations vs. macroeconomic realities

As a fourth condition is the mismatch between the assumed positive socioeconomic outcomes for families made by policy makers and designers and the downward reality determined by macro-economic trends these family have experienced in the last decades. Policymakers expected that housing will work as a capital transfer providing wealth to families (see Chapter 3). Decision-makers and designers created social housing projects and policies under the expectation of upward (social) mobility; however, the Latin American working class has been impoverished in the last 50 years.For instance, subsidized social rents in South Africa were expected to serve an emerging Black middle-class after ten years of democracy and socio-economic reconstruction policies, such as the RDP (Iqani, 2017). In Argentina, the slum eradication policy devised a robust subsidized mortgage policy, with the expectation that working families would be able to pay for their apartment in the long term as part of a "civilization" project of the popular classes living in "villas miseria" (Oszlak, 1991). In Colombia, the Macroprojects housing policy was conceived as a "locomotive" for economic growth through increased productivity in construction to achieve the goal of one million new homes (PND, 2010-2014).

These positive expectations about the social future of the beneficiaries had very specific policy decisions, not only architectural but also programmatic, such as subsidized rent and mortgages schemes designed for a formal, emergent working class, while in Argentina, Colombia, and South Africa wages have depreciated, and jobs have become precarious and informal. For instance, Ricardo Hausmann suggested the FSD that CB should be designed on the idea of residents commuting daily into the city and returning home "importing wealth into the neighborhood." However, residents can barely afford the cost of a bus ticket downtown, and 90% do not make the minimum salary. The fact that my three study cases are located in different time moments, reflects that these discrepancies are not only a pre-neoliberal miscalculation about the future, but a systemic flaw in the persistent modernist nature of housing. JSA architects and STAFF design memories also reveal the imagery for these urban working classes: JS-1 was intended to be a starting point for people moving to the city to find work. Once residents can afford it, the intention is for them to move on, giving the opportunity to others to find their feet in the city." In Buenos Aires, the government expected that families living in the NHT casitas would "awake" the desire to "make an effort" to obtain the definitive housing, that is acquiring a subsidized mortgage to move to the permanent units. However, residents can barely afford the cost of a bus ticket downtown, backyarders could not adjust to the formal rent requirements in Js-1 and families in Presidente Sarmiento did not come up with a formal job capable of meeting the costs of a mortgage.

The COVID-19 pandemic only increased the structural tendencies of deprivation and precariousness in the region (CEPAL, 2020). A similar trend applies to post-apartheid housing policies. Since 1994, upward social mobility among the poorest segments in South Africa has been very limited, with indications of concentrated downward mobility among the less privileged in Capetonian townships, such as Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain (Tonheim & Matose, 2013; Ziervogel & Crankshaw, 2009: 247-48). These contradictions are, of course, embedded in a post-neoliberal landscape, however, my longitudinal comparison of cases reflects that this mismatch is not a pre-neoliberal miscalculation about the future, but a systemic flaw in the persistent modernist nature of housing.

Outcomes of informalization

In the final reflections on each study case chapter, I review in detail the consequences of informalization. In this chapter, I briefly introduce some reflections on the specific patterns and differences between cases. Taken together, it seems that these households seek to retrofit the more socio-economically supportive aspects of informal livelihoods into the more austere conditions of formal mega-projects in terms of policy, programming, building design, and site design. Informalization is particularly important for developing an informal economy within the neighborhood, anchoring the displaced families to their new territory, adapting the residential units to the families' needs, and maintaining sustainable political relationships with local governance actors. Far from a landscape of chaos and destruction, the informalization of Presidente Sarmiento, Joe Slovo, and Ciudad del Bicentenario has enhanced its use-value to residents in many dimensions and partially solved the contradictions between the assumptions of the creators and the needs of the families. However, it also brings social tension due to the non-normative nature of this form of city-making. The lack of a regulatory system to manage double standards lead to judgments about what is allowed and what is not--often falling into disputes where those families with fewer resources are subject to the 'law of the strongest,' loss of resources, and personal/family stress. From this perspective, while informalization does provide socio-economic space for reproduction by anchoring people to their territory and enhancing livelihoods, it also brings significant challenges at a social level, as it induces a conflict of interest between those neighbors who take advantage of the informalization synergy and those who cannot.

Permanence and displacement threats. Informalization guarantees the permanence of the families in their territory. Although, most of the residents of the projects do not have title deeds, either because bureaucratic processes get truncated, as in Presidente Sarmiento, because of delays in the delivery of the papers, as in Ciudad del Bicentenario and JS-3, or because they units are rental housing (JS-1). Even so, the lack of title deeds has been no impediment for residents to invest, modify, and adapt their homes as anchoring practices. In Joe Slovo, there is a direct relationship between informalization and the cancellation of displacement to Delft. In Presidente Sarmiento, the possibility of staying in the territory implies the consolidation of a political-social network that guarantees access to state resources and a solidarity economy. The expansion of "Casas Espejo" (mirror houses) signifies that the house is for life and the life of successive generations, and therefore, the ability to transform it is a comparative advantage over other neighborhoods in the city. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, investments in housing and business intend to transform the housing project into a neighborhood with the necessary local services. As an anchoring practice, it enhances the livelihoods of families who already must bear histories of violent conflict, displacement, and socio-environmental vulnerability. For the displaced families, it has an important practical and symbolic rootedness content.

Livelihoods and reproduction of life. Informalization plays a preponderant role in developing the informal economy in the neighborhood, which helps families develop livelihoods. Informalization also creates space for the development of social relations based on the transaction of goods and services. In all three projects, the meeting space is the terraces of small businesses, the counter of a grocery store, or a barber's chair. In Presidente Sarmiento, where the informal economy already shows some sophistication, such as several businesses with significant investments, hierarchical commercial streets, and specialty businesses, the corporate association

of informal merchants represents an essential organizational aspect of the neighborhood. In this sense, neighborhood sociability gets represented in relationships, experiences, and expectations around the informalization of the built and institutional environment.

Social conflict and Violence. Despite the remarkable capacity of some residents to overcome the economic austerity of their new place of residence, my research discloses how working and developing businesses informally fosters tension within the family, between neighbors, and with the local authorities. The complexification of the urban form and the increasing scarcity of opportunities (space, structures, infrastructures) may imply decreasing effectiveness of the "on the fly" resolutions and empowerment of the use of privileges and violence. From this perspective, while selected informalization offers a livelihood solution, it also produces a systematic complexification of the lives of low-income families. The safety of people and property is a significant concern for the residents in all three cases. In Presidente Sarmiento and Ciudad del Bicentenario, neighbors see violence as intrinsic to community life. Violence is imposed by gang groups related to criminal activities and is also product of a long history of institutional violence and state terrorism. In the fight against drug trafficking Presidente Sarmiento is currently militarized. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, installing a police center was one of the main residents' demands during my interviews. Despite the centrality of violence in people's lives, I did not find empirical evidence to assert that informalization produces, increases, or decreases violence in neighborhoods. Some practices of informalization build on "the law of the strongest," such as the appropriation of public spaces, the imposition of uses that are harmful to families (bars, canteens), and the relationship between landlords and tenants unprotected by law. Other actions improve the conditions of the built environment in the face of insecurity in the neighborhoods. The appropriation of public spaces reduces the physical space for gang activity, and families invest resources in transforming their homes into safer private spaces, possibly reducing exposure to crime. There are some points of contact that seem to be interesting to analyze to what extent pluralizing decision making and practices depends on the State regulation to produce social order, but associated questions to violence remain open for future research

Housing practices evaluation: spatiality and transformation

When first studying the spatial aspects of informalization, I focused my observations on the "inventions" and "counter-intuitive" practices that challenged the conventional wisdom for an architect like me. The inventive constructive details using recycled and unusual materials, such as empty glass bottles, caught my attention powerfully. However, the counter-intuitive practices, such as eliminating ventilation in a room or covering an outdoor patio, made me reflect further on the rationality we –architects and planners-- often ignore in low-cost housing design. Much has been said about the ignorance of designers in community practices, the needs of user-producers living in informal settlements, the inadequacy of standardized social housing prototypes, and the lack of sensitivity of modernist architecture to the social realities of the most vulnerable communities (Kim, 2015; Huchzermeyer & Misselwitz 2016; Lemanski, 2009; Natarajan, 2015; Roy, 2004; Simone, 2004, Turok, 2016). I consider all of these significant contributions to the design world; however, the study cases I present in this dissertation show additional unpleasant findings for designers and planners of affordable and social housing. My conclusions reflect a structural flaw in the way planners and designers anticipate the future and

how macroeconomic trends impact the spatial relations, the urban structure, and the socio-spatial configuration of the household.

Failed expectations about the uprising socioeconomic future of the families also shaped the built environment of the poorest families. The housing units reproduce the floor plans of prototypical middle-class houses, with reduced dimensions in size and quality adapted to the economic possibilities of the poor. These aspirations also excluded productive spaces from the house and the neighborhood. Decision-makers hold expectations that residents would be employed elsewhere in the city (downtown, the factory) as described by Ricardo Hausmann in Ciudad del Bicentenario and the memoirs of JSA Architects in Cape Town. In addition, the distribution of the bedrooms, designed for a typical middle-class family (two adults and two or three children), does not fulfill the needs of extended families. These discrepancies between social expectations and the social realities of the residents express the constant tension between a built environment designed under the premise of upward mobility and a built environment inhabited by the popular classes who have not yet experienced such mobility. This tension is expressed in measurable indicators, such as overcrowding. Based on the RCHI sample, I estimated forty percent critical overcrowding in Ciudad del Bicentenario. Without a precise percentage, it is easy to assume that measurable overcrowding occurs in Presidente Sarmiento and Joe Slovo. The tension is also expressed in symbolic terms. As a Cape Town political activist argues, the government wants to create the idea that they are interested in transforming slum dwellers into homeowners, getting obsessed with the image to hide poverty and making the poor look like the middle-income with houses.

In this section, I compile and compare the spatial practices of the families that I analyzed in each study case. Using the design-politics framework, I will consider the time variable and the spatial patterns of informalization practices, seeking to understand if learnings emerge from families' tacit knowledge and decisions about their dwellings and workspaces.

Tensions between transformation and inertia

Comparing the dwellings designed in these three case studies, including the multiple architectural typologies within each case, is a starting point for my reflection. As might be expected, informalization takes place more rapidly and fluidly in single-family units than in high-rise collective housing. It is simply easier to transform, renovate, and change low-density, single-family homes than high-rise apartments. At the same time, controlling the transformation over one's lot does not imply breaking with so much physical and social inertia. Unlike transformation that happen within individual homes, the physical transformation of shared spaces, structures, and infrastructures implies more consensus or violence among neighbors. Consensus or violence is essential during the initial stages of informalization before the community accepts or agrees to that becoming for the built space. The inhabitants of high-rise apartments in newer projects such as Joe Slovo and Ciudad del Bicentenario carry out small remodeling works, determined by the physical limits imposed by the projects' design, such as enclosing semi-covered terraces or generating an alternative entrance through the balcony. However, these residents feel more prevented from developing a significant transformation using the collective space, either for fear of the rule of law or their neighbors. I return to the anecdote of Juan, the resident of Ciudad del Bicentenario, who lamented the fact that he was the beneficiary of an apartment and not a house. What is more, Juan saw his apartment "as a punishment" that prevented him from opening a business or adding a room for his family.

