



# CONFERENCE REPORT

**MULTI-STAKEHOLDERS FORUM ON BUILDING FORWARD BETTER WITH THE URBAN POOR.**

**29TH JULY 2021**

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<b>CHV:</b>	<b>Community Health Volunteers</b>
<b>CSO:</b>	<b>Civil Society Organization</b>
<b>GBV:</b>	<b>Gender-Based Violence</b>
<b>IDP:</b>	<b>Integrated Development plan</b>
<b>KENSUP:</b>	<b>Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme</b>
<b>KISIP:</b>	<b>Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement Project</b>
<b>KYCTV:</b>	<b>Know Your City TV</b>
<b>NMS:</b>	<b>Nairobi Metropolitan Services</b>
<b>PLWD:</b>	<b>Persons Living with Disability</b>
<b>PPE:</b>	<b>Personal Protective Equipment</b>
<b>SDI:</b>	<b>Slum Dwellers International</b>
<b>SPA:</b>	<b>Special Planning Area</b>
<b>RAP:</b>	<b>Railway Relocation Action Plan</b>





On July 29th, SDI Kenya, Muungano Wa Wanavijiji, and Akiba Mashinani Trust- Muungano Alliance sponsored a stakeholders workshop forum themed **“BUILDING FORWARD BETTER WITH THE URBAN POOR.”**

The main agenda of the forum was to share findings, experiences, practices, and perspectives generated over time and influence socio-economic benefits of timely action aimed at fostering future resilience of the urban poor communities.

During the conference, delegates shared firsthand experiences, thoughts, opinions, and suggestions concerning building forward and better with the urban poor communities.

The multi-stakeholder forum also explored approaches and strategies in the inter-related areas of tenure security and housing, community-led planning, tackling vulnerability shocks experienced by the urban poor, livelihoods, safety, and governance.

The Building Forward Better for the Urban Poor stakeholders Report places urban poor communities, local authorities, Urban planners, thinkers, and development partners are at a tipping point where we no longer afford to make gradual adjustments but must take action immediately. It emphasizes the need to work collectively to guarantee safe cities.

This forum is aimed at putting forward recommendations on city-wide planning and policy interventions aimed at improving the living conditions of informal settlements.

Muungano wa Wanavijiji is a social movement of 'slum' residents and urban poor people in Kenya. We believe that slum upgrading is possible, but only where communities themselves are at the centre of their development.





## CONTEXT

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### RATIONALE FOR A CONFERENCE ON BUILDING FORWARD BETTER WITH THE URBAN POOR

In Nairobi City, it is estimated that six out of every ten people live in an Informal settlement with slum-like conditions. These settlements are characterized by poor infrastructure, overcrowding, insufficient access to water resources and sanitation facilities, resulting in a high disease and morbidity burden.

These unsanitary conditions have exposed the residents of these slum settlements to the negative impacts of climate change, disease outbreaks, and pandemics, as witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On matters of Slum Upgrading, the urban poor movement has in the last two decades seen and taken note of the increasing interest from both the national government and county government's efforts to upgrade or improve the housing and infrastructure conditions of slum settlements.

Good practical examples of slum upgrading efforts include; The Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP) housing projects and the infrastructure improvement projects through the Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement Project (KISIP). These initiatives have contributed to improved living conditions for many slum dwellers in Kenya.

Civil Society Organizations have for years driven the urban agenda, in collaboration with governments. Their ultimate contributions have been through lobbying and advocacy processes and financial investments in housing, infrastructure, and service improvements in some settlements across the country.

The growth of informal settlements has by far, outpaced the improvement/upgrading initiatives. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kenya triggered an increased investment in service infrastructure in many informal settlements in Kenya.

The National Task Force on COVID-19 considered Informal Settlement areas as the most vulnerable and prevalent communities that can easily exacerbate community transmissions as a result of high population densities, inadequate services, and poor infrastructure among others.



Mid to late last year (2020), many informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya were considered to be COVID-19 Hotspot areas and included: Kibera, Kawangware, Mathare, and Eastleigh settlements.

This prompted the City-County Government of Nairobi, and the Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS) to take drastic prevention measures, such as the supply of handwashing soaps, setting up handwashing facilities and boreholes, and provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and mass testing.

As a response to slow down COVID-19 spread in the country, President Uhuru Kenyatta announced a range of measures. These included total and partial lockdown in some counties, country-wide curfew, and provision of social protection funds to cushion the elderly, orphans, PLWDs, and those living with underlying conditions.

This phase of intervention revealed the need for accurate and verifiable data on the number of informal settlements; the number of households as well as the most vulnerable households within the informal settlements.



