Main findings of the publication

"Building Cities for All

Lessons from Four African Experiences"

Aurore Mansion and Virginie Rachmuhl
with contributions from Papa Ameth Keita, Benjamin Michelon and Olivier Toutain

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Nearly 830 million people around the world currently live in slums, two thirds of them are in Africa. While UN-Habitat findings indicate that the living conditions of 24 million of these people have improved over the last decade, the population of slums in sub-Saharan Africa[1] has only fallen by per centfive per cent.[2] Urban operations are now one of the main tools for improving the living conditions of those who live such informal settlements.

The authoritarian approach habitually adopted by these operations began changing in the 1990s with the emergence of new approaches that take greater account of the human aspects of such exercises and encourage participation by affected resi-

dents. These approaches raise many questions about their underlying objectives, the strategic choices that shape them and the practices used to implement them.

For instance: Who is eligible to participate in these operations? Where do they begin and end, and what oversight is there? Does it take social support into account? Why and how are residents involved? Under what conditions can residents be displaced? How are land issues managed? How are operations funded? Should residents be "made to pay" or be "paid", and how? Why and how are operations monitored and evaluated?

This paper aims to provide some answers to these nine questions. It is a synthesis of a more detailed document that compares four experiences in Mauritania, Morocco, Rwanda and Senegal, providing a reference for the designers, decision-makers and operators of such actions. It illustrates some of the

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1. The UN-Habitat definition of sub-Saharan Africa covers 48 countries in West, East, Central and South Africa.

2. UN-Habitat, *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011 - Cities for All: Bridging the Urban Divide.* 2010.

approaches currently used in Africa, and highlights one aspect of these operations that is accorded insufficient attention: social support. This paper shows that future operations of every kind must find the right balance between over-provision and under-provision, urban density and urban spread, making a "clean sweep" and keeping neighbourhoods as they are, and the realities of the actual settlement and the planned neighbourhood.

WHAT DO WE MEAN
BY NEIGHBOURHOODS
AND OPERATIONS

Neighbourhoods: different realities that are hard to define and label

The first difficulty in dealing with these settlements is what to call them, as they are known by various names – "informal", "illegal" or "unregulated" settlements. All these labels are reductive, relating to town planning and land use standards that these neighbourhoods and their residents would not meet, while indicating their close links with the rest of the city.

Each country has one or more specific names for such neighbourhoods, whose literal translation reflects how these areas and their inhabitants are seen, and the often authoritarian way that they are dealt with by the State: *kebbé* (dumping ground) and *gazra* (occupied by force) in Mauritania, *achwaiy* (random) and *ghîr amena* (dangerous) in Egypt.

None of them take account of the diverse standards of living, housing conditions and land tenure status within these settlements. Realities vary between regions, countries and cities, and within a single city or even neighbourhood. The spectrum ranges from slums whose location, infrastructures, services, buildings, residents' socio-economic profiles and land status are all extremely precarious, to unplanned settlements that are solidly built and well integrated into the city.

El Mina *kebbé* in Nouakchott, Mauritania
© Christian Vium

This synthesis looks at settlements that combine one or more elements of insecurity and social stigmatisation. They are usually characterised by social and urban diversity, but share one common factor: some or all of their inhabitants lack any land rights that are recognised or secured by the current legal and institutional framework.

The operations: more political than social or local input

The operations currently under way in Africa are primarily political exercises, conducted for security reasons (in areas considered dangerous) or economic and electoral objectives (territorial standardisation and competition; recovering and distributing land rent to establish a political clientele). In many cases, these objectives require substantial investment in infrastructures and entail large-scale resettlement in areas that are not necessarily well-serviced or close to the original neighbourhood.

International donors have played a much greater role in choosing the institutional and organisational setup of these operations as the countries needing to fund them become more open and democratic. The World Bank, for example, has played a key role in promoting and financing these operations since the 1970s. Operational Policy 4.12 on Involuntary Resettlement stipulates that residents of these areas must be taken into account, and now constitutes a frame of reference for the international community in terms of residents' participation, compensation, support, etc.