Dissatisfaction with high-rise collective housing is partially a matter of cultural inadequacy but mostly an issue of possibilities for the future. From a monetary and social point of view, the maintenance of high-rise buildings is much more costly than the maintenance of an individual dwelling. For instance, the towers in Cartagena and Buenos Aires with the shared, large water tanks and pumps pose a costly and inefficient system for the families. Collective water tanks are an unaffordable technological device for the resident due to the lack of payment for electricity services, the broken mechanical parts, and the general lack of maintenance. Most of these tanks do not serve drinking water to the residents, even if the physical infrastructure is there. Consequently, in some towers of Ciudad del Bicentenario, residents bring water up to the third and fourth-floor apartments on foot. In Presidente Sarmiento, where water supply cuts from the central water tower became constant, the situation was so critical that the local government changed the system to "semi-individual" tanks shared by four families.

The lack of possibilities that the modernist-built environment imposes on low-income residents also manifests in the physical inertia of its static future. In the short and mid-term, modern buildings do not allow incremental or self-building transformations. As Joe Slovo's descriptive memoirs indicate, these buildings are created as temporary solutions for families, "The place is intended to be a starting point for people moving to the city to find work. Once residents can afford it, the intention is for them to move on, giving the opportunity to others to find their feet in the city."[22] My fieldwork findings show that families remain in place. In Presidente Sarmiento, families have stayed for more than fifty years. This project also demonstrates that the resistance imposed by the physical-legal apparatus of architecture gives way to the persistent force of informalization. No improvements in buildings or services, social programs, or participatory roundtables performed by the municipality could undo informalization, regulate it, or control it. Living in a territory with transformation capacity opens up the economic and demographic possibilities of the house, thus informalization represents a comparative advantage to other "static" neighborhoods and residents accept its trade-offs.

This evidence poses significant challenges to the newest housing "solutions" that seek to balance density with cultural adaptation, as in the case of Joe Slovo's phase 3 design. The strip housing units with shared communal space set a total occupation of the lot by the house, leaving no space left, such as backyards or patios. This full footage occupancy limits the possibilities of growing upwards or horizontally, imposing tremendous physical resistance to the processes of neighborhood transformation. While the project claims to include "flexibility" to set up small stores on the first floors, the houses have such small surfaces that other uses ineffectively displace essential family activities, such as the dining room. With the antecedents of informalization in Cape Town, such as backyarding and rent boycotts, the JS-3 housing design intends to avoid backyarding and any spatial transformation in an overly contested space. However, the longitudinal comparison with Presidente Sarmiento shows that the physical resistance to informalization has an expiration date. In Presidente Sarmiento, the physical resistance of the project lasted twenty years. It is feasible to assume that if everything remains equal, the forms and norms of JS-3 will give way to significant transformation processes driven by the force of informalization and socio-spatial power struggles and tensions over decision-making will occur in a more complex, built space.

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[22] https://jsa-architects.co.za/

Figure 92. Comparison of two urban blocks built at Joe Slovo.
In the block on the left, two-story houses occupancy individual lots. In the open space of the lots, informal constructions known as backyarding by the residents are evident. The block on the right (built-in 2014) shows the final blocks model that continued to be built throughout Phase 3. In this model, where instead of houses with individual backyards, the houses share a shared space, there is no evidence of backyarding.

Source: Google Earth.

Form follows Need (vs. form follows function)

The lenses of Design Politics allow us to observe the transformations of informalization and understand what residents value beyond their oral discourse. From studying the physical transformation of housing, I identify some general patterns about making decisions about the built space in housing projects. In the analysis, I have found security, productive investment, trade-offs, and privatization of shared spaces as generalized practices that I detail below.

In general, all transformations occur incrementally, according to families' economic possibilities and changing needs over the decades. In this sense, John Turner's famous phrase "housing as a verb" continues to have a substantial relevance in describing the processes of popular housing construction. The domestic agenda of safety always marks the first phases of informalization. Protecting property and people guide the first investments made by the families in all the three case studies. These practices are manifested in the immediate barring of doors and windows to provide greater security, fencing off the surrounding space, and establishing a solid physical and symbolic boundary between "outside" and "inside." In all three case studies, using bars and fences to protect goods and people from theft and robbery is crucial for retailers. In Presidente Sarmiento, ninety percent of the commercial premises I visited have protective bars, establishing a physical distance between the customer and the shop owner.

Of course, these investments are driven by the latent insecurity in these neighborhoods and the distrust among new residents that is not necessarily a product of informalization. It is interesting, however, to compare what architects and designers imagined regarding safety and shared areas and how residents experience public space in everyday reality. From the discursive-project point of view, designers always assumed a harmonious community life in public and community spaces designed for encounter and sociability. Residents describe social dynamics at the scale of the housing as "scrambled" in Ciudad del Bicentenario and "rivals" between different groups of residents of Langa-Joe Slovo, and the public space is seen as "no man's land" in Presidente Sarmiento. In Presidente Sarmiento, these expectations took shape in a myriad of morphological gestures: stairs, bridges, retreats, free-plan first floors. Instead of working as shared, community spaces, they sent an unexpected message about natural physical evolution of the project. The families built their shops and extra bedrooms in the hollows because that seemed to be what should happen naturally.

Figure 93. Fences made by residents in Presidente Sarmiento (top left and bottom); Ciudad del Bicentenario (bottom left), and Joe Slovo Phase-2 (right)

Figure 94. Renovations made by residents in Presidente Sarmiento often include fencing and physical protection (bars, metal doors, glass divisions)
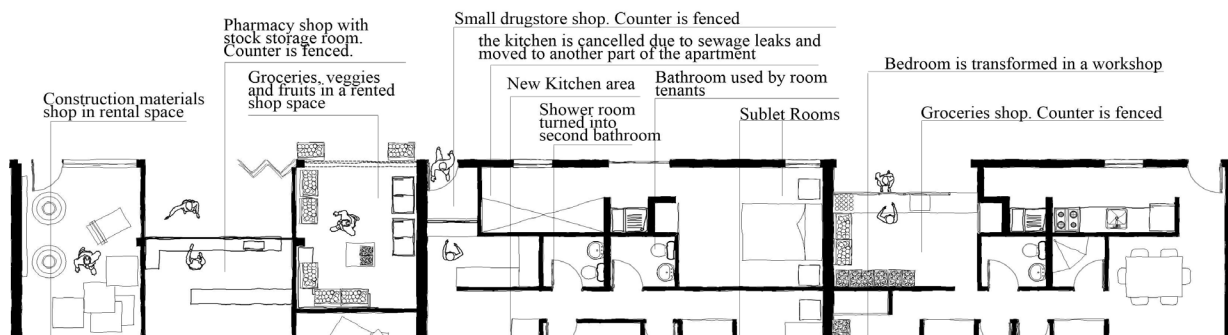
Source: Laura Wainer

The unintended consequences of creating community spaces to foster community relations have a robust physical correlate beyond the bars on doors, fences, and terraces: the appropriation of public space for private use by residents of the projects. This appropriation has similar manifestations, mainly in appropriating surrounding space of the dwelling and individualizing the shared goods. coming back to the issue of the water tanks, the solution to the problems of management and maintenance in both Presidente Sarmiento and Joe Slovo was to have individual tanks replace the communal artifacts. The processes of individualization of space and public resources have a very evident physical manifestation. As these blunt limits acquire remarkable preponderance in determining the boundaries of social space, the spatiality of shared and the private gets reconceptualized. These practices of enclosure, individualization, fragmentation, and privatization of public space happen in Joe Slovo at a neighborhood scale in a very forceful physical way, fragmenting the phases of the project in different fenced areas.

Another pattern that housing policies often ignore is the productive-economic logic of family investments in housing. From my fieldwork, I have collected those significant investments, i.e., those more important renovations in terms of investment, are always related to a source of income: workshop, trade, or rental units. Although local governance actors (the FSD, the municipality of Moron, or the tripartite committee in Cape Town) encourage the emergence of a local economy, they do so only transversally due to their inevitable informal character. These actors provide technical-logistical support to the "entrepreneurs," contributing with building materials or even micro seed capital. However, they do not publicly recognize these ventures since they break the housing policy's building and land use regulations. Even though the newest typologies carry design principles of "greater flexibility," such as JS-3 or Ciudad del Bicentenario two-story houses, they do not formally include productive activities within the housing units. It is a "letting do" design solution instead. Including other uses within the dwelling does necessarily imply hybrid flexibilization. It is about design decisions to make room for productive activities without taking family living space, such as increasing electrical service capacity, creating independent entrances, adding autonomous productive areas safe for children, and improving mechanical ventilation, among others. My fieldwork has also detected conventional commercial uses developed inside the dwellings and spaces that public policies ignore, mainly areas of faith such as churches, initiation sites, and prayer spaces. Incorporating

commercial or productive uses implies an essential trade-off for family members who lose domestic space, mainly for family gatherings, such as dining rooms or living rooms. In Bicentennial City and Joe Slovo, I asked residents with businesses inside their homes what they would prefer to choose between keeping the activity inside the house or having a separate space. No one responded that they would want to keep the business inside the home because of how disruptive this is to the domestic dynamic.

Figure 95. Abandoned public and community spaces. (top) shared "lungs" spaces in Presidente Sarmiento; (center) community hall in Ciudad del Bicentenario; (bottom) abandoned shared halls in Joe Slovo-1

Source: Laura Wainer

Figure 96. Individualization of public spaces at different scales. (top, left and right) Small gardens and fencing in Ciudad del Bicentenario; (center) expansion of ground floors over lungs areas in Presidente Sarmiento; (bottom) gated community in JS-2

Figure 97. A few examples of original housing prototypes and renovations made by residents including retail spaces and new bedrooms with no natural lighting and ventilation

covered, open garage area

Expansion over lungs area: private outdoors with barbecue and play toys for grandchild

Expansion area over the lungs

New access to private outdoor area

Expansion over lungs area: new bedroom
Expansion over lungs area: new bedroom

Exit to lungs

Bedroom 1   Bedroom 2

Living-room

Entrance

Bathroom comes with finishing, and appliances

kitchen with no appliances

Wardrobe space

Covered terrace area

new TV room in previous outdoor terrace

new retail shop in former living area. Front Desk is fenced

old bedroom with blocked windows by new bedroom

bathroom remains original state

kitchen opens to dinning and circulation

new dinning area in previous bedroom area

ONE-STORY ORIGINAL HOUSE
(as it is delivered by FSD)

patio

bedroom

kitchen / dinning area

bedroom

outdoor terrace

Backyard: outdoor area with no finishing on walls and floor

Bathroom comes with finishing, toilet and washbasin

kitchen area has no finishing, floor or appliances

only doors delivered are the two exterior doors and bathroom door

interior walls are unfinished with exposed concrete bricks

no floor finishing only underlayment

Outdoors area in the front house

ONE-STORY HOUSE with RESIDENTS' INTERVENTIONS
with retail shop

A new bedroom is built in the backyard area for second room

bathroom remains as originally designed

medium / large fridges do not fit in the kitchen area

entrance form shop to the house

living area and one bedroom is used as a grocery shop

outer space is used to exhibit merchandise and freezers

counter

merchandise

public space in the corner is taken as part of the house extention outdoor, fenced area

New fence in the entrance

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I have also found some general patterns regarding the trade-offs made by the families. Kitchens and bathrooms rarely change their position since this modification implies a considerable investment due to changes in plumbing. It is fundamental technical knowledge that the construction of wet cores is next to the stairs, one of the most expensive investments in constructing a house. Despite this, the FSD proposes in its "incremental" typology the relocation of the kitchen to enlarge the living-dining room. I have not found a single family that has followed this suggestion or respected the FSD's expansion proposals, which involve expanding the surface areas of existing rooms and building additional bathrooms and bedrooms upstairs. On the contrary, although rooms always have minimum standard measurements, families rarely enlarge the surfaces of the rooms. Horizontal and vertical expansions almost always add more rooms to the dwellings, a factor probably related to the need for more rooms due to extended family characteristics. This phenomenon is also very clearly repeated in Presidente Sarmiento and Ciudad del Bicentenario. Along the same lines, I also found that families have no problem sacrificing light and ventilation for more rooms within the dwelling. The quantitative need for more space (and not more space) reigns over the qualitative space values.