*Photo: Household numbering in Mathare.*

Muongano Alliance continued to collect data from its community leaders, from informal settlement neighbourhoods across 6 counties. The Alliance collected information from hundreds of community leaders, more so Community Health Volunteers and leaders, which enabled the federation to produce regular reports of the COVID-19 situation, among other social-economic challenges within the informal settlements.

## CONTEXT

Data collection and mapping exercise tracked eight informal settlements in Nairobi (three settlements), Kisumu (one settlement) Kiambu (One settlement), and one settlement in Nakuru County.

The active participation of SDI Kenya, in the National COVID-19 Taskforce (Informal Settlement Sub-committee) in mobilizing informal communities, providing factual data, and drafting home-based and Isolation care guidelines, provided an opportunity for the upward flow of information from different communities to the government and downward from the government to communities. This led to the interests of the urban poor community being represented in the published guidelines.

An improved model of information flow, enhanced community access to handwashing stations, masks as well as emergency access to food, and further supported the process of identification of isolation centres. Subsequently, relevant authorities began to reach out to the Alliance, recognizing the value of the information, which triangulated well with other sources, and the significance of their work.

Guided by the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) prepared for Mukuru, where over 100,000 households living within the boundary of Mukuru settlements are set to benefit from improved infrastructure and service provision.

This is a result of a collaborative work of over 42 organizations which involved governments, academia, civil society organizations, and private institutions.



*Photo: Data Collection process*

Drawing from these experiences of both the government, private sector, and civil society support to informal settlement dwellers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the potential benefits from the upgrading and implementation of the IDPs, it is imperative to consider options of building the resilience of the urban poor.

Mitigation, rather than adaptive measures should be adopted in the short term, to address both the short and long-term developmental needs, reduce vulnerability and marginalization; and foster livability among the urban poor.

This approach will integrate the urban poor into the overall urban fabric, and reduce impacts such as climate change and future pandemics. Additionally, drastic measures taken to address urban vulnerability will result in reduced cost of adoptive measures uptake in the long term.



## SESSION 1

KYCTV media team aired an introductory video. The video series depicted some of the challenges that the urban poor communities have had to endure during the COVID-19 pandemic. Most residents living in informal settlements lack access to basic services such as clean water and sanitation facilities.

The pandemic has brought about vulnerability shocks such as loss of livelihoods. This has greatly affected the informal workers especially the youth. Slum-dwellers have been excluded by the social protection systems, hence coping with the effects of the pandemic has been a great concern to most communities residing in the Informal settlements.

The urban poor are unable to access basic needs due to the rise in inflation, which has indeed battered and caused a strain on the economy. COVID-19 has posed a challenge to both the private sector and the government on the level of preparedness in addressing such a situation in the future.

This session was preceded by introductory remarks and the setting of the policy and partnership context for urban development in Kenya



Photo: Killion Nyambuga



Photo: KYCTV media team

This conversation reminisced Muungano Alliance's journey in advocating for the security of tenure, slum upgrading and access to basic service infrastructure, and most importantly the evolution of priorities for the federation; which for a long time has revolved around the security of tenure, savings, infrastructure planning, and housing.

Muungano has trailed its focus in addressing more urgent needs such as climate change and addressing pertinent vulnerability issues brought about by COVID 19, that have had a strain on public health. This session was moderated by Jack Makau.



Photo: Jack Makau

SDI-Kenya's lead planner and data expert Killion Nyambuga presented and provided a context of the conference theme. The presentation featured the Case of Mathare informal settlement. It further highlighted some of the contributions made by the Muungano Alliance when the Kenyan government affected the Covid 19 restrictions and guidelines.

These contributions included;

**1. Surveillance** –. The information contained in the report was collected by Muungano wa Wanavijiji in collaboration with the community residents that included Community Health Volunteers and the community leadership.

Data collection exercise was piloted in the Counties of Nairobi, Kisumu, Kiambu, and Nakuru. The aim was to gather and collate information on the situation in informal settlements and issued progressive reports every 2-3 days throughout the pandemic.

This would help the government and first health responders to identify the challenges various informal settlements were facing during the pandemic e.g. the number of COVID-19 cases reported in the various informal settlements, lack of handwashing stations, lack and of access to clean water.

**2. Mapping of Isolation Centers** - When COVID-19 cases spiked and the health systems strained, Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) and the community, identified possible spaces that could be used as isolation centres – these spaces were also mapped out. This data was later presented to the COVID-19 Informal Settlement sub-committee, and as a result, the Alliance was invited to sit in the committee that developed home-based care protocols for informal settlements.

**3. Partner and donor support** –Muungano Alliance in partnership with various donors, extended a hand of care and support.

The federation offered support that included donations of foodstuff, handwashing stations, Informative, Educative & Communicative (IEC) materials and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). This was in Nairobi and Kisumu. Vulnerable households/families in the community were also mapped out to enable reach the needy in these communities. The IEC materials are aimed at creating awareness on COVID-19.