However, its application on the ground is patchy. Progress has been made on some fronts, but local governments and residents still play a limited role in these operations, which are generally State-driven, with social support subordinated to technical and economic objectives. The operations' objectives and investment programmes, and the scale of the resettlements and treatment of local and social issues are determined by the stakeholders' ability to negotiate and organise themselves.

Modes of intervention can vary greatly from one operation to another: some interventions consolidate what is already there, while others completely reconfigure the occupation, landscape and daily lives of the neighbourhood; some operations provide support, while others are purely technical interventions. The four examples presented below illustrate the wide range of possible interventions.

FOUR EXPERIENCES ILLUSTRATING FOUR DIFFERENT TYPES OF INTERVENTION IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

Operation to restructure the *kebbé* of El Mina in Nouakchott, Mauritania

The operation to restructure the *kebbé* of El Mina was a central plank of the electoral promises made by the President of the Republic of Mauritania prior to his election in 2002. The city of Nouakchott is also being modernised through one of the largest urban projects in West Africa, the Urban Development programme (UDP), which was launched in 2001 with support from the World Bank.

This operation targeted the "historic"[3] *kebbé* of El Mina, a neighbourhood south west of the city mainly inhabited by Harratine or black Moors, 97 per cent per cent of whom live below the poverty line. Although El Mina town council was involved in discussions, the State was the main client for the operation. A "resettlement" unit was created

3. This neighbourhood appeared in the 1970s and developed as migrants fled successive droughts that hit the country during this period. After a series of "forced" operations by the State in the 1980s, Nouakchott had just one neighbourhood of this kind in the early 2000s.

El Mina *kebbé* © Christian Vium

Aerial view of El Mina *kebbé* (Mauritania) after the servicing phase © Christian Vium

within the Urban Development Agency to oversee administrative, technical and financial support for the families concerned.

Nearly eight years elapsed between the first technical studies (2000) and households being resettled on the new parcels. The operation included several phases to install services, consolidate land and regularise land tenure. Some 2,000 of the 14,300 households affected by the operation were resettled in a well-serviced adjoining area, and 5,000 households were moved to peripheral areas.[4]. Displaced households received a lump-sum settlement and a free parcel of 120 m² to be developed.

The main stakeholders in the operation (the State, local government, donor, operators and inhabitants) regard it as a success because it reached its target and proceeded without causing social unrest. The allotted parcels were developed quickly

thanks to the social housing programme, Twize,[5] and the original neighbourhood and resettlement zones have now been incorporated into the urban fabric in an exercise that helped inhabitants establish or develop their own landholdings.

This operation was less successful in that it excluded tenants, resettled numerous families in poorly serviced enclaves, and did not provide post-operational support. Relocating just over one in two families in new neighbourhoods generated unprecedented costs of various kinds – socio-economic (breaking up families, severing social links, separating social and work zones), financial (compensation, servicing several resettlement areas) and urban (the spread and management of new neighbourhoods) – which will have major repercussions on future operations in Mauritania.

4. Located about two kilometres from the *kebbé*'s initial site.

5. A programme implemented by Gret within the framework of the UDP, with social, technical and financial support to improve housing and provide professional training and support for community projects.

Slum clearance in Karyan Thomas and Douar Skouila in Casablanca, Morocco

The operation to clear the slums of Thomas and Skouila in Casablanca took place in the context of the suicide bombings of 2003[6] and the national "Cities without slums" programme (PVSB), whose main operator was Holding d'Aménagement Al Omrane. This operation consisted of rehousing nearly 8,400 families from two of Casablanca's largest and longest-standing slums.

