Upgrading dense informal settlements in Africa: realising their potential?

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Human Sciences Research Council
Goal: make dense informal settlements liveable

What is feasible? What are the priorities?
Research Partners

• Case studies in Angola (Luanda) and South Africa (eThekwini)
• 3 Main Partners
• Human Sciences Research Council (Academic – multidisciplinary)
• Project Preparation Trust (NPO – informal settlement upgrading specialists)
• Development Workshop: Angola (NPO – urbanists, community upliftment)
Haphazard urban form!
(Covid-19 also highlighted this)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parkington</th>
<th>Hillbrow (CBD Jo’burg)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total area (hectares)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>108</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>1 006</td>
<td>74 131</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persons per hectare</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>686</td>
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<tr>
<td>Floor space per person (m²)</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>21.9</td>
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Parkington, eThekwini, South Africa

Marconi, Luanda, Angola
Top upgrading priorities

- Prepared to build upwards? 92% yes, 8% no
- Compromise on size of your land? 94% yes, 6% no
- Move position of your house? 100% yes
- User-fee for better basic services? 88% yes, 12% no
Can we envision an alternative future?

SERVICE GRID NB—Building upwards to create space!

- Pathways
- Standpipes
- Greywater disposal points
- Solid waste containment and collection point
- Toilets – e.g. stand alone or mini block
- Fire hose points
Principles

• Framed structure
• Modular
• Suspended floor
• Low-technology simple construction
• Ubiquitous materials
• ’BETTER’ practice
• Incremental improvements
Final reflections on TD approach

Lessons
• Value in co-design: embedding research in current landscape (key players and existing projects)
• Value in inter-disciplinary team: practitioners, scientists, community activists
• Value in participatory approach: local solutions which are feasible, practical and maximise impact

Looking ahead
• Pilot build of new housing typology - complete
• Contribution to pilot partnership upgrading model for eThekwini (through iQhaza Lethu programme)
• 150 units planned for eThekwini: approx. ZAR 10 million in next phase (early 2021)
• Contribution to Angolan National Housing Upgrading Policy through DW in partnership with UN-Habitat
Thank you!