One of the major lessons learnt during the support of the COVID-19 pandemic, by both the Civil society and the government, was that there was a huge data gap. This means that the government does not have details of the most vulnerable in the informal settlements. Having Household data has enabled the Alliance to identify those that are most vulnerable in various communities.

Notable investments by the Government during the pandemic were:

**Water provision** - When the Nairobi Metropolitan Services (NMS) took over the management of some of the services offered by the County government, they dug boreholes in the community to ensure there is enough water in the community.

**Improved health care system** - The government improved the status of hospitals. This happened nationally.



## SESSION 2

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### JOSEPH MUTURI - SDI PRESIDENT

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*We need to do something different, something disruptive. Muungano over time has been disruptive in a positive way, an example is the RAP project, which was disruptive but positive. It depicted that there is another way of doing things, instead of evicting people. Counties has also learned that spatial standards can be altered to be flexible for informal settlement. We should continue to scale up and do things differently.*

– Joseph Muturi

”



Joseph Muturi, SDI's president presented an overview of how organized community trends have influenced changes in city development, these changes are impacting the planning of cities. He emphasized the community values and voices are part of the fabric and identity of cities and that the urban poor are essential for the development and sustainability of these cities.

In his address, Joseph Muturi reiterated that Muungano with the support of Slum Dwellers International has been reflecting on our approaches over the last 20 years.

“We need to do something different, something disruptive. Muungano over time has been disruptive in a positive way, an example is the Railway Relocation Action Plan (RAP) project, which was disruptive but positive. We should continue to scale up and do things differently.”

The Railway Relocation Action Plan depicted that there is another way of doing things, instead of evicting people. Counties have also learned that spatial standards can be altered to be flexible for informal settlement.

Muungano wa Wanavijiji is now challenging academia, professionals, and researchers to offer new knowledge that urban poor communities don't know, and which we can foster tangible change. That is the catalyst for Muungano and all the organizations that worked in Mukuru. Muturi challenged the delegates to learn and reflect on the gains emerging from Mukuru. He then invited Marion, to give the Keynote address.



### KEYNOTE ADDRESS-

## MARION RONO, DIRECTOR HOUSING AND PLANNING – NAIROBI METROPOLITAN SERVICES



Marion Rono - The Director of Housing and Planning -  
NMS

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*“We should take stock of where we have been and how we should move forward. It is important to build capacity on how to address the urban poor. It is a joy to see professionals talking about informal settlements and interventions that should be adopted. In the past, the government was in constant fights with the NGO’S. when we see the kinds of things happening in Mukuru due to the SPA, it is a joy to see the collaboration between the government and NGOS.”*

*- Marion Rono*

”

In her maiden address to the participants, Marion Rono - Director of Housing and Planning at the Nairobi Metropolitan Service took note of the fact that in yesteryears It was not very common for city planning departments to work in a very coordinated way with civil society organizations.

Most cities lack structured, integrated planning and partnership models that would help ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholder groups in the formulation of common goals and plans.

“We should take stock of where we have been and how we should move forward. It is important to build capacity on how to address the urban poor. It is a joy to see professionals talking about informal settlements and interventions that should be adopted. In the past, the government was in constant fights with the NGO’S. When we see the kinds of things happening in Mukuru due to the Special Planning Area (SPA), it is a joy to see the collaboration between the government and NGOs.”

Marion cited an example where a presentation was made to the president in April 2020, and he directed the NMS Director-General to implement the plan immediately, to improve the living conditions of the slum dwellers.



## SESSION 2

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS-

## MARION RONO, DIRECTOR HOUSING AND PLANNING – NAIROBI METROPOLITAN SERVICES

Access roads and drainages, simplified sewer systems, Infrastructure has been implemented in Mukuru. “The feeling is amazing!” Marion exclaimed. There is water access, drainages are wide and clean, and there is a proper road network in most informal settlements in Nairobi.

Marion, also cited plans by the NMS to put up a 2-3 story market that will also be developed in Mukuru to cushion the people economically, within the 2021- 2022 financial year.

**“By next year June, there will be a market in Mukuru”, she said.**

Governance has changed, with NMS making most decisions, and this has sped up the process of the plan implementation.

There are a number of lessons to adopt;

- KENSUP project. It has taken a long time to do housing. There are very few units in Kibera, that have been constructed over the past 20 years. Is the KENSUP model the best model for us?
- The national government’s commitments through the Kenya Informal Settlement Improvement have identified 13 Informal settlements within the Nairobi Metropolis to undergo infrastructure improvements in the KISIP II planned project.

- In the course of the initial KISIP project, the City-County government of Nairobi was only able to develop housing in KCC village and Kayole.