Some families were rehoused on the existing site, and others resettled in the "integrated urban centre" of Essalam Al Loghlam on the eastern outskirts of the city.[7] Displaced families were paired up and allocated a subsidised plot where they had to fund the construction of a four-storey building (G+3). A "third partner" mechanism was put in place,[8] providing social support that was supposed to "facilitate operations and ensure that target populations subscribe to the programme."[9]

Now in its sixth year of implementation, the operation seems to have been fairly successful despite the technical complexities, level of displacements, and major political and social issues involved. Most of the shacks in the original slums have been demolished,[10] all the land on the new site has been parcelled up, and construction of the new houses

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6. Young men from Douar Thomas in the eastern outskirts of the city carried out suicide bombings in Casablanca on 16 May 2003.

7. A 71-hectare site about 7 kilometres from Douar Thomas and close to Douar Skouila. The plan is to accommodate 77,000 residents in 1,942 plots.

8. The two beneficiary households work with a "third partner" (promoter, property owner, etc.) under a contract in which the third partner pledges to finance and execute construction of the housing for the two families, in return for two of the four floors (usually the ground floor and first floor).

9. Minister for Housing, May 2005.

10. Over half in Skouila (amounting to nearly 3,000 households), and 60 per cent in Karyan Thomas (around 1,500 households).

Work on the Essalam operation in Morocco
© Olivier Toutain

is almost complete. The development process proceeded more quickly than some of the other operations in the programme,[11] recovery rates are high, and the site is well serviced thanks to an agreement that is in place to develop the sector.[12] recovery rates are high, and the site is well serviced thanks to an agreement that is in place to develop the sector[13] or having to resell their "bonds".[14]

However, several aspects of the operation have been less successful. A large number of households have not yet been displaced/resettled. Institutional support dwindled once the initial impetus and dynamic had worn off, social tensions started to rise and the situation became increasingly politicised. The social support mainly served to accelerate the rate of slum clearance without kickstarting the socio-economic development missions envisaged in the contracts, or providing post-set-

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11. Follow-up studies of self-build slum clearance operations have generally shown that they can sometimes take over ten years to complete.

12. A budget of 200 million dirhams, or nearly 18 million Euros, was released in 2007 for that purpose.

13. Less than 2% of households took out bank loans.

14. Registered bond issued by Al Omrane to beneficiary households involved in clearance operations.

tlement support for displaced households. In addition to this, the third-partner mechanism caused a large number of disputes and conflicts due to the lack of a suitable framework and appropriate social management.

Rehabilitation and consolidation of informal settlements on the outskirts of Kigali, Rwanda

The Rwandan Ministry of Infrastructure launched the Infrastructure and Urban Management project (PIGU) in 2003, in response to the exponential growth in the population and number of informal settlements in the capital, Kigali, in the late 1990s.[15] Operational activities on the first urban project funded by the World Bank (International Development Association) and the Norwegian government began in 2006 after a two-year phase of preliminary studies, and were completed in 2010. In addition to an investment and institutional capacity-building component, PIGU also included a programme to improve living standards in three neighbourhoods near the city centre (mainly Gitega, also Cyahafi and Rweza-

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15. The population of Kigali more than doubled in the 11 years between 1991 and 2002, rising from 235,000 to over 603,049 inhabitants (according to the 2002 General Census).