In the introduction to this dissertation, I suggested that physical informalization is taboo for policymakers and designers. At the same time, organizational and economic informalities are more naturalized and even openly supported in different ways (technical, financial). I wonder if this taboo is rooted in, as the political activist in Cape Town indicated, the obsession with the image of governments and preoccupied with making the poor look like the middle-income class to hide poverty. Is the only poverty that counts that which is visible? Is it that physical informalization inevitably exposes the reproduction of the housing deficit within the same housing projects built by the state? Or is it that economic and institutional informalization has been accepted and naturalized at all levels of our societies and physical informality has not? I am inclined to think that all these reflections may have some truth in them. However, it is mainly the opposition to the city-making culture of informalization that policymakers fear so much because of its illegibility, the inability to control it, and the inability of state bureaucracies to channel a process of undoing the rules and forms that they have set forth.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

Lessons for theory: the limits of "informality" as an explanatory concept

At the beginning of my research, I presented the following hypothesis:

> The informalization of the formal is a consequence of three city-making cultures building on the same space. Based on my observations, I argue that selected informality introduced in formal housing projects does not exclusively represent a policy failure or a bottom-up, insurgent initiative. The phenomenon presents an uneasy confluence of three forces: massive housing projects based on the national States' modernist developmental agenda, the complex structure of informal living of the residents who deploy alternative livelihood strategies, and the holistic planning perspectives of local actors who attend the demands of the

residents to build political capital for their own. […] This tripartite encounter of city-making practices can be analyzed under the cultural lens.

The results of this study partially verify this hypothesis; however, I found more complex explanations that converge to the informalization of housing projects. In particular, a more complex interaction than the simple "clash of rationalities" between the logic of "need" (or the logic of informality) and logic of the State, as pointed out by Watson (2009, 2019) and Abramo (2012) and Shepard (2017).

During my fieldwork, one of the most exciting findings is that informality does not exist as a unique, continuous, and homogeneous state for the residents, something they can recognize as a distinctive phenomenon from the expected evolution of the built environment. Residents are, of course, aware that the improvements and modifications happen out of the legal procedures that the State demands. Although most of my interviews live off of the *popular* economy, combining a variety of livelihood strategies that include informal production and transaction of goods and services, care and solidarity, residents also value getting more formal employment as a source of benefits and economic stability. However, formal labor is just one more strategy among many livelihood strategies families deploy (selling miscellaneous items, day jobs, temporary services, applying for state social assistance, renting a room in the house). In this sense, I did not find evidence that informality is a distinctive reality of the physical, economic, and organizational landscape of residents. As Pablo Peirano said during my interviews, we (architects) distinguish a housing building from a self-construction. To us, there is a material difference. There is also a procedural-legal difference we cannot see but can identify through meaning: the spontaneity in creating businesses, the lack of receipts and papers, the aesthetic of churches and prayer centers that fit in tiny houses. However, it is uncertain whether residents perceive the practical and symbolic limits as professionals and academics do. Instead, we may be the ones who constantly reconstruct what we see to adjust these complex urban landscapes to our epistemic realities. This finding suggests that informality is not reality itself in the popular neighborhoods, especially for those who inhabit it, but rather a knowledge-construct for those who create it: planners, designers, and engineers.

For instance, when I asked about the physical transformation and modifications of the buildings, residents refer to multiple practices that carry different logics. In Presidente Sarmiento, occupying the *hollows* is a radically different action than encroaching land in the *lungs*. In Joe Slovo, the occupation of the highway and reblocking belong to two distinctive activist actions which represent antagonism and activist groups that ended up being rivals in Langa. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, there is an enormous perceived and pragmatical distance between the residents who can invest and transform a house into a shop and those who sell miscellaneous inside the house.

In Latin America, the term "informality" applied to informal settlements has been highly criticized for its semiotic sense, suggesting that the self-built space lacks "papers," but it does not lack morphology (Herzer et al., 2008; Fernández Castro, 2011). I suggest that the critique should be about more than semiotic meaning. The idea of informality as the leading type of urbanization not only misleadingly describes the physical and legal environment where the majority of the world lives but also raises questions about its adequacy to describe the actual and conceptual field of "the popular." My argument here is that informality, usually seen as a consequence of both market and state failures, not only has changed the relationship between legality and

legitimacy but also represents new modes of canonical socio-spatial practices that change how the state exercise power over the population and in turn how population resists, mobilize, and struggle for their agendas. As I presented earlier in this dissertation, the creation of informality as a universal meaning and mode of intervention becomes a process to define canonical modes of intervention, such as redevelopment (housing), displacements and micro-projects (upgrading, small-scale improvements), and it operates through symbols re-coding realities in a language capable of being internalized by the global-scale capitalist planning system. This last point is critical when thinking about what mechanisms legitimize informality as a mode of global governmentality that operates at local levels and how we professionals and academics see the urban landscape.

In the testing of my fieldwork questionnaires, I stopped using the term *informality* to react to my interviewees' responses. I had to replace the terminology with multiple specific terms, such as occupation, appropriation, modification, improvements, production, investing, breaking rules, expansions, constructions, and controlling among others. I chose the term *informalization* as analytical category to reflect on the undoing of norms and forms imposed by the State and the redoing of counterhegemonic practices transversal to the traditional modes of city-making. While acknowledging the flaws of still referring to *informality* as a valid analytical concept, the term *informalization* allows me to both embrace and criticize its nature in the discussion of my findings with a wide range of professionals, academics, and activists to whom I hope engaging in diverse geographies of the world. In reflecting on what other words could better name what we now call informality, I found myself in an intellectual trap. Even though finding alternative political rhetoric to informality is essential, my conclusions reveal that it is not precisely a matter of replacing semiotics. The theoretical search must focus on an epistemological expansion of informality to make room for more specific, contextual, and –most importantly-- much more sensitive definitions of the territorial realities where a quarter of the world's population now live.

With these thoughts in mind, I identify informalization as a "process of practices," counter-hegemonic in their nature, that together constitute a city-making culture within large-scale social housing projects in the global South. In particular, I found five practices of informalization to represent processes of undoing and redoing urban space: *anchoring, unlocking, incrementing, individualizing,* and *stabilizing*. Understanding each one separately and their interrelation is essential to appreciate the physical-social rationalities of informalization. In the following sub-sections, I offer some final reflections to clarify ideas and open windows for future research.

Anchoring [people]. In all three projects, conditions for informalization emerged through displacement and relocations carried by the government, leading to territorial anchoring strategies deployed by organized residents and de facto managers; that is, strategies that would allow people and organizations to stay in their own place. Anchoring practices are directly related to families' experiences when they are relocated from their former neighborhoods -- often informal settlements -- to the new housing projects on the periphery. In many cases, relocated families to Joe Slovo, Presidente Sarmiento, and Ciudad del Bicentenario carry a background of displacement. In Cape Town, Black African and Coloured families suffered decades of violent, forced displacement, isolation, and marginalization perpetuated by apartheid. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, most of the relocated families are victims of forced displacement due to political violence in rural areas or victims of natural disasters. In Presidente Sarmiento, the families

relocated from the slums had previously migrated from the inner country, displaced by rural poverty. In the three study cases, housing policies force relocations that also include violent practices, such as the destruction of former houses and neighborhoods, the "disinfection" of "uncivilized" people, and the "hauling" of families in military trucks.

Anchoring refers to practices aimed at prevention from being displaced again and at settling down in a territory with unfamiliar dynamics, landscapes, and people. To leave the new neighborhood behind implies, probably, the loss of income and resources that come with it. These practices involve community organizing, such as the reblocking and occupation of roads in Cape Town, the boycott of rents in JS-1, or the boycott of *hollow*s' retailers in Presidente Sarmiento when the provincial government required temporarily relocation to repair the subway infrastructure of the complex. It is interesting to note that "legal" processes of secure tenure, such as property titling, bears little relevance to the reality and practice of anchoring. In Joe Slovo-1, the residents anchored themselves in the territory by breaking the contractual contract with Thubelisha Homes, which paradoxically left them in a position of legal weakness, but political strength. Titling is undermined by political-bureaucratic processes, stalled for years and even decades, as demonstrated in the analysis of Ciudad del Bicentenario and Presidente Sarmiento. It is also a recurrent problem in South Africa.

Relocated families are not the only ones who must develop strategies to anchor themselves in the territory. It is also a recurrent practice of de facto managers who do not have legal jurisdiction over the housing projects. These agents must guarantee their temporary or permanent permanence through engagement with local communities and control over local decision-making. For example, the FSD guaranteed its permanence by establishing an alternative socio-urban management model through DINCS. The Joe Slovo Task Team retains political control over the territory by controlling the pace and terms of the implementation of JS-3; the Tenant Association of JS-1 must maintain the boycott to retain power. Sabbatella's government established a political alliance with territorial leaders of the neighborhood that allowed his reelection twice. In this sense, anchoring is an informalizing dynamic since it builds outside the legal-institutional rules and inserts practices of resistance, alliance, negotiation, and dispute of territorial control in the city-making process.

Individualizing [land]. In all three projects, I found evidence of the individualization of public or shared space as a recurrent and constitutive practice of informalization. The process of individualization of land includes appropriation, occupation, and physical limitation of a piece of land that does not legally belong to individual residents. Individualization links directly to the parcel structure of the housing projects and design decisions regarding the size of lots, the boundaries between private property and public property, and the characteristics of public spaces.

In Presidente Sarmiento, STAFF's alternative urban vision established large-scale public spaces and community areas with no clear boundaries between the public and the private. The need for physical and programmatic transformation of the original project implied, in turn, the need to create private plots, delimit public spaces, and define streets within the large patch of shared areas. The individualization of common space occurred due to the underutilization of public areas and the individual need of growing families. It was also deployed as a mechanism to regulate undesired activities and gang control in a "no man's land," transforming useless large extensions of land into more manageable spaces. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, families extended

their one- and two-story houses towards the public areas. They appropriated the spaces surrounding the lots and the ground floors of the "towers" to create private gardens, horse corrals, and motorcycle racks. At JS-1, residents of small apartments moved onto terraces, expanding bedrooms and workspaces.