**How do we guide the urban design, for uniformity of houses (development control)? How do we empower the private sector through the security of tenure, to develop proper, sufficient housing?**

In the second phase- KISIP 2: The 13 informal settlements have been categorized it has been categorized into two phases. Phase one will take place in 5 settlements and phase 2 in 8 settlements.

For phase 1, engineering drawings are ready, and implementation will commence soon. For phase 2, the planning is done, however, the engineering designs are yet to be conducted, therefore this phase will take place later on.

5 settlements in phase 1: Kahawa Soweto, Embakasi Village, Kambi Moto, Kahawa Village, Kayole Soweto.

8 settlements in phase 2: Huruma Fire victims, Majengo, Pumwani, Mathare, Matopeni, Spring valley, Redeemed, and Ex- Grogan.



## SESSION 2

### KEYNOTE ADDRESS-

## MARION RONO, DIRECTOR HOUSING AND PLANNING – NAIROBI METROPOLITAN SERVICES

Other settlements will be identified for planning purposes and infrastructure development. It is expected that NMS will seek consultancy services to map out all the informal settlements in Nairobi.

Marion asked the partners in attendance that as a country we need to move beyond the conventional upgrading of informal settlements (infrastructure), but also think of softer issues, e.g. skills and innovation improvement, to impact and cushion slum residents. In a reflective perspective she urged the delegates to begin to conceptualize;

- • **How do we work with civil societies to mobilize savings from people?**
- • **How do we mobilize our communities?**
- • **Looking at cross-cutting issues, e.g. issues of youth, PWDS, health, GBV, etc.**

Most of these projects are developed by project partners/ donors. Most of these projects depend on donor funding to make meaningful interjections in the country. In order to be dependent on our internal resources to support the urban poor, we must answer these important questions;

1. **How do we ensure we have budgets set aside for meaningful development in the urban poor areas?**
2. **For collective responsibility, how do we build our communities and make them more responsible for the resources they have?**
3. **How do we ensure communities protect what they have, e.g. by ensuring they provide labour in infrastructure development, for collective responsibility?**

### Response to questions from delegates

Why would NMS flout a consultancy expression of interest for offering mapping services, yet urban poor communities have the capacities to do the same and still take up the ownership of the data? For the consultancy to map out informal settlements in Nairobi, it will be a procurement process that will be advertised by the KISIP national team. Anyone with the requisite expertise will be open to bidding, including Muungano Wa Wavijiji.

The Mukuru plan has been done through collaborative efforts. It was humbling to see partners putting their resources to do the sector plans, the county only supported in stakeholder forums. The government is very grateful for this commitment from all the partners. The housing sector was not discussed, but the government will be able to discuss with partners the housing sector moving forward.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS- JANE WERU - AKIBA MASHINANI

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*We should always ask ourselves the difficult questions, will infrastructure development displace the urban poor?*

*- Jane Weru*

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*Jane Weru - Executive Director -Akiba Mashinani*

In response to Marion's keynote address, Jane relived some of the moments Muungano went through in seeking collaboration with the Nairobi City County at city hall.

“Marion has a commitment to work- she used to walk 14 floors to her office at city hall, she worked under very difficult conditions. I think the staircase was the challenge- walking 14 floors to carry out one task was overwhelming.”

Jane urged the participants to be alive to the fact that slum upgrading is not about infrastructure, but about the people that live in the informal settlements. Muungano was Wanavijiji has undergone a drastic transformation in the past three decades. From a situation in the 1990s where informal settlements were considered a rare phenomenon, to a situation where the majority of those living in an urban area are now living in one.

Without sizable interventions insight to improve the situation in existing settlements and plan for future growth, the living conditions in urban areas will aggravate fast. Today, there are several experiences in Kenya that have tried to address the situation in informal settlements. From those first attempts of resisting forced evictions of the urban poor in informal settlements in the early 1990s , to the efforts that the Muungano was Wanavijiji has undertaken to date. until today.

City stakeholders have joined by developing strategies for affordable land developments and there is also wider recognition within the local government regarding the need to approach the matter through a partnership approach. "We should always ask ourselves the difficult questions, will infrastructure development displace the urban poor? We should always jealously guard the urban poor," she concluded.

### CASE STUDY 1 - SHEELA PATEL

Case Study 1: Sheela Patel, is the founding director of the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centres (SPARC), an NGO set up in 1984 in India to explore alliances and partnerships with community organizations of the urban poor in their efforts to seek their right to the city through secure housing and basic amenities.



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*“I am delighted to see the amazing and the terrific way forward. We are trying to change the traditional ways of looking at informal settlements. This new partnership between community networks and government that focus on making changes that work for the community is the only way forward.” - Sheela Patel*

“

Sheela Patel’s presentation took a multi-themed approach.