General view of pericentral settlements in Kigali, Rwanda © Benjamin Michelon
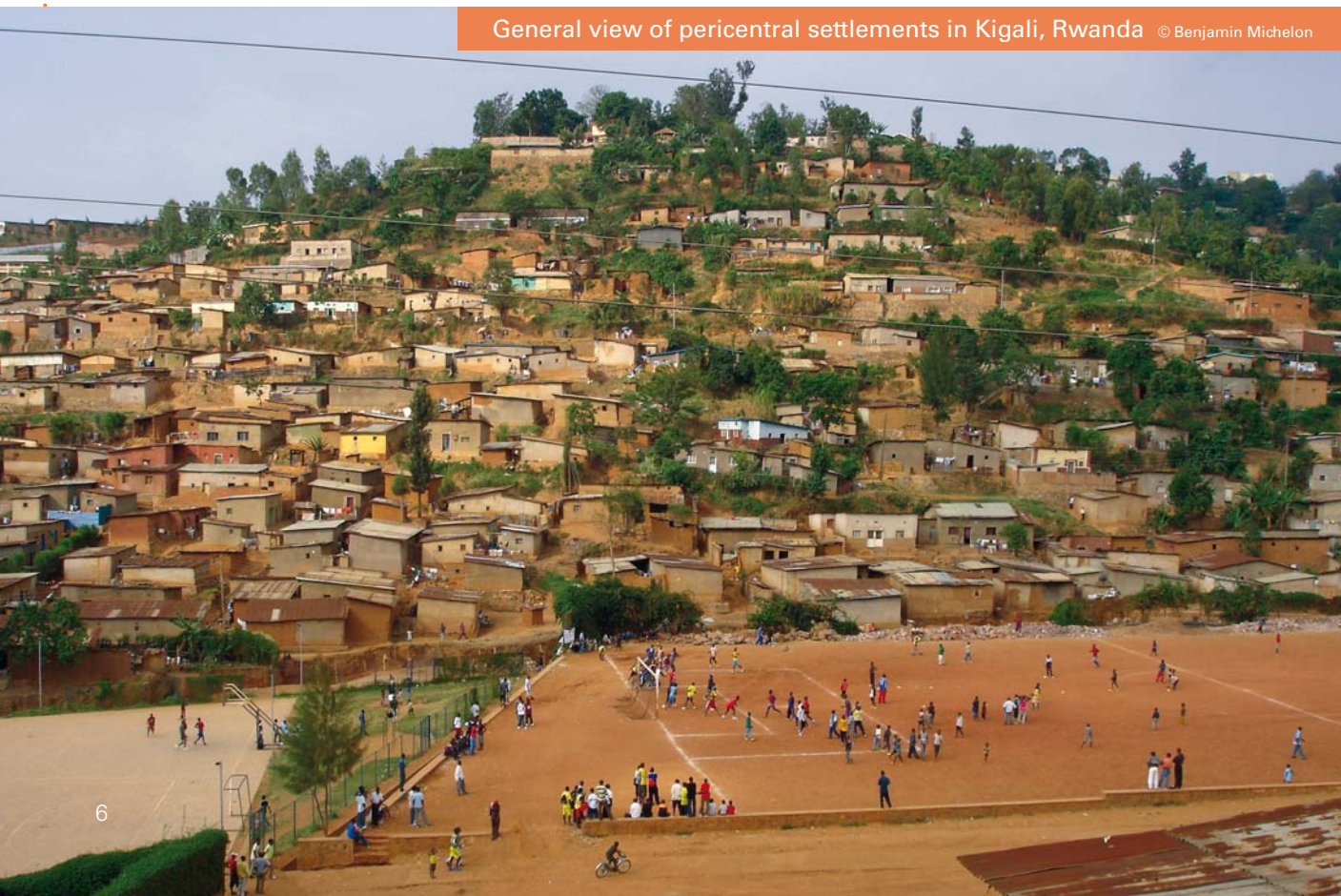
Typical housing in Senegal
© Papa Ameth Keita

menyo), each of them home to about 25,000 people. These sites were selected partly on account of their strategic location (on the Nyarugenge plateau, near the city centre), and partly because they were classic examples of informal settlements in terms of their history, density, rough terrain, sanitation problems, and varying degrees of inaccessibility.

The government and city of Kigali had originally intended to clear these neighbourhoods. However, as the project got underway they adopted an alternative proposal made by the service provider responsible for the preliminary studies and undertook a modest rehabilitation project instead, which focused on residents' priorities and minimised the number of displacements.

The main strengths of this operation were that it involved the city of Kigali, kept to the planned investment programme and timetable, and resulted in the partial or complete demolition of very few houses.