The individualization of shared and public space takes place through fencing and walling, wide-spread practices of informalization to avoid social contact between different people, provide "protection," and serve the individualization of public space to serve the physical transformation needs of families and their homes. These practices of enclosure, individualization, fragmentation, and privatization of public space also happen in Joe Slovo at a neighborhood scale in a very forceful physical way, fragmenting the phases of the project in different fenced areas. As these blunt limits acquire remarkable preponderance in determining the boundaries of social space, the spatiality of shared and the private gets reconceptualized. Through this individualization, public or shared land came under private individual control, changing the systems of rights and responsibilities in the territory. This approach to the traditional city through the individualization of shared space also proposes a dilemma of control. The dynamics of growth continue to exert pressure on the individualization of shared space as population growth increases and vacant space decreases. Questions remain about how effective this physical-social management system can be as the neighborhood densifies, and the social scale becomes more complex.

Incrementing [houses]. In general, all housing renovations occur incrementally, according to families' economic possibilities and changing needs over the decades. In this sense, John Turner's famous phrase "housing as a verb" continues to have a substantial relevance in describing the processes of housing construction in the *popular* territory. Incrementality takes on particular importance since, according to my findings, the homes in question are the family spaces for life and the life of extended families as well. Over such extended periods, incrementality not only offers a more affordable solution to houses' modifications but also it transforms the house into a dynamic entity, capable of constantly adapting to needs of various families over the decades.

In this sense, "No exit from the neighborhood" is a metaphor for the permanence of extended families living in extended houses as a conscious choice related to the importance of territorial belonging for the *popular* classes. As I demonstrated in the oldest project, Presidente Sarmiento, territorialized social ties (families, neighbors, neighborhood referents) anchor new families to the neighborhood. In this context, families create multiple dwellings within the same dwelling, what residents call "mirror houses,", referring to the duplication and triplications of housing units in the same plot. The ability to transform the house is a comparative advantage over other formal neighborhoods in the city and one that directly relates to traditions, know-how and practices that families imported from their previous neighborhoods, mostly informal settlements.

Incrementality rarely occurs exclusively through self-building but involves masons, local builders, technicians, financing sources, and even public spheres and institutions. In all three case studies, project managers and designers made efforts to include incremental strategies to provide more typological flexibility to families. However, there is an important tension between proposing incremental typologies and the need for governments to make the houses look like finished units. For example, the second generation of houses in CB, which claim greater flexibility, still work as a "total architectural unit," a sort of shell with unfinished interiors, rather

than an "open architectural unit," like those typologies designed in the Peruvian PREVI Experimental Housing Project in the mid-1960s.

The materialization of an extended house or a mirror house, a house within a house, shows that popular neighborhoods need to densify, become more complex, and include non-residential activities. It is already clear that a new way of city-making related to principles of adaptation, incrementality, and conditioning implies an alternative physical-social management, with an internal logic based on the continuous resolution of micro-conflicts, the invention of constructive and technical solutions, and the constant adaptation to a dynamic social landscape, showing us about what housing policy should look like in the future.

Unlocking [livelihoods]. Informalization plays a preponderant role in developing livelihoods in the neighborhood, creating spaces for the development of social relations based on the transaction of goods and services. Although the land uses regulations and the specific housing policies prohibit non-residential activities, houses are also economic units. The symbiotic relationship between housing and work enables housing improvement and consolidation to take place as the dwellings themselves improve opportunities for income generation, employment prospects and productivity. Economic income can also come from renting rooms and transferring plots or parts of them, which leads to new subdivisions either by the sale or transfer of the air space of the house and/or a fraction of the land, or by the subdivision and/or air expansion of the original house to offer rooms for rent.

Unlocking refers to practices that activate the "locked" economic and social and activities by law, as well as the families' strategies to undo punitive norms towards the *popular* economy and livelihood strategies of care. The transformation of house sections into shops and workshops offers a great deal of flexibility, as these spaces constantly adapt to varying economic strategies that happen simultaneously or during short periods of time. Particularly for women, decisions about whether or not to work near or inside their own homes, are not exclusively related to an economic rationality but to wider understanding of livelihoods that includes safety and care, such as generating income while looking after their children. However, it also brings tensions between the domestic and productive experiences, which often must take place in small units. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, I asked residents whether they would stay working at home if they would have the opportunity to work at some other place (shared warehouse, rented space, private workshop). Most of the interviewees chose to go out, indicating that even though working from home can bring some benefits, it is not necessarily an aspirational setup.

Although local governance actors (the FSD, the municipality of Moron, or the tripartite committee in Cape Town) encourage the emergence of a local economy, they do so only transversally due to their inevitable informal character. These actors provide technical-logistical support to the "entrepreneurs," contribute building materials or even micro seed capital but simultaneously do not recognize these ventures since they are always located inside the housing units (or in their expansions), contrary to what the land use regulation, the condominium contract and the building regulations of the housing complexes dictate. Even though the newest typologies are based on design principles of "greater flexibility" such as JS-3 or Ciudad del Bicentenario two stories from a design point of view, they do not propose a real inclusion of productive activities within the housing; it's just a "letting do."

Stabilizing [territories]. Stabilization practices refer to the actions of residents and de facto managers to make these territories sustainable and focus on the resolution of tensions, conflicts,

negotiations between governments and residents transversally - but not wholly - outside the institutional channels of each local context. As conflict around the incremental solutions grows, the lack of a regulatory system to manage the physical transformation of the houses leads to judgments about what is allowed and what is not--often falling into violent disputes where those families with fewer resources are subject to the 'law of the strongest,' loss of resources, and personal/family stress. In the three cases, most of the interviewees responded that conflicts are solved "between the neighbors," showing both autonomy and lack of institutional channels that regulate communal social life. However, I also found from de facto manager about the centrality of conflict resolution in their daily practice. Examples I brought in the analysis, such as the role of Moron's Habitat and Housing Director assuming he looks first for alternative negotiation and conciliation solutions before spending time in endless administrative procedures, or FSD employees feeling trapped in a paternalistic model where the residents are increasingly more dependent on the FSD rather than more autonomous, call for the attention to the parallel channels in which governance happens in the peripheries.

Alternative governance actors and their de facto management of the territories collaborate with the social and political stabilization, whether by addressing social demands or dealing with urban growth conflicts. This seems especially important due to the double-standards that the enclave condition of this type of housing policy impose through design of forms and norms. The empowerment of different community factions and the informalization of the housing project process forces the State to take a different stance on informality. Pragmatically, the State maintains institutional channels, such as the steering committee in Joe Slovo, and, at the same time, reaches discrete agreements on specific conflicts, creating a network of negotiation, representation, and individual empowerment for patronage.

Informalization as a process of counterhegemonic practices

As I demonstrated in the empirical work of this dissertation, these counterhegemonic practices are not always necessarily aligned in terms of objectives, outcomes, and interests reflecting that informalization as a whole is a complex web of contradictory paths is not a unidirectional process. The landscapes resulting from these practices can be diverse, different, even antagonistic. Informalization does suggest, though, an irreversible path of continuous flow.

The empirical findings of my research indicate that informalization is a physical, economic, and organizational process where the residents and de facto managers of large-scale housing projects undo and redo the architectural forms and legal norms imposed by the national States. These housing projects entail alternative models of urban management that displace the local governments from their institutional capacities to operate the sites. Within the jurisdictional and administrative absence of the local State, informalization is not a product of laissez-faire but arises from the active engagement of residents and de facto managers (including local politicians, NGOs, foundations, and municipalities) without enough legal-administrative capacity but committed to managing the social demands and conflicts of urban growth. Informalization is thus a practice of city-making that operates over a complex web of regulations and pre-existing forms created by the national State and "on the fly" practices and tacit rules that seek to anchor residents in their territories. These practices create productive spaces for the *popular* economy, make room for demographic growth and community services, and empower situated agents as de facto urban managers. Informalization is thus a *process of practices* that can be typified in *anchoring* people and organizations to their territory, *individualizing* land to self-manage urban

space, *incrementing* houses to serve the families' needs, *unlocking* the local economy beyond the rule of law, and *stabilizing* the tensions and social conflicts produced by urban growth.

To develop my thesis, I would like to return to the idea of "anti-city" outlined by Alfredo Garay. During my interviews, Garay argued that Presidente Sarmiento was conceived under an "anti-city" philosophy based on physical and legal ideas often attributed to modernism. He focuses on the land structure of modernist projects, mainly how large parcels are designed with no clear division between the public and private space, constituting an anomaly he calls the "anti-city." According to Garay, the multiple "gray areas" (organizational, legal, physical) of this diffuse land management determine that modernist projects, such as Presidente Sarmiento, end up being "no man's land."

My research findings extend the anti-city argument to a broader concept of alternative urban management models imposed by the national States through housing policy. The modernist developmental agenda of these massive projects reflect an indivisible relationship between legal and formal architecture, expressed both in the built environment and the institutional landscape. In the three study cases, the State "fails" with former experiences of spatialized poverty management. These end up in early criticisms of the RDP program in Cape Town, the exponential growth of slums in Buenos Aires, and slow rates of social housing production in Colombia. In search of a different and "better" housing solution, the State attempts to create new "model" projects that imply urban management schemes different from those governing the city (Cartagena, Cape Town, Buenos Aires). In all three projects, the national State transfers the governing responsibility to alternative "territorial agents." In Presidente Sarmiento, the national government created a unique-large scale condo administration and a "total unit" morphology developed by STAFF. In Joe Slovo, the presence of Thubelisha Homes is the regulator of urban phased development of enclaves of housing typologies, the administrator of the leasing system, and the mediator of social conflict between different actors. In Ciudad del Bicentenario, the State transfers the development of the housing project and the territorial management of the territory to the Santo Domingo Foundation who imposes the DINCS model as an alternative governance system. In addition, the hyper-standardization of the built environment couples a legal-administrative architecture that impose rules different from typical values of the democratic capitalist city, such as a clear definition of the land property structure, a system of democratic-local representation, and the multiple land uses that shape the built environment.

In this power transfer, the national State legally and operationally dissociates itself from the production and administration of these housing projects while displacing the local government from its governing capacities. Consequently, the "anti-city" gets filled with physical and institutional gray areas and double standards. These abstract, alternative city models evolve as urban enclaves ruled by different parameters than the rest of the city, including administration systems that are unsustainable in physical, socio-economic, and political terms. In the short term, these models do not provide optimal responses to residents who previously lived in the area, nor to those families relocated from other areas of the city who need to anchor themselves to the territory as a strategy for livelihoods and life reproduction. In the long term, these "anti-city" models also fail to respond to the demands of demographic growth and the increasing development expectations as the relational characteristics of the housing complex –such as location-- improve.

In this context, informalization emerges as a city-making practice that attempts to undo the norms and forms of hyper-standardization of large-scale housing into habitats more suited to the needs of its residents, community organizations, and local managers. The families' strategies are driven by a reactive response to the bad decisions of the project design and by "importing" practices from informal, working-class, and rural built environments. Their physical relocation to these new projects also entails displacing their former knowledge, practices, and traditions that build expertise in constructing *popular* habitats strongly linked to the *popular* economy and livelihood strategies of care. That is to say, the logic of informalization reflects comparative advantages regarding other neighborhoods in the city for these social groups.

In the jurisdictional and administrative absence of the local State, it is not laissez-faire but the actions of situated actors who take a de-facto role of urban managers. Without enough legal capacities over the territory to develop formal- institutional responses to the social demands and the challenges of growth, they support families' city-making strategies and deploy informalization strategies to make these housing complexes socially and politically sustainable. These informalizing logics are not opposed but, as Teresa Caldeira (2017) points out, transverse to the logic of the "formal" capitalist city. Informalization as a city-making process undoes the alternative norms and forms of the "anti-city" and assimilates these projects to the logic of the traditional capitalist city. It establishes limits between public and private property, de-monopolizes the decision-making process, makes up room for demographic growth, and integrates the productive logic in the uses of urban space. Consequently, the informalization city-making culture is not exclusively rooted in the clash between "necessity" and "managerial" but entangled in a complex network of levels of authority. This yields the contradiction between the normative frameworks and the realpolitik of these projects, the power vacuums, the practical exercise of urban management, anchoring, and livelihoods strategies in alternative city models created and imposed by the national State.