“I am delighted to see the amazing and the terrific way forward. We are trying to change the traditional ways of looking at informal settlements. This new partnership between community networks and government that focus on making changes that work for the community is the only way forward. We should continue to urge our governments to continue exploring these kinds of partnerships and solutions. ”

Sheela Patel also gave a closer look at the ground reality of the slums in Kenya’s context. She expressed that there is a close link between local infrastructural and the response to the needs of the communities living in informal settlements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Muongano wa Wanavijiji’s approach to having detailed vulnerability data and a map of informal settlements is an effective way of catching the attention of the local government. With a map, training communities, and engaging city officials, it was possible to develop a plan together to address the issue of infrastructure in relation to the containment measures to the spread of COVID-19 in informal settlements.

## CASE STUDY 1 - SHEELA PATEL

This would prove invaluable when identifying measures for disaster prevention and preparedness.

Ms Patel suggests that “Governments, development partners and communities living in informal settlements together wield the power to transform the process by which solutions are found and made, and involve the affected constituencies so that communities are appropriately reached according to their needs.

Good solutions and partnerships from above and below can convince our governments that the world cannot go back to the way it operated before the pandemic.

Lessons must be learned, deeper insights are required and local networks should be recognized, validated and effectively and meaningfully engaged”.

Those who are vulnerable should have solutions that make them resilient to climate change effects. In Africa, Kenya is among the leading countries to prioritize climate change, and in Nairobi, Muungano and SDI-Kenya are shaping this discussion and spearheading solutions.



### CASE STUDY 2 - DR. RACHEL TOLHURST

Case Study 2: Dr Rachel Tolhurst, is the Research Director for the GCRF Accountability for Informal urban Equity Hub (ARISE). ARISE Hub, addresses the intractable development challenge of ill-health, inequity and insecurity in informal urban settlements in Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).

Dr Rachel's presentation focused on the collection of data that seeks to inform an intervention approach of tackling vulnerabilities to shocks in urban informal settlements.

The presentation cited Mathare informal settlements as a case study. In Kenya, ARISEHub partnered with Muungano Alliance and Liverpool VCT (LVCT Kenya) in addressing some of the major challenges affecting the urban more, particularly on matters touching on addressing the shocks posed by COVID-19 in informal settlements.



*Dr. Rachel Tolhurst - ARISE HUB*

Dr Rachel's presentation delved deep into some of the vulnerabilities and how to support local communities take action.

#### **Key emerging issues from the presentation were;**

- Tracking vulnerabilities shocks in urban informal settlements - learning with Mathare residents
- Lessons learnt from communities in informal settlements during the COVID-19 period
- COVID-19 greatly affected Nairobi Informal settlements -43 per cent of the urban poor community are facing food insecurity due to inadequate aid being provided by the government
- Lack of transparency on data from national and Nairobi county government used to provide support to vulnerable communities.
- Increased community tension due to youth franchise e.g. water, sanitation facilities
- Global evidence on social security indicates that 53 per cent of the world population is not covered with social security, many countries are falling into debt, hence, there is a need to accelerate progress in building social protection systems.



## CASE STUDY 3 - MARY KIPKEMOI

Case Study 3: Mary Kipkemai, currently works for - Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) as a Researcher. Mary is a PhD candidate and is passionate about research. Her speciality is in the field of Financial Mathematics, Computing for actuarial science, Economics, and Finance.



Mary Kipkemai - PASGR

### Presentation topics;

Why do the poor pay more?

It paid a closer look on three key pointers;

- Seeing the Nairobi Urbanization problem beyond the slum 'silo'
- Beyond Ownership: opportunities in organizing and regulating to realize the transformation
- Bringing the voice of the people to the table with numbers. Revisiting the economically investible opportunities in Nairobi's urbanization.

Urbanization in Nairobi is beyond slums and housing ownership opportunities. Therefore, as a result, the dynamics of densities and different variations in economic incomes has instigated the aspect of the poverty penalty in low-income communities.

It is indeed a fact that private owners and slum lords dominate Nairobi's housing spaces- because of the high returns on investments. The presentation cited pipeline and Mukuru slums as a key examples. Therefore, there is a need to connect money and opportunity.

What we are heading to;

- There is a question of the social protection role of slums. But there is a valid or strong question of choice
- There exists affordable housing and basic service solutions. It is therefore a question of minimum acceptable standards of dignity. It is not a price question- but a social justice question.
- The voice of the urban poor can only be strengthened by numbers. It is a penalty but the flip coin it is a non-subsidy investible opportunity.
- Mary painted a picture of accessing financing for low-income households in the case of the Mukuru informal settlement. Initially, findings were presented to the Nairobi City-County. The findings highlighted the poverty penalty – the high price the urban poor households pay for access to basic services.

For instance, in Nairobi, a family in Mukuru pays 3 times more for water than people living in formal estates. The Nairobi City County in 2017 took action to declare Mukuru a special planning area.