Unfortunately – and despite the positive findings of the evaluation conducted in 2010 – this turned out to be a one-off experience, which has had no effect on urban policies that prioritise "the progressive demolition of haphazardly constructed informal settlements" and have resulted in large-scale evictions.[16]

16. Kigali Conceptual Masterplan, officially adopted by the government in 2008, cited by Benjamin Michelon in his intervention "Kigali, Une ville durable… pour tous?", intervention at the symposium 3e controverses d'action publique - 8 & 9 October 2009 – Lausanne, "Sustainability, so what? Retour critique sur les promesses du développement urbain durable". *http://www.pacte.cnrs.fr/IMG/html_Michelon.html*

Programme to upgrade, restructure and regularise land tenure in Pikine Irrégulier Sud, in Senegal

In 2005, the Senegalese authorities launched a World Bank-supported programme to construct a 34km-long toll highway between Dakar and Diamnadio, providing a national-level infrastructure that would boost the economic hub of Dakar.[17] Section 3 of the highway bisects a 5.5 km stretch of the densely populated neighbourhood of Pikine Irrégulier Sud (250,000 habitants). Its construction entails demolishing properties and displacing thousands of families.

As part of measures to compensate for the highway building programme and its policy to restructure and regularise land in informal settlements,[18] the government undertook a rehabilitation and restructuring programme in Pikine Irrégulier Sud to reorganise the area, develop its urban infrastructures and secure residents' land tenure. The project management of this operation was assigned to the Agency for the promotion of investment and large-scale works (APIX), which was also responsible for the highway component.

The project affects about 1,000 concessions in the area slated for restructuring. About 47 per cent of

17. Preparations for this project began in the 1970s. It was launched in 2005, and pre-operational studies began in 2006.

18. See in particular, Decree 91-748 of 1991 setting out the procedure for the execution of land restructuring operations in undeveloped areas within zones earmarked for urban renovation, and Decree 96-386 (which replaces that of 1991) instituting a Land restructuring and regularisation Fund (FORREF) to finance these operations.

Flooding in Pikine, Senegal
© Papa Ameth Keita

the households concerned (about 7,000 people) will be able to stay on the site, and 53 per cent (about 8,000 people) will be moved to a site in Tivaouane Peulh some 10 kilometres away which will be serviced accordingly.[19] Economic Interest Groups (EIGs)[20] will help families that remain on the original site apply to regularise their land tenure; while displaced families will receive compensation in kind (a new house built on the relocation site) or cash (this option is only available on request from title-holding property owners).[21]

At the time of writing this paper, the preliminary technical and social studies had been completed, and a local service provider has been recruited to monitor and support the resettlements and progress of the works. The process has generally gone well so far, although delays have meant that the losses incurred by resettled families have had to be reevaluated. The success of the operation is largely due to the focus on social support, the account taken of differing circumstances, and the nature and substantial amount of compensation offered to families. All this was possible within the framework of an exceptionally well-funded operation, but is not necessarily replicable on a large scale.

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19. 2,000 homes and social and community amenities will be built (two primary schools, a secondary school, a health post, two multi-functional sports grounds, a multi-purpose social centre), plus two local places of worship and a local market.

20. A decree was passed requiring EIGs to be set up to ensure that residents participate in the process.

21. A minority of property owners (15 of the 508 households obliged to leave the neighbourhood) asked to be compensated in cash.

NINE STRATEGIC COMPONENTS
TO IMPROVE THE RUNNING
OF URBAN OPERATIONS

Urban operations are not an easy undertaking. They are delicate exercises in which a large number of sometimes conflicting constraints have to be managed. This synthesis and the main work on which it is based consider nine factors that are crucial to the running of such operations. One of the main lessons learned from the case studies is that more attention needs to be paid to social support, which is a priority and a necessary condition for successful operations.

Better defined target groups

The question of who is eligible and who has the right to a plot, housing and various measures to compensate for resettlement is clearly strategic. The eligibility criteria that are selected will partly determine the nature, economy and social impact of an operation. Therefore, it is essential to understand the social realities behind commonly used terms like "family", "household", "tenant", "owner", "occupant", "concession", "shack", "housing", etc., and to analyse the implications of the possible options.