Lessons for planning practice: How can these places be governed?

Informalization practices have political, economic, and organizational impacts in the neighborhoods, particularly around the management and administration of private property through a decentralized and less normative decision-making system. Far from regression back to an immature urban development stage, it is a sophisticated set of entirely rational coping strategies to provide livelihoods, anchoring, and governance within extreme austere circumstances. The social, economic, and spatial dynamics that emerge in these housing projects challenge many assumptions about the role of state intervention with urban populations, such as the idea that a house represents a wealth asset that improves people's economic prospects and livelihoods.

During my fieldwork, I observed that the informalization of the formal is a very sensitive issue among policymakers. Even in countries that have incorporated urban informality and informal work into their statistical methodologies, this type of informalization of formal housing projects often goes unnoticed in official statistics, upgrading, and regularization policies. Durst and Wegman (2017) suggest that when informality is interwoven with formal homeownership, it is also largely hidden. In the U.S., informality is largely hidden due to intrinsic characteristics of these practices: small and fragmented interventions hidden from the public street view, which makes it difficult and costly for local governments to monitor and enforce existing regulations.

In cases such as Presidente Sarmiento, Ciudad del Bicentenario, and Joe Slovo, the scale and dynamics of informality interwoven with formal homeownership make it openly visible. However, informalization is hidden because it is a political *taboo* for both the local administration and developers.

While hardly uninvited, informalization is indeed unwelcome by the State at central offices. I noticed that politicians, professionals, and policymakers still see informalization as a policy failure. They attempt to either reverse it --arguing that public investment must focus on returning to the initial stages-- or re-formalize it, meaning regularizing spaces and uses through land titling, business habilitation, occupancy certificates, among others. However, my empirical findings indicate that, in practical terms, informalization does not seem to be a reversible process. Stopping, cutting, or even formalizing it from a traditional, bureaucratic State logic has not found a solution yet. For the State bureaucracy, undoing the norms, procedures, and rules created by themselves implies an immense challenge. There are no straightforward, short-term administrative mechanisms to "adapt" the new realities to the old norms and forms of the projects. For example, regularizing, re-blocking, and re-titling land in Presidente Sarmiento implies disintegrating the parcel structure registered in the provincial cadaster. To do so, there must be a legal agreement between the municipality of Moron, the province of Buenos Aires, and each one of the thousands of formal owners of the original apartments (many of which are still in titling limbo). The political agreement must be even broader, including all informal plot owners and extended families living in the project. Without a new cadaster subdivision of the site, the municipality cannot legally intervene in its jurisdiction and by any means carry out an "integral" improvement program in the neighborhood. Given the current, this cadaster re-doing is pragmatically impossible.

In Ciudad del Bicentenario, legalizing productive uses within housing implies a local government and national authorization for the redefinition of the land uses, reconsidering sensitive health and safety standards, basic construction parameters, and exceeding basic labor safety laws. Also, the national housing ministry should authorize other uses than residential within the execution of social housing, implying a redesign of the law of Macroprojects with its corresponding approval at the National Congress. This policy would fall outside its political-administrative competence of the housing ministry and therefore imply a bureaucratic redefinition of the terms of budget spending at all ministries levels. In Joe Slovo, the resolution of political conflicts to quickly summarize the construction of Phase-3 involves the negotiation and agreement between rival factions of residents who are at odds with each other and with the government of the Western Cape: "Informal Area Committee," the Task Team, the Residents Committee, and the Tenants Committee, and the Langa backyard dwellers. Formalizing the informal rental market has higher costs than the value of the buildings themselves, plus the additional cost of offering a housing solution to informal tenants in a place where land is already scarce. It also implies redefining the role of the HDA and its political mandate.

These decisions involve political will and the reconfiguration of bureaucratic processes, legislation, files that must be annulled, and a bureaucratic and political body accepting informality as a legitimate fact within the landscapes built by the State itself. In part, politicians and bureaucrats wish to return to the original *State of affairs* as a mechanism to regain control of the physical and social order over the territory. With informalization, the State loses territorial control and, thus, its project of socio-spatial order. Based on the findings of this research, I am inclined to say that informalization creates territories that are very difficult to govern and

manage. Interestingly, however, this hypothesis can only be confirmed by spatio-temporal analysis. In the short term, the informalization of physical and institutional spaces makes large-scale housing projects' political and social sustainability possible. Productive, organizational, and physical solutions enhance the livelihoods of the displaced populations. Informalization also strengthens the decision-making over their own territory while weakening the relationship between the resident and the State due to the increasing tensions with the government, which loses territorial control. However, as informalization grows and space and resources become scarcer with time, the built and institutional environments become more complex, and significant social conflicts emerge within the community. This poses significant challenges for planning and management since the built and social environment becomes more complex and more contested among various actors. As the State loses control over these territories and, tensions between governments and communities increase, it is more difficult for the bureaucratic apparatuses to find valid and possible solutions to guarantee the physical security of people and social order within the neighborhoods.

The loss of territorial control and the incapacity of the State to reestablish a legible socio-spatial order make these territories "ungovernable." The difficulties are not only financial or technical but also ethical and ideological, especially for local governments that wish to respect the law to guarantee rights and at the same time understand or live in the logic of necessity. They are faced with many questions: Which rights to respect? How to regulate? To what extent should we allow it? How to reverse what has been done? As a result, these territories are made invisible; there are no protocols to intervene in this type of situation. As a Western Cape official admitted in my interviews, "nobody knows what to do." It remains highly uncertain what kind of actions the current programming of these projects will take concerning the high degree of physical and economic informality encroached upon, and even overtaking, the old formal and normative modernism of these projects. The challenges are many: the fair redistribution of available land, new norms and standards, the official approval of new uses, new roads, and more.

These findings lead one to think that informalization may provide effective housing solutions in the short and medium term but encounters uncompromising social limits in the long term if it is not well managed under clear, community-wide rules. In this context, the lack of a regulatory system to monitor and control how people can renovate their homes in this otherwise overregulated environment leads to a lack of information about post-renovation home safety. This may yield a critical future challenge; mainly as more extensive renovations occur and densification of both people and buildings interferes with the quality of living conditions and the capacities of the existing infrastructures of these neighborhoods. Calls for new policy directions for regeneration and housing rehab seek to reveal the variety of urban landscapes within the label of "informality," seeking to determine different types of interventions (infrastructure, security, tenure, social services) capable of transcending "brick and mortar" approaches (Ward et al., 2015). These claims often focus on informal settlements and self-built neighborhoods but rarely consider the challenges of the vast peripheries of recently built formal housing projects experiencing major transformations. For example, in recent years, incremental practices, such as the housing developments designed by the Elemental studio in Chile, reflected a renaissance of traditional self-help practices both in the academic and public spheres that were largely supportive of this kind of approach in the 1970s (Ward, 2019). This renewed vision focuses on architectural solutions rather than an urban idea of incrementality, where infrastructure, services, and urban regulations (uses, minimum surfaces, construction standards) enable the dynamism of

incrementality. Thus, while policymakers wish to incorporate models of incremental housing, there is a lack of vision about how incremental solutions can contribute at a neighborhood level to manage consolidation and densification in large-scale, peripheral housing projects, where physical and social infrastructures quickly become obsolete due to high demand. Informalization as an irreversible process poses important challenges for the future. While incrementality is concerned with containing informality, it is rarely an approach that considers how to regulate the processes of self-construction, densification, consolidation, and complexification of the land. A clear example of these limits is that the approach does not work well for city densification. The evidence from this research suggests that incremental approaches should focus efforts on understanding how these neighborhoods can be regulated in their growth and complexity, and on what code standards and procedures are optimal to guarantee the well-being of their residents. Also, what are the comparative advantages for residents to following formal rules while living in the informal economy?

These concluding observations raise important questions that relate housing policy to the idea of the future. When is a housing policy concluded in a way that can be assessed? When and how can we best measure the impacts of public housing policies on families? What is the effectiveness of the idea of some single "post-occupancy" evaluation, versus a more complex and comprehensive kind of life-strategy assessment undertaken at different points in time? How do different measurements change the assumptions upon which we design housing? When is it right to measure the effectiveness of housing policy implementation? When is it right to measure the effectiveness of policy design? When is it appropriate to assess the impacts on families and communities? When is it possible to understand the impact of a project's insertion into the city?

It is possible to affirm that the housing policy is never concluded before the anchoring of the families in their new territories, that is, before families resolve their means of production and reproduction of life. In pragmatical terms, this goal includes development and consolidation of livelihoods, children's education, inclusion in groups of community belonging, consolidation of democratic systems of civic representation, accompaniment in the adaptation of housing to the needs of the family, development, and consolidation of a neighborhood economy. The experience of DINCS and the impossibility of the FSD to "leave" the territory indicates that, probably, a housing policy can never be concluded as a short or medium-term project, and that the creation of habitat implies sustained agendas over a very long term. From this perspective, the evaluation of a public housing policy should have different stages. The immediate one, an evaluation that measures the effectiveness of public policy management, such as a technical-political evaluation that gives credit for the effectiveness of implementation, expenditure, and political promises. A second stage in the short and medium-term would measure the socio-economic impacts on the families, taking account of their capacity to develop strategies that help them anchor in the territory. A third medium to long-term stage would measure the levels of community building, the development of a local economy, and collective projects. And a final long-term stage would need to measure the level of integration of the project into the larger urban dynamics of the city.

The type of measurement of housing policy impacts also represents fundamental policy challenges. As long as we planners cannot find an alternative political narrative, powerful and solid enough to displace the political mandate to deliver housing units, it will be difficult for national ministries to redirect resources towards another way of building habitat (in practice not on paper). As long as a minister's effectiveness is measured by units delivered, we will remain

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trapped in the limbo of housing deficit reproduction within housing complexes and considering informalization a policy failure "hidden" in peripheral locations.

In Argentina, Colombia, and South Africa, present and future structural deficiencies are evident for policymakers and designers but still hidden under the veil of the expectation of upward social mobility. Beyond these expectations, the long and short-term reality of Argentina, Colombia, and South Africa reveal that the popular classes' wages have depreciated in the last decades (Lissardy, 2020), jobs have become precarious and informal (Kuhn et al., 2018), and may continue to do so without structural changes (CEPAL, 2021). In addition, in the long-term absence of affordable options in both the formal and informal markets, a single house has become a family's lifetime solution for future generations as well (Ward, 2012). The results of my research suggest that downward mobility generates an increasing complexity in the daily life of those who make permanent efforts to stabilize it. Pauperization is experienced as a personal dislocation and as a disorganization of the surrounding social world. Impoverishment without the possibility of recovery is a turning point that threatens the future with the fearful downward mobility of the future generations (Kessler and Di Virgilio, 2008). This reality poses critical challenges when thinking housing solutions from a contextual and speculative perspective of the future rather than a utopian expectation. If the development trends impoverishment, wage depreciation, and structural inequality persist, what does it mean to design housing for a descending social class in increasingly unequal countries? What are the habitat expectations for a family that, according to macroeconomic trends, will suffer from higher unemployment, greater labor informality, and greater poverty? How can it be ethical to continue to design housing with self-serving assumptions about an arising economic future that has not existed for the past 50 years? And if we engage with informalization and the downwardly mobile prospects likely faced by the majority of families these projects serve, what are the design methods we professionals must have to envision the materiality of this future? Understanding the mechanisms and practices that have been produced outside of government-led housing projects holds great potential. Learning from these, and advocating for their safer embrace, offers the possibility to build more just solutions while clarifying a more holistic vision for *what affordable housing should afford* in the Global South.