There have also been quick wins for the community with the County alongside the Nairobi Metropolitan Services setting up some water facilities, building access roads, and most recently setting up level three hospitals across the city.

Towards the tail end of the presentations, Josiah posed a number of questions to the stakeholder to reflect upon:

1. Who are the vulnerable groups? How are their needs to be addressed in the long term?
2. In addressing their needs, how do we ensure they are not displaced?
3. How do we prepare better to address issues of pandemics, health, and the environment?
4. How should communities fit within the ongoing government processes?
5. How do we make better use/ leverage financing from the market?
6. How do we plan better, implement better, finance better, monitor and evaluate better with the people/ communities?



## PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The plenary discussions were moderated by Josiah Omoto and guided by five critical questions that cast relevance on the conference theme; ***Building Forward Better with the Urban poor***. The stakeholder panellist consisted of:

- Jane Weru – Executive Director, Akiba Mashinani Trust
- Constant Cap – Urban Planner and Senior Product Manager at Code for Africa’s ‘ Africa.
- Emily Wangari – Resident, Mathare
- Nancy Njoki, SDI Management Committee Member
- George Gachie – Planner, UN-HABITAT
- Diana Kinya –Urban Planner, and Lecturer at Kenyatta University



*Josiah Omoto - Muungano Wanavijiji*



## Reflections by Jane Weru

To avoid future displacement and planned evictions is for the slum residents to begin to have the right refusal to own a house.

There can never be one solution to the informal settlements They should not be forced to move from their places to give way for housing projects and other projects within the settlements.

The cases of homelessness will increase in Nairobi if there is no proper planning. It will be caused by the displacement of people. Responding to challenges experienced by communities living in informal settlements requires bringing together multiple actors, including government and non-state actors. This can easily be established through equitable partnerships.

The Mukuru Special Planning Area (SPA) in Nairobi, offers an example of inclusive citizen engagement. Following Muungano Alliance’s policy engagement work using community data, the county government in 2017 categorized Mukuru as a SPA, bringing a requirement for an integrated development plan.

## PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Developing the plan drew on inputs from the settlement residents that blended knowledge with multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral consortium members.

The lessons collected by the Muungano Alliance emphasize the importance of dedicating time and resources for a community organization to secure mass buy-in and ownership of the planning process; creating institutional and procedural mechanisms that integrate community participation into all stages and allow for interdisciplinary and multi-sectoral collaboration.

### Reflections by Constant Cap, Urban Planner



From a community perspective, we are all vulnerable. Everyone is vulnerable at various levels hence the importance of including an inclusive planning approach that takes into account men, women, and children.

From the planning process, there is a place for everyone in the community. There are still challenges in the informal settlements because some professionals fear participation in the planning process. In addition, there are some people in the community who like short-cuts and do not want the projects to go through the full cycle of the planning process. These short-cuts make a large of people who should participate in the planning being left out in these processes.

The vulnerabilities facing slum dwellers are indeed a reality in cities. and is a result of the outcome of a number of factors, many that are controlled by policymakers and stakeholders. Everyone is vulnerable at various levels hence the importance of including an inclusive planning approach that takes into account men, women, and children.

Collaboration between policymakers, urban planners, and stakeholders is critical in advancing planning engagements with slum dwellers, state agencies, and civil society organizations to identify opportunities, needs, agreeable solutions, and resources to actualize the Integrated Development Plans.



## PANEL DISCUSSIONS



## Reflections by Diana Kinya, Urban Planner

### Accurate and Actionable Data

Reliability and accuracy of data remain to be a critical area of concern since data drives decision-making processes in urban and city planning. There is a growing use of data evidence to shape developmental initiatives by the state as well as non-state actors, which creates a demand for actual and verifiable data.

The urban poor movement, as demonstrated by Muungano wa Wanavijiji, wields the power to achieve data accuracy in an ever-changing environment where populations are dynamically changing. The second aspect of data accuracy is data ownership.

The capacity that the urban poor movement has accrued over time complements inputs made by local authorities in planning processes, more those involving informal settlements which translates data-driven knowledge into actionable forms.

Different people are vulnerable at different times. i.e. In terms of access of access to basic needs, in the community some people have shelter but lack food some have clothing but lack shelter and vice visa.

During this pandemic, the government interventions have only provided short-term solutions to the challenges facing the informal settlements.

There is a need of coming up with interventions that provide long-term solutions in preparation for other pandemics that might strike in. For instance, there should be a policy for private housing investors, wherein every three units a private institute is doing, they need to provide two units for middle-income people and one unit for low-income people in the community.

# Reflections by Nancy Njoki



## Tackling Vulnerability Shocks Brought About By COVID-19

COVID-19 has exposed informal settlements to a number of shocks which has significantly derailed Muungano's approach to development-oriented engagements and largely affected livelihoods for most slum dwellers.