Operations will proceed much more smoothly if decisions are made public, perceived as equitable by residents, and properly implemented. Conversely, confusion and lack of transparency can lead to opportunistic strategies, special privileges for some and the exclusion of the weakest.

Conducting a census is a crucial stage in the process as it establishes a list of rights holders. There are preventive measures that can be put in place to manage the risks associated with this type of exercise, along with technical tools such as family profiles, GPS reports, photographs, databases, etc.. These should include a mechanism for cross-checking information gathered in the field in order to identify possible inconsistencies or errors. Residents need to be kept informed and sensitised in order to limit the number of false statements, and monitoring measures and sanctions need to be applied when mistakes are made or the system is abused. Whether or not these tools are used is largely a matter of political will.

One of the major problems in running operations is the contradiction between the need to take a snapshot of one aspect of social and urban reality at a given moment to establish a list of rights holders, and the dynamic nature of this reality (births, deaths, marriages, separations, arrivals, departures, etc.). Cut off dates take no account of changes in people's situation, and operations often extend over several years, increasing the risk of contestations or injustices. However, some provision can be made for this when the eligibility criteria for operations are defined, by establishing conditions and rules to be applied when family situations change, creating a commission to manage applications, and a

Numbered houses in Mauritania, Senegal and Rwanda

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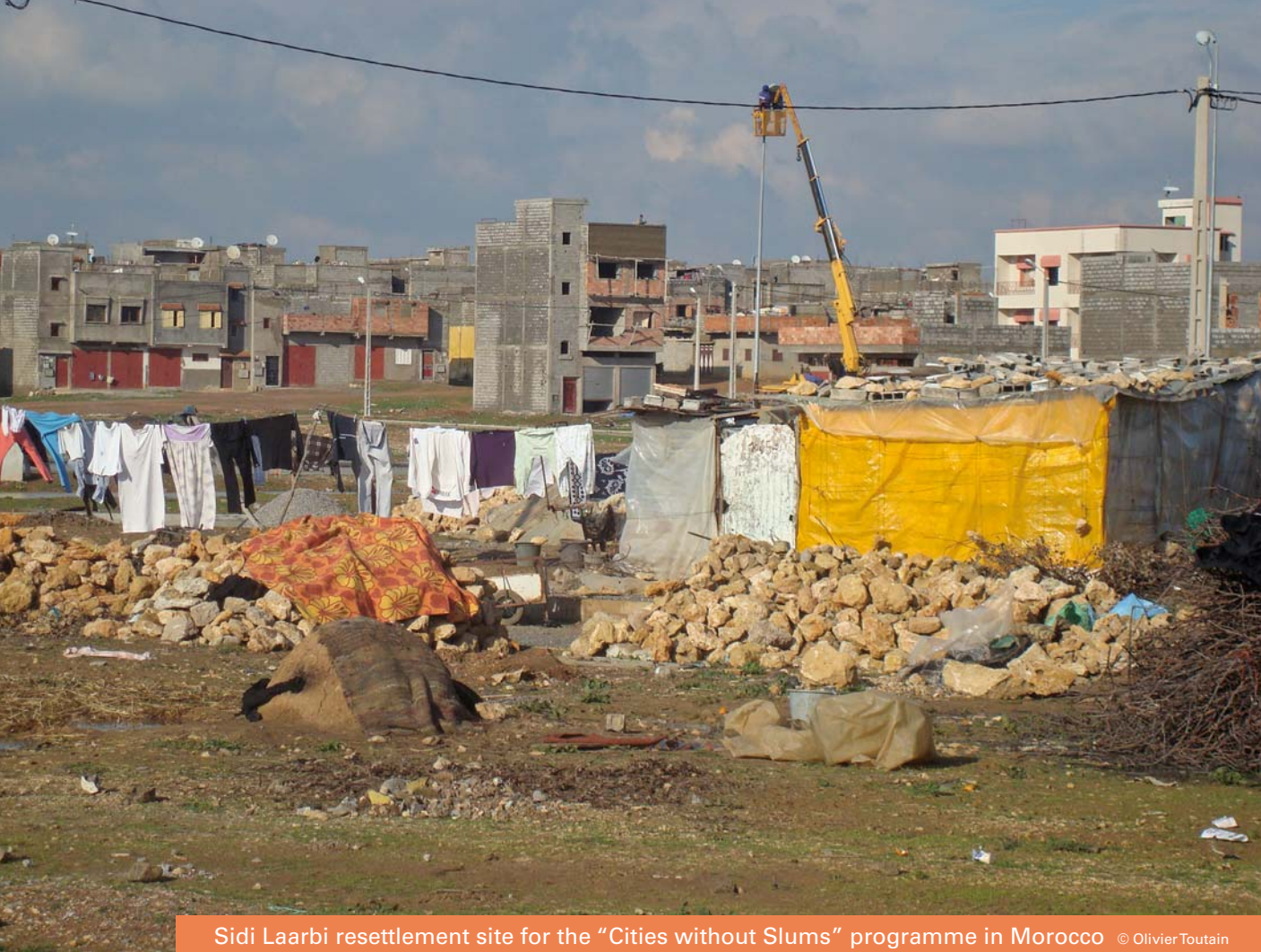
Sidi Laarbi resettlement site for the "Cities without Slums" programme in Morocco © Olivier Toutain