APPENDIX

FIELD WORK PROTOCOL IN BUENOS AIRES

In Buenos Aires city, I conducted extensive archival research, coupled with fieldwork between January 2020 and March 2021. The fieldwork included twenty-eight semi-structured interviews with residents who have modified their original units, seventeen sporadic and unstructured talks with other neighbors, and thirteen interviews with public officials in different ranks and phases of the project (two of them also residents in the neighborhood). I interviewed twice the only surviving architect of the architecture studio that designed the project. I also spoke with three academics knowledgeable of the Presidente Sarmiento and modernist housing in Buenos Aires city. I conducted all my interviews and talks with neighbors between January 2021 and March 2021, in which I also made observations of the built environment and sociability in the public space and shops. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, I conducted many of my interviews with experts, professionals, and academics between May 2020 and October 2021 via Skype or Zoom.

Selection Criteria

Stakeholders

Three processes of snowball sampling guided the selection criteria for the interviewees. Interviews with experts in the local public administration at different times in the municipality (during the redevelopment process of the Carlos Gardel houses initiated in 2003 and at present) were obtained through a first interview with the current Secretary of Strategic Planning and the Director of Habitat and Housing of the Municipality of Morón. From that first interview, I was able to identify through snowball sampling:

- Secretary of Strategic Planning and the Director of Habitat (interviewed in person on March 10, 2020)
- Director of Habitat and Housing of the Municipality of Morón (interviewed in person on March 10, 2020; interviewed online May 20, 2020, and January 14, 2021,).
- Project coordinator, Carlos Gardel Urbanization Program (interviewed via Skype /phone July 15 and 28, 2020)
- Social Worker in the Carlos Gardel Urbanization Program and current officer at Hábitat y Vivienda of Morón (interviewed via Skype /phone June 05, 2020)
- Housing Project Manager, Carlos Gardel Urbanization Program (interviewed via Skype /phone June 20, 2020)
- Social Worker in the Carlos Gardel Urbanization Program and current Centro de Orientación Comunitaria (COC) Director (interviewed via Skype /phone June 15, 2020)
- Director UGC 12 El Palomar (Barrio Gardel community management unit) and former social worker and resident (interviewed via Skype /phone July 17, 2020)

- Director of Diversity Policies and resident (interviewed in person on February 12, 2021)

Since the implementation of the neighborhood infrastructure program in 2018, the project is under shared management between the municipality and the Provincial Agency for Social and Urban Integration (OPISU). Thus, I decided to also carry-out interviews with provincial level officials. A first interview with the coordinator of the technical project of neighborhood infrastructure of the Ministry of Infrastructure (MISP) of the Province of Buenos Aires led to a snowball sampling of the following interviews:

- Technical coordinator of the Project of Neighborhood Infrastructure in Conjunto Habitacional Presidente Sarmiento - Barrio Carlos Gardel (Morón of the Unidad de Coordinación de Infraestructura Barrial (UCIBa) of the Ministry of Infrastructure (MISP) of the Province of Buenos Aires (interviewed via Skype /phone June 06, 2020)
- Technical adviser of neighborhood infrastructure in Conjunto Habitacional Presidente Sarmiento - Barrio Carlos Gardel (Morón of the Unidad de Coordinación de Infraestructura Barrial (UCIBa) del Ministerio de Infraestructura (MISP) de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (interviewed via Skype /phone June 06, 2020)
- Design Adviser in Conjunto Habitacional Presidente Sarmiento - Barrio Carlos Gardel (Morón of the Unidad de Coordinación de Infraestructura Barrial (UCIBa) of the Ministerio de Infraestructura (MISP) of the Provincia de Buenos Aires (interviewed via Skype /phone June 07, 2020)
- Director of Urban Planning at the Provincial Organism of Social and Urban Integration of the Province of Buenos Aires until 2018 (interviewed via Skype /phone June 10, 2020)
- Architect - Advisor, Ministry of Territorial Development and Habitat Buenos Aires, Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, Argentina (interviewed via Skype /phone June 19, 2020)

I interviewed twice the only surviving architect of the architecture studio that designed the project, Olga Wainstein, Principal, STAFF studio (interviewed via Skype /phone June 16, 2020). I also interviewed the following academics and architects:

- Marcela Vio, an academic who did in 2016 a social analysis of the living conditions of residents of Presidente Sarmiento - Barrio Carlos Gardel for the Improving Habitat in Vulnerable Neighborhoods of the Greater Buenos Aires (GBA) Program (interviewed via Skype /phone June 13, 2020)
- Domingo Patron Risso, President of the Housing and Habitat Subcommittee of the Central Society of Architects, who developed extensive research on modernist housing in Buenos Aires City (interviewed via Skype /phone June 18, 2020)
- Alfredo Garay, former Undersecretary of Urbanism and Housing of the Province of Buenos Aires (2004-2008) who has extensive professional and academic knowledge on housing issues in Buenos Aires City

Fieldwork

I made five visits to Presidente Sarmiento with local referents and government officials. During these visits, I took interviews and made observations on the spatial organization and the social dynamics in the different sectors of the neighborhood, for example, which are the central and dynamic areas, which corridors not to take for safety reasons, which areas are the focus of public policy interventions, and which are relegated, and what times it is safer to visit the neighborhood, among others. After these visits, I made six independent visits, all in the morning and on weekdays, where I decided to talk spontaneously with owners of first floor apartments who had remodeled or expanded the unit, owners of first floor commercial premises and three residents working in construction inside the neighborhood. If people were not available at the time to talk, I coordinated a second visit. The interviews were conducted following a questions-guide and lasted between twenty minutes and forty minutes. I decided to conduct spontaneous interviews with residents rather identifying interviews through a snowball sampling based on my contacts with community leaders because their relationship with the local government's political party, a fact that could have add ideological biases to my research. I identified information saturation at twenty-eight semi-structured interviews with residents who have modified their original units. I also took notes and observations of seventeen sporadic and unstructured talks with other neighbors (some who modified or built informally, other who just did reparations).

Interview model

Interviews with stakeholders

1. What is your relationship with the Presidente Sarmiento - Carlos Gardel neighborhoods and how long have you maintained this relationship?
2. How would you characterize living conditions in general in GS and CG?
3. In your opinion, what do you think are the main challenges facing the inhabitants of GS at present?
4. In your opinion, what are the main strengths of the neighborhood and its inhabitants?
5. In GS, do original residents from the housing policy of the 1970s live in GS or was there turnover over the years?
6. Do the expanded families stay in the neighborhood, or do they move to other neighborhoods?
7. Do you think the neighborhood residents are a similar or diverse social group? Why?
8. Can you describe how the neighbors are organized? Are there cooperatives, associations, mutuals, religious organizations in GS and CG?
9. Is there any type of neighborhood/neighborhood organization linked to the provision of services (security, garbage collection, cleaning of public spaces)?
10. Do you perceive conflict between neighbors? What type of conflicts between neighbors do you observe recurrently in the neighborhood?
11. In your opinion, how do the inhabitants live the public space (e.g., do they use it freely or is it taken over by certain groups, do they identify it as dangerous or as a meeting and recreation space, do they use it day and night or only at certain times)?
12. How do you think the (original) architecture of buildings and public spaces influences the inhabitants?

13. (For those people who maintain an economic activity) Do people work from their homes or go outside to work? What kind of economic activities do people develop inside their homes or within the neighborhood?
14. When did you detect that people started to expand their houses on the first floors, open businesses, build garages for cars?
15. Do you know how the inhabitants carry out the construction of these renovations / additions / new buildings?
16. Do you know for what purposes people modify their apartments (e.g., adding a bedroom, expanding dining room/kitchen/opening a business/renting a room)?
17. Is there conflict or solidarity among neighbors around the issue of apartment expansions / modifications or new construction?
18. Do the neighbors who opened businesses on the ground floor of the apartments still live in those residences or have they moved elsewhere?
19. Is there subletting / renting of apartments or rooms? Who rents and who are the tenants? How much is the rent in the neighborhood?
20. Do you know how the market space (former kindergarten) is managed (who manages the premises, whether the premises are rented or bought, whether they are neighbors or outsiders?
21. In your opinion, do you think that the families who remodeled their apartments now live better, worse or the same?
22. From your experience in the neighborhood, how do you see the appearance of informal buildings and businesses in the project? Why?
23. How do you see the appearance of informal businesses in the project? Why?
24. From your perspective, how does the municipality accompany the inhabitants of GS (currently and in the past)?
25. How was the Carlos Gardel housing project conceived?
26. What were the expectations and objectives about the overall outcomes of the project when it was launched? Were those expectations aligned with the actual outcomes?
27. Did official and operational objectives change during project implementation?
28. How did resident participation influence the design process of the houses and public spaces?
29. Are there any topics we haven't talked about that you would like to mention?
30. Who can I meet / interview?

Interviews with residents

1. Since when you live in Presidente Sarmiento / Carlos Gardel (GS/CG) neighborhoods and how long have you maintained this relationship?
2. How are the living conditions in general in GS and CG?
3. In your opinion, what do you think are the main challenges facing the inhabitants of GS at present?
4. In your opinion, what are the main strengths of the neighborhood and its inhabitants?
5. In GS, do original residents (your neighbors) from the housing policy of the 1970s live in GS or was there turnover over the years?
6. Do the expanded families stay in the neighborhood, or do they move to other neighborhoods?

7. Do you think the neighborhood residents are a similar or diverse social group? Why?
8. Can you describe how the neighbors are organized? Are there cooperatives, associations, mutuals, religious organizations in GS and CG?
9. Is there any type of neighborhood/neighborhood organization linked to the provision of services (security, garbage collection, cleaning of public spaces)?
10. Do you perceive conflict between neighbors? What type of conflicts between neighbors do you observe recurrently in the neighborhood?
11. In your opinion, how do the inhabitants live the public space (e.g., do they use it freely or is it taken over by certain groups, do they identify it as dangerous or as a meeting and recreation space, do they use it day and night or only at certain times)?
12. Do people work from their homes or go outside to work? What kind of economic activities do people develop inside their homes or within the neighborhood?
13. When did you detect that people started to expand their houses on the first floors, open businesses, build garages for cars?
14. Do you know how the inhabitants carry out the construction of these renovations / additions / new buildings GS?
15. Do you know for what purposes people modify their apartments (e.g., adding a bedroom, expanding dining room/kitchen/opening a business/renting a room)?
16. Is there conflict or solidarity among neighbors around the issue of apartment expansions / modifications or new construction?
17. Do the neighbors who opened businesses on the ground floor of the apartments still live in those residences or have they moved elsewhere?
18. Is there subletting / renting of apartments or rooms? Who rents and who are the tenants? How much is the rent in the neighborhood?
19. Do you know how the market space (former kindergarten) is managed (who manages the premises, whether the premises are rented or bought, whether they are neighbors or outsiders?
20. In your opinion, do you think that the families who remodeled their apartments now live better, worse or the same?
21. Are there any topics we haven't talked about that you would like to mention?
22. Who can I meet / interview?