During the outbreak of COVID-19 in Kenya, the Government and organizations grouped people living with disabilities, old aged, orphans, and people with chronic conditions as the vulnerable in the community. Everybody in the community is vulnerable.

In addition, the Government and organizations forgot that people in the active age are the most vulnerable. For example, in Mathare, these are people working in Eastleigh, and during the time of work, they are exposed to COVID-19 more than other community members.

**How do we ensure people are not displaced?** These can be achieved through a participatory planning process. Everybody in the community should be involved in planning for the developments or projects from the inception, decision making, and implementation of the projects.

The Government should have better practices of creating spaces for people who pave way for the projects within the settlement rather than taking people away from the settlement and letting them settle somewhere else which leads to increment and growth of other new informal settlements in the city.

**How to plan for a better future?** By including communities and cooperating homemade solutions for local problems. The communities should not rely on foreign donations and support to help them in upgrading their settlements. People should tap into the locally available resources within the settlement and start being innovative to help them create job opportunities for themselves.



## PANEL DISCUSSIONS

However, as a result of Muungano's capacity to gather, analyze and collate data, enabled the federation to propose strategic interventions announced and enforced by the state to address the health, social, economic, food impacts of COVID-19 in the informal settlements.

Communities living in informal settlements, more so informal workers were excluded from the state stimulus and recovery packages. It is therefore important to begin utilizing our data to engage the government in reaching sustainable transformation initiatives that are inclusive, equitable, and transformative sustainable approaches. How do we prepare for the future? This can only be achieved through the inclusion of communities and in cooperating homemade solutions for local problems.

# Reflections by George Gachie



## Documentation and Communication Plans

The documentation and communications plans, or lack thereof in any planning process form basis for the success or failure of any relevant process. A detailed documentation and communication plan provide a sense of direction for all project stakeholders.

Going forward the element of documentation, the tools to use, and the degree to which they should be sharing, documenting, and storing that information ought to be considered. Because of the number of stakeholders involved, more so in the Mukuru Integrated Development Project and their diverse roles, the Documentation and communications plan orchestrate project communication through a cohesive approach to information sharing. It is a critical deliverable to the planning process.

## PANEL DISCUSSIONS

# Reflections by Emily Wangari



Informal community members should be involved in the planning processes. The local authorities should also be involved in project planning as they better understand the community's perspectives. The community should look into the historical injustices and try to reclaim their land.

The community can fit better in Government processes through public participation. The local projects should be aligned with the national plans as this makes it easy for the government to support the projects.

The informal settlements pay a lot more to access the services than other people in the city. This is because of the illegal connections and cartels who create charges for the community and these prices are uncontrollable. This is in terms of access to water and electricity.

Mathare, like any other informal settlements in Kenya, faces daunting challenges. The settlement lacks the most basic infrastructure, schools, clean water, and sanitation services, and yet city officials drag their feet providing money for repairs or improvements coupled with a lack of security of tenure.

In Mathare, residents grew tired of waiting for the government to act and took matters into their own hands by documenting and mapping the settlement. The settlement remained invisible to city planners for a long time, but through data collection and mapping all these challenges came to the fore.

Mathare residents now carry solid proof of the everyday challenges they face in the slum.





## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### 1. Research design. How do we make it participatory?

Communities living in Informal settlements ought to be involved in community-based research processes, from tool formulation to data collection, data analysis, and report writing.

There has been a lot of data duplication in the informal settlements. Organizations need to organize forums where they consolidate data and leverage data well. There is also a need for real-time data collection.

### 2. Which services do slum dwellers pay more?

Slum-dwellers pay more for everything; housing, water, sanitation facilities, and electricity. This is because of the existing service cartels offering these services to the community hike up the costs of these services to earn exorbitant profits.

### 3. Must we Kenyans be owners of housing projects?

The private sector is very active. For instance, Mukuru is a purely private sector economy. Generally, in our informal sectors, private sectors deliver a lot. The new question is how do we do something with the private sector that we like and ensure that as the constitution says that the most marginal are protected?

### 4. How do we ensure Governance and Transparency in our processes?

When you have bad governance, things are sheltered with a lot of secrecy. Through open governance, there is transparency. The government should embrace community participation in the planning processes to help enhance accountability and transparency.



#### a) **Data is power**

There is a need for participatory research. Youths are mainly engaged in data collection but they feel left out during the implementation of the projects.

#### b) **There is a need of updating data**

This is due to rapid urbanization which leads to an increase in population, which means there is an increase in energy consumption, production of household waste, and usage of other services.

#### c) **Data Duplication**

Organizations need to work collectively to avoid data duplication. There should be forums for data consolidation.