mechanism to update the database of rights holders and help the relevant administrations produce official documents confirming changes in family circumstances.

In certain cases, the exclusion of legitimate categories of groups encourages people to bend the rules and increases the number of rights holders.

Tenants are not eligible to participate in three of the four operations studied (Mauritania, Morocco and Rwanda), even though they are often the poorest and most vulnerable residents of informal settlements. Specific measures can be taken to include tenants, as in Senegal, where they were compensated for their losses and supported through the rehousing process. They can be offered adapted credit products to help them become property owners, and contracts between landlords and tenants can be formalised in order to control rental increases.

The process of developing these solutions should take account of the dynamics at play when these neighbourhoods are improved, which invariably increase land and property values. It also assumes that resources will be made available upstream to assess the socio-economic situation and determine funding capacities, expectations, etc.

Involving local governments in order to incorporate operations into medium and long-term territorial management

Operations are often viewed as a series of technical or social activities to be conducted in a logical order. They are organised in three main stages: preparations for the operation, implementation, and post-operational activities. Most effort is expended on the preliminary technical studies and execution of the works. It is becoming increasingly common for preliminary studies to include environmental and social impact assessments (which are mandatory in operations funded by the World Bank) and socio-economic studies. Yet, with the exception of the case studied in Rwanda, these are rarely used to inform multi-actor debates, help clarify and define the operation's major objectives, or prioritise the problems to be resolved.

The question of when operations will end is rarely considered. They generally finish at the same time as the programme of works. Post-operational support is often limited to regularization programmes and managing residual cases. There is also little clarification of who will be responsible for activating and maintaining public amenities, connecting

families to urban services or creating local facilities. Much still needs to be done on various fronts to help families rebuild their homes and adapt to their new environment. Administrative procedures have to be completed to obtain property ownership and access schools and health services. Public transport is also needed to enable people to get to work and avoid social isolation.

As the bodies with primary responsibility of managing their territory, and in accordance with decentralisation processes, local governments need to play a much greater role in operations – not just during the works, but particularly after they have been completed. In the right circumstances, they could assume responsibility and manage such projects. In any case, they should always be given assistance in managing post-operational issues and work with sectoral administrations and other land actors. Technical assistance programmes and missions should include a capacity building component for local governments.