FIELD WORK PROTOCOL IN CAPE TOWN

In this paper, I integrated qualitative methods and design techniques to observe both design and political interfaces in low-income housing projects. The analysis of design involved systemic in-situ observations about the characteristics of the public space, the buildings and the interior units in Phases 1, 2, and 3, as well as the remaining informal settlement in Joe Slovo and the Temporary Relocation Areas in Delft that the government created to shelter the Joe Slovo residents during the construction works. The information is classified in a) phases (1, 2, 3, not redeveloped, TRA), b) scales of observation (terrain/site, public spaces, buildings, house units, non-residential uses), and c) variables of analysis (population/ building density, morphology, aesthetics, construction systems). I linked these in-situ observations with the BNG policy goals and the JS project documentation (drawings, plans) utilizing the same variables of analysis.

Selection Criteria

I carried out twenty-one in-depth semi-structured interviews with a variety of key informants, conducted between 2016 and 2019. The interviews cover a wide range of perspectives and timeframes. They provide a detailed analysis from multiple perspectives on: (1) the logics and factors that contributed to the design of the Joe Slovo housing project in each phase; (2) the source of the design decision making; (3) the ways that spatial arrangements of each phase shape the politics of different interest groups; and (4) the specific spatial actions implemented by the Joe Slovo community that had an impact on the policy agenda for the site. The interviewees included:

- A Leader of the Task Team (JS-3)
- A leader of the Tenants Association of JS-1 flats
- Three residents of JS-1 flats
- Three residents of JS-3 houses
- One resident of JS-2 gated community
- A former high-level city government policy maker involved in the design and execution of JS-1
- A current high-level city government official during JS-3
- The project manager of Joe Slovo (phase 3) redevelopment at the Western Cape government since 2016.
- Six NGO directors and program officers of three NGOs linked to Joe Slovo (CORC, Ikhayalami, SDI)
- One specialized local media director who has published about Joe Slovo and low-income housing in Cape Town
- Two political activists, one directly related to the Joe Slovo case during the anti-eviction campaign, and one political activist indirectly related to Joe Slovo who works on issues of housing location for low-income groups in Cape Town.

Model Interviews

Interviews with Government Officials, NGOs and developers

1. During which of the following periods were you involved in the N2-Gateway/ Joe Slovo Housing Project, and what was your role?
    a. Phase 1: 2004-2006   Role:
    b. Phase 2: 2007-2009   Role:
    c. Phase3: 2010- 2015   Role:
2. Do you know how the Joe Slovo redevelopment was conceived within the N2-Gateway project?
3. What were the expectations and objectives about the overall outcomes of the project when Phase (1/2/3) was launched?
    a. Did those expectations align with the real outcomes?

  b. Were your institution's official objectives the same as those implemented? Can you specify?

4. Did the official and the operative objectives change during your involvement in the project?
  a. If so, when that happened and what do you think was responsible for this policy shift?

5. Who were considered beneficiaries or the target population of the new housing project in Phase 1/2/3 (Langa residents, Joe Slovo residents, any applicant of the RDP housing program)?

6. According to the N2-Gateway's white paper, the Joe Slovo housing redevelopment was proposed to be an experimental, pilot project for the new housing policy framework, *Breaking New Ground*. Would you agree that Joe Slovo was experimental? Why?
  a. If so, do you know who decided that JS should be a pilot project?

7. Could you describe the process of the design of the project at Phase (1/2/3)?

8. Do you think the policy introduced novelty (or innovation) in terms of management and design? Can you give some examples, please?

9. Were there different visions of the design of the project among policy makers in your institution or different institutions/organizations involved?
  a. If there were different approaches to the design of the project, how did they get resolved (if they did)?

10. What is the relationship between Cape Town's Spatial Development Framework and this housing project? Are there any differences/similarities? Why do you think so?

11. Why did the city and national governments decide to re-design the project for Phase 3?

12. Why did the city and national governments introduce participatory processes with the community during Phase 3?

13. In your opinion, how do you think these participatory processes affected the design or the implementation of the project?

14. Do you think that the *re-blocking* affected the implementation and design of the Joe Slovo Project? Can you be specific?[23]

15. Do you think the Joe Slovo project has any lessons for the national housing policy? What do you think these lessons are?

16. Looking back, if you had the opportunity to change anything about your involvement, what would you have done differently?

17. Are there any issues that we haven't talked about that you would like to mention?

Interviews with community leaders and members

1. During which of the following periods were you involved in the N2-Gateway/ Joe Slovo Housing Project, and what was your role?
  a. Phase 1: 2004-2006 Role:
  b. Phase 2: 2007-2009 Role:
  c. Phase3: 2010- 2015 Role:

2. Do you know how the Joe Slovo redevelopment was conceived within the N2-Gateway project?

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[23] All government officials, NGOs and academics involved with planning, upgrading and informal settlements know what re-blocking is.

3. Did the objectives of the Joe Slovo project change during your involvement in the project?
    a. If so, when that happened and what do you think was responsible for this policy shift?
4. Who were considered beneficiaries or the target population of the new housing project in Phase 1/2/3 (Langa residents, Joe Slovo residents, any applicant of the RDP housing program)?
5. According to the N2-Gateway's white paper, the Joe Slovo housing redevelopment was proposed to be an experimental, pilot project for the new housing policy framework, *Breaking New Ground*. Would you agree that Joe Slovo was experimental? Why?
    a. If so, do you know who decided that JS should be a pilot project?
6. Could you describe the process of the design of the project at Phase (1/2/3)?
7. Do you think that the architectural design of your house respects your needs and/or lifestyle preferences? *(For interview test: please check if respondents understand concept of "architectural design")*
    a. What aspects of your house meet your needs and preferences?
8. Would you prefer to live in another sector or type of house of Joe Slovo *(Interviewer-- i.e., for clarification, if necessary*: one family house, rowed-house, department)?
9. Do you fear of losing this house or being displaced to another site? If so, could you tell us why?
10. In your opinion, why did the city and national governments decide to re-design the project for Phase 3?
11. In your opinion, why did the city and national governments introduce participatory processes with the community during Phase 3?
12. How do you think these participatory processes affected the design or the implementation of the project?
13. Do you think that the *re-blocking* affected the implementation and design of the Joe Slovo Project? Can you be specific?[24]
14. Do you think the Joe Slovo project has any lessons for the community? What do you think these lessons are?
15. Looking back, if you had the opportunity to change anything about your involvement, what would you have done differently?
16. Are there any issues that we haven't talked about that you would like to mention?

FIELD WORK PROTOCOL IN COLOMBIA

RCHI project in Cartagena and Barranquilla for FSD

In 2016, the FSD commissioned RCHI to conduct an independent impact assessment of the families resettled in CB. RCHI uses a broad framework for understanding housing affordability based on a repertoire of exemplary practices and four interconnected principles of resilience: (1) support for community social structure and economic livelihoods of residents, (2)

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[24] All government officials, NGOs and academics involved with planning, upgrading and informal settlements know what re-blocking is.

reduction of the vulnerability of residents to environmental risks and stresses, (3) enhancement of the personal security of residents in the face of violence or threats of displacement, and (4) empowerment of communities through enhanced capacities to share in their own governance. This research operationalizes the RCHI principles in the Colombian context as a way to assess the success of the implementation of the DINCS model in the FSD Macroprojects in Cartagena and Barranquilla. Our questions focused on how the transition to the new homes impacted the lives of residents, seeking to identify the respondents' perceptions about socioeconomic opportunities compared to their former neighborhoods, environmental risk, and their interest and capacity of self-organization and collective actions.

Interviewees were randomly selected as a sub-set of the baseline assessment survey carried by the FSD, implemented at the time when families moved into their new homes. The baseline data included 1,692 respondents (52% women, 48% men) surveyed in 2014 and 2015. We determined our sub-sample through a cross sectional, multistage cluster sampling, after sorting the fuller baseline surveys by economic status, housing typology within CB, gender, and displacement condition (whether families are -or are not- victims of forced displacements produced by political conflict or natural disasters). This multistage cluster sampling allowed us to cover a range of populations that we later consider in our analysis (Chart 1). From a random selection of one-hundred and ten baseline respondents, we were able to locate in fieldwork seventy-five households for semi-structured in-person interviews, lasting between one hour to three hours each. We did not always interview the official house owner or the household head. Some were out working, others were renting/ lending the unit. If we could not set-up a meeting time after two visits, we chose to interview the person in charge of the household at the time. As we cared about the households and not the individuals per-se, other family members well represented the family dynamics. This accounts for differences in some characteristics of the randomly selected cases: women stay at home more often than men do. Also, some units are not inhabited by the beneficiaries of the housing policy. We identified two families living in a borrowed house from a family member and four families renting. However, these figures may underrepresent the phenomenon. According to testimonies of residents and FSD officials, the percentage of rental units may be much greater, but it is difficult to track. Interviewees were understandably reluctant to answer openly about their tenure status because the housing policy establishes a clause constraining selling or renting for a ten-year period.

Chart 1. Characteristics of seventy-five interviewed population in 2016 and 2017

Characteristics of interviewed population		Gender		Displaced Populations		Non-Displaced Populations	
Housing typologies in CB		Female	Male	Political Conflict in Rural areas	Natural Disaster in Informal settlements	Extreme Poverty	Subsidy Low-income families
One-Story Houses	29	20	9	11	12	0	6
Two-Story Houses	26	18	8	6	13	2	5
Four-Story building apartments	20	14	6	12	5	3	

Total	75	52	23	29	30	5	11
				59		16	

Source: own elaboration

Drawing upon the qualitative data of RCHI research, I re-examined the dataset and returned to CB in subsequent visits to investigate the conditions that produce these three paradoxes as well as the interrelations between them. To answer these questions, I carried out ten in depth semi-structured interviews with former and current employees at the Foundation whose work relates to the implementation and management of CB housing project and held three unstructured-interview meetings with the FSD current leadership. I also undertook additional systemic observations of the built environment, noting the characteristics of the interior of the houses, their renovations, and level of maintenance, as well as the quality of the public spaces and green areas.

Selection Criteria

In an effort to assess the quality of community life at the FSD's Macroprojects, the Foundation implemented a baseline survey to measure the socio-economic development of the families arriving in the Macroprojects between 2014 and 2015. The structured questionnaire is organized around 10 topics: characteristics of the house and the neighborhood; characteristics of the family; education level of the household members; income, livelihood and job training; health conditions and access to services; community engagement and participation; sports and recreation; cultural activities; access to technology. With the RCHI team, I developed a fieldwork and interview protocol to expand the baseline data collected by FSD surveys through follow-up interviews, asking a series of open-ended questions.