#### d) **Community planning**

There is a need for strengthening partnerships between Government, civil society, Academia, and community in development. This process should be a community-led process. This helps in harmonizing the policies and frameworks between all the partners. There should be platforms where the community gives in their insights and reflections on issues affecting them and their priorities.

#### e) **Documentation**

Organizations and governments need to continuously document the development processes.

#### f) **Transparency and Accountability**

Community members normalize holding the duty bearers accountable and this can be achieved through the stakeholders mapping process.

#### g) **Community Well-being**

Developments and plans need to also take into account the well-being of community members. As it is well put in SDI Kenya vision which is “Championing for cities where the poor live in dignity, meeting the basic needs at scale”.



## SESSION 4

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Jane Wairutu, SDI-Kenya's Programme Manager led the wrap-up session, where groups brainstormed and exchanged ideas and information shared throughout the conference.

Some of the key recommendations are;



*Jane Wairutu - SDI Kenya*

1. There is a need to redefine vulnerability to account for communities living in informal settlements especially during this COVID period, Muungano Wa Wanavijiji together with its support organizations; SDI-Kenya and Akiba Mashinani Trust has available data (<https://www.muungano.net/muunganos-covid-19-response>) to make a case with the National Task Force on COVID 19.
2. Data collection, mapping, and advocacy remain strong pillars for Muungano Wa Wanavijiji. Muungano therefore needs to form a task team to lobby for the KISIP/NMS mapping project of informal settlements around the country-wide mapping and audit of public spaces in informal settlements.
3. There is an urgent need to bring on board more service providers on board so as to improve the quality and delivery of services to the urban poor as well as enrich Muungano's participatory planning processes.
4. There is a need to redefine vulnerability to account for people in informal settlements especially during this COVID period since data is already available to make a case with the National Task Force on COVID-19.
5. Pay utmost attention to both the physical and social solutions-softer issues - mental awareness, wealth creation, livelihoods, and economic strengthening
6. Data remains to be a powerful tool hence it is important for proper documentation of process-acknowledge there is a lot of documentation, engage communities in data collection and consolidate data from various organizations and partners to avoid duplication.
7. Need to identify and cement new partnerships with non-state actors, government county governments, and other like-minded institutions to address new areas of concern such as Climate change and COVID-19 through mitigation and adaptation for resilient communities.
8. Transparency and accountability form core values for development. This should be engrained in our culture, partnerships, data collection, documentation and delivery of services to the urban poor.



Joseph Kimani, The Executive Director -SDI-Kenya expressed Muungano Alliance's congratulatory message to the organizers of the conference, Lead experts who presented insightful case studies at the conference. It reflected the quality of the work done in the three projects by all partners.

"We conclude that the Building Forward Better with the Urban Poor conference adds significant value to building the capacity of the urban poor, as well as that of the supporting organizations through the existing transnational inter-city networks like the ones we had the privilege to work with. Also, sincere thanks to the keynote speakers and content experts for their contributions."





# ANNEXE 1

## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### MORNING

8:00 - 8:30 am	<b>Registration of Participants</b>	
8:30 - 9:00 am	Introduction A video by KYCTV	Jack Makau
9:00 -10:00 am	Presentation: The Case of Mathare informal settlements – SDI Kenya and Muungano wa Wanavijiji	Presenters: Killion Nyambuga Emily Wangari
10:00 -10:15 am	Q and A session	Moderator: Charity Mumbi
<b>10:15am – 10:30am</b>	<b>TEA BREAK</b>	
	Key Note Address – Chair Slum Dwellers International	Joseph Muturi
	<b>Presentations</b>	
10:30 -11:30 am	1. Sheela Patel - SPARC 2. Mary Kipkemoi - Strathmore University 3. Rachel Tolhurst - ARISE/LSTM	Moderator: Mr. Josiah Omoto,
	<b>Panelist Discussion</b>	
11.30 am - 12:30pm	1. Jane Weru – Executive Director, Akiba Mashinani Trust 2. Constant Cap – Urban Planner and Senior Product Manager at Code for Africa's ' Africa. 3. Emily Wangari – Resident, Mathare 4. Nancy Njoki, SDI Management Committee Member 5. George Gachie – Planner, UN-HABITAT 6. Diana Kinya –Urban Planner, and Lecturer at Kenyatta University	Moderator: Mr. Josiah Omoto
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	Q and A session	

### AFTERNOON

<b>1:15 – 2:00 pm</b>	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>	
2:00 – 3:00pm	Moving Forward	Moderator: Jane Wairutu
	Break Away session	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Feedback from Session	Joseph Kimani
3:45 - 4:00 pm	Wrap up Session and closing Remarks	Joseph Kimani
<b>4:00 – 4:30pm</b>	<b>Tea Break: Guests Leave at their own pleasure</b>	

# ANNEX 2 PICTORIALS