Making social support a more important element of operations

Social support can be delivered through various kinds of activity at different phases of the operation such as information, outreach, consultation, administrative support. Some of these activities are cross-cutting, such as conflict management and information, while others are more intermittent, such as assistance in preparing administrative or financial documents. It is not easy to determine how much time will be needed to implement activities like organising consultations between groups of actors, resolving conflicts, mobilizing certain institutions or managing information.

The need to make progress on the technical and operational fronts often means that insufficient time and attention is given to social activities, particularly in the upstream and downstream phases of operations.

While there is no doubt that progress has been made in recent years, many technical operators still lack the full range of in-house skills they need to deliver social support. This means that operations often involve several service providers, which makes it hard to coordinate interventions and position the social support within the overall plan.

Genuine political support for the social aspects of these operations is needed to ensure that social operators do not take second place to technical operators, as is often the case. A body responsible

Public information session in Rwanda
© Benjamin Michelon

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for steering social activities should be appointed and put in place at the same level as the technical component (possibly through a mandate to delegate project management). The project manager would be responsible for coordinating and ensuring the smooth running of the two components, whose respective commitments would be formalised in an agreement. Depending on the context, this body could be public or private, national or local.

Social support workers often need to improve and broaden their skills. This could be done by creating specific and general professional training programmes, putting in place capacity-building programmes in donor-funded operations and ensuring that teams meet regularly to learn from each other's experiences.

Adjusting participatory mechanisms to local contexts and competences

Development policies generally tend to encourage democratic processes involving stakeholder discussions, participation and consultation – as much on account of their cost as their effectiveness. Once these mechanisms are in place, the question of how to proceed still has to be resolved. Participatory processes can only work if projects have a rigorous methodology, specific competences and allocate sufficient time and financial resources to these activities. Their feasibility also depends upon the nature of the political systems in place and the maturity and dynamism of civil society. As conditions vary considerably from one operation to the next, levels of participation range across the scale from very "passive" to highly "active".[22]

Residents in these four case studies influenced operations through negotiation, pressure or obstruction, rather than using formal participatory mechanisms. The risk with this type of situation is that it accentuates inequalities between influential residents or groups and those who lack the education, information and networks to make their voices heard.

The mechanisms put in place to encourage residents to get involved in discussions need to be adapted to the institutional situation. There is a range of tools that can be used, even in contexts that are not conducive to participation: conducting qualitative surveys, putting in place mechanisms to inform the public and creating decision-making bodies and grievance procedures. It is possible to

22. Beuret J.-E., *La conduite de la concertation*, Politique sociologie, 2006, 342 p.

involve residents in defining action programmes and steering operations, but this requires specific skills in order to reach compromises acceptable to the different interest groups and create the conditions for genuine dialogue between residents, technicians and politicians.

Preparing and assisting resettlement processes to better integrate new neighbourhoods into the urban and social fabric

Opinion is divided over the question of resettlement. Some see it as the price to pay for "a better life" and escaping the stigma of living in a poor neighbourhood, while others believe that it is costly and upsets the socio-economic equilibrium within informal settlements.[23] Since it is sometimes impossible to avoid total or partial resettlement, the best practical means of doing so and reducing the negative impact on families needs to be found.

Challenges will vary depending on the nature of the operation and type of resettlement involved. This could either be a temporary or provisional displacement while the original site is redeveloped, or permanent resettlement of all or some of the residents in zones slated for urban development. These operations severely disrupt people's lives, especially when the resettlement sites are located far from the original neighbourhood.

23. This view is mainly held by the World Bank and international organisations.

Dismantling shacks prior to resettlement in Mauritania © Virginie Rachmuhl

The importance of public spaces – Essalam resettlement site in Casablanca, Morocco © Olivier Toutain

The success of operations involving involuntary resettlement is determined by the quality of the social support they provide for residents. Assistance activities should be put in place before, during and after resettlement, and particular effort is needed to ensure that households are kept fully informed at every stage of the process.

Unfinished building in Kiyovou neighbourhood in Kigali, Rwanda