The sample selected for the interviews is a sub-set of the sample surveyed by the FSD baseline assessment. The baseline included 1692 respondents randomly selected from 2628 beneficiaries arriving to Ciudad del Bicentenario between 2014 and 2015.[25] Our sub-set sample selected for interviews is determined through a cross sectional, multistage cluster sampling. The primary sampling criterion is the Livelihood Index developed by RCHI. The Secondary sampling unit is a nominal variable that indicates if families are -or are not- victims of forced displacements produced by political conflict. The data source for these variables is the registration list of Red Unidos, an inter-ministerial national government strategy designed to support the extremely poor and victims of political displacement. The Third sampling unit is the gender variable (F/M). Respondents were randomly selected among clusters defined by the variables and weighted according to their level of representation within the sample. The Coding method used by the FSD in the baseline surveys guarantees anonymity of the respondents. The sub-sample consists of 8 groups:

- Displaced families at the lowest quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, and female head of the household

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[25] From Fundacion Santo Domingo Social Management Unit Knowledge: Technical details of the implementation of the survey. Random Sample: $n = \dfrac{(Z\alpha/2)^2 PQN}{e^2(N-1)+(Z\alpha/2)^2 PQ}$ Sample error: +/- 5.0 percent, Confidence level: 95 percent, Heterogeneity: P = 50 percent; Q = 50 percent.

- Displaced families at the lowest quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, and male head of the household
- Non-Displaced families at the lowest quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, and female head of the household
- Non-Displaced families at the lowest quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, and male head of the household
- Displaced families at the top quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, female head of the household
- Displaced families at the top quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, male head of the household
- Non-Displaced families the top quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, female head of the household
- Non-Displaced families the top quartile of RCHI Livelihood index at baseline, male head of the household

The purpose of the RCHI Livelihood index identified population clusters within the FSD survey population using the baseline data. Based on the baseline FSD reports, raw data and field work visits we identified:

- population groups that are especially vulnerable in socio economic terms. We will consider *access, capabilities, economic independence and stability and social mobility.* For instance, we can interpolate variables to identify those households that:
- depend on external income sources (family, remittances, state subsidy) and/or rely on social capital and kinship in the community,
- have income levels below minimum salary and deal with significant constraints (for example those who have reported skipping meals),
- struggle to find jobs and report very low levels of training and education,
- informal and temporary or seasonal jobs.
- Population that arrived to the Macroprojects from very vulnerable areas facing poor socioeconomic conditions.
- Population that reported better living conditions (savings capacity, employment/stable economic activity) prior to arrival in Ciudad del Bicentenario, to analyze the impacts of relocation processes

Assignment to these categories is based on responses given to particular questions in the baseline survey, as follows:

Variable 1: Economic dependency on other sources of income
A28- Does anyone in the family receive income from the following sources? rentals, pensions, interests, vehicle rental, food cash transfer, own business. Any positive answer (SI) = 1
Or/and
A29- Does anyone in the family receive economic help? (Remittances, family help, state subsidies) Any positive answer (SI) = 1
[Eco-DEP] = A28 ∨ A29
Variable 2: Extreme Poverty-
[Eco-POV] =

Variable 3: Economic Activity – Main activity, includes formal and informal employment and own businesses
6.3- What is your main activity? (working, looking for work, unemployed, student, at home, receives pension). Looking for job, pensions, At home, not able to work =1 / Working, Studying =0
[Eco-ACT] = Q5.3
Variable 4: Education and opportunity
6.2- Do you have any job-/professional certification? Yes=0, No=1
5.2 – Education levels. Primary, Secondary, None= 1, Tertiary, university = 0
[EDUop] = 6.2 ∨ 5.2
Variable 5: Tenure
A3- Do you have documents that accredit the tenure of your house? Yes=0, No=1
[TEN] = A3
We weight each of these variables equally to arrive at a Livelihood Index score:(LIVE index) = [Eco-DEP x 0.20] + [Eco-POV x 0.20] + [Eco-ACT x 0.20] + [EDUop x 0.20] + [TEN x 0.20]

In addition to the RCHI fieldwork, I undertook ten in depth interviews with former and current FSD employees directly involved in the design and management of CB. Between 2016 and 2018, I participated in three meetings between the FSD and the Planning office of the City government of Cartagena, and four strategic meetings of the FSD's members board, where I took observation notes.

- Current CEO and President Fundación Santo Domingo (held October 18, 2018, in person in Bogota, Colombia)
- Former CEO Fundación Santo Domingo (held July 31, 2020, online)
- Director of Social Development Fundación Santo Domingo (held January 23, 2017, in person)
- Former Director of Ciudad del Bicentenario Project (held January 24, 2018, in person)
- Former director of Communications and Knowledge, Fundación Santo Domingo (held January 24, 2018, in person)
- Director of Ciudad del Bicentenario Project, Fundación Santo Domingo (held June15, 2020, online)
- Director of Economic Development, Fundación Santo Domingo (held June 16, 2020, online)
- Director of Employment Office in Ciudad del Bicentenario, Fundación Santo Domingo (held June 25, 2020, online)
- Director of Social Development in Ciudad del Bicentenario, Fundación Santo Domingo (held June 25, 2020, online)
- Community Management Coordinator in Ciudad del Bicentenario, Fundación Santo Domingo (held June 26, 2020, online)
- Project and Planning Coordinator in Ciudad del Bicentenario, Fundación Santo Domingo (held June 29, 2020, online)

Interview model

Interviews with residents

How many people live in the house? How is the family composition (parents, children, grandparents, etc.)? Does someone in the family suffer from health problems or disability? Does any of the family members work and in what? Does someone receive pension / retirement or financial aid (State or family)?
Did the family pay for the house, do they rent it, or did they receive it free of charge (displacement, natural disaster)?
Do they have the house's deed? How much time passed between: (1) they were notified that they were beneficiaries of the house, (2) they moved into the house and (3) and they were granted with the deed of the house.

1. Where were you born? (neighborhood, town, city, state)
2. When, where and why did you move from that place for the first time? (neighborhood, town, city, state)
3. When and why did you move into Cartagena city?
4. In Cartagena city, did you live in one neighborhood or in many different neighborhoods?
    a. Could you name the neighborhoods you lived in before moved into Ciudad del Bicentenario, starting from the first and finishing with the most recent one? (please specify moving year and tenure status of each residence)
        a. For how long did you live in each of them?
5. Has your quality of life stayed the same, improved, or decreased since you moved to Ciudad del Bicentenario?
    a. Could you specify in which areas (job, health, education, house) and how?
6. Do you think that the Macroproject provides you with greater or fewer opportunities for work than your former neighborhood(s), or is it about the same? *(i.e., for interviewer includes formal, informal employment and any other economic activity for subsistence)*
    a. What factors matter most? (i.e., for interviewer: better access to jobs areas, better jobs, shorter trips)
        b. If not, in which of your former neighborhood(s) did you find better opportunities to work and why?
7. Do you work from home? If so, does your house include spaces for work? If so, what kind of workspaces? And were those included in the original design of the house?
8. Do you think that the architectural design of your house respects your needs and/or lifestyle preferences? *(For interview test: please check if respondents understand concept of "architectural design")*
    a. What aspects of your house meet your needs and preferences?
9. Did you renovate, modify, expand your house because of workspace requirements or life-style preferences? Could you specify which kind of modifications have you done?
10. Before moving to the Macroproject, did you rely on kinship or social relationships (i.e., for interviewer: family, remittances, neighbors' solidarity, friends' collaborations, baby/elderly sitting) for your subsistence?
        a. If so, were you able to keep those relationships or build new ones here?
        b. If not, did anyone in your family stop working to take care of family affairs?

11. Since you arrived to the Macroproject, do you spend more or less money, or about the same, in the following areas?
    a. Transportation, why?
    b. Groceries/food, why?
    c. Education, why?
    d. Health, why?
    e. Services (electricity, water), why?
    f. Taxes, why?
    g. Recreation, why?
12. Since you moved into your new house, has any of the following items not worked?
    a. Water
    b. Toilet
    c. Electricity
    d. Oven, stove and/or burners
    e. Roof waterproofing
    f. Other, specify:
13. Do you think Ciudad del Bicentenario is in better or worse or about the same physical condition today than when you moved in? Could you give us examples?
14. Before coming to Ciudad del Bicentenario, did you ever lose your house and/or belongings because of a natural disaster, fire or political violence? (please specify)
    a. If so, do you feel your house/belongings are more secure now in the Macroproject?
    b. If not, what kind of hazards do you fear?
15. Do you think that other residents respect the neighborhood? Could you give us examples?
16. Are there are noticeable differences in household behaviors between different parts of the Macroprojects? *(Interviewer-- i.e., for clarification, if necessary: people in single houses tend to take care of public spaces or invest in house improvements)?* Does this depend on the type of house they live in?
17. Would you prefer to live in another sector or type of house of the Macroproject *(Interviewer-- i.e., for clarification, if necessary*: one family house, row house, apartment)?
18. Would you prefer to move back to any of your previous homes? Could you tell us which one(s) and why?
19. Do you feel your personal security from crime and violence has improved, decreased, or stayed the same in the Ciudad del Bicentenario? Can you give us examples?
    a. In which ways do these events affect your relationship with your neighbors and other people living at the Macroprojects?
20. When there are problems between neighbors, who do you think is responsible for their resolution? Are problems solved well by those who are responsible?
21. Do you have enough privacy from your neighbors and/or family members in your apartment/house?
22. Do you think CB is a good place to raise children? Why or why not?
23. Do you think that the Macroproject is better, worse or about the same than Villas de Aranjuez? Why?
24. Are there any rules and/or regulations at the Macroproject you wish could be changed? If so, which and why?
25. Did you attend the FSD meetings before moving into the Macroproject? If yes, did these help you settle into your new neighborhood? If not, why?

26. Do you know who the community leaders of the microproject are?
    a. Do you think they're a positive, negative, or neutral influence in the neighborhood? Why?
27. Do you know who the social workers and managers of FSD are?
    a. Do you think they're a positive, negative, or neutral influence in the neighborhood? Why?
28. Are you familiar with the purpose and contents of your Macroproject's Community Action Plan? What do you think of it?
29. What links back to your former community do you keep?
30. Do you ever consider moving back to any of your previous neighborhoods or towns? Which one(s) and why? Are there any issues that we haven't talked about that you think need to be mentioned?

Interviews with stakeholders

1. What is your formal position and previous positions like?
2. When did you start working at FMSD?
3. How would you characterize the overall living conditions in BC? In your opinion, what are the main challenges that families experience when moving to CB/VSP? Do you think the macro-project offers greater or lesser economic opportunities than the previous one or the previous neighborhoods where families lived? What factors are the most important?
4. What do CB residents complain about the most?
5. Do you think the architectural design of the houses meets the needs and/or lifestyle preferences of the new residents? Why?
6. Do you think Bicentennial City is in better or worse condition or about the same physical condition today as when you stated working for FMSD? Can you give examples?
7. Do you think the residents of the neighborhood are a similar or diverse social group? Why?
8. Do you perceive conflict between neighbors? What kind of conflicts between neighbors do you observe recurrently in the neighborhood?
9. Can you describe how the neighbors are organized? Are there cooperatives, associations, mutuals, religious organizations in GS and CG?
10. In your opinion, how do the inhabitants live the public space (e.g., do they use it freely or is it taken over by certain groups, do they identify it as dangerous or is it a meeting and recreation space, do they use it day and night or only at certain times)?
11. Is there any conflict or solidarity among neighbors around the issue of extensions/modifications of apartments or new constructions?
12. In your opinion, do you think that the families that remodeled their apartments now live better, worse or the same?
13. From your experience in the neighborhood, how do you see the emergence of informal buildings and businesses in the project? Why?
14. Are there any rules and/or regulations in the macro-project that you would like to see changed? If so, which ones and why?
15. Are there any issues we haven't talked about that you would like to bring up?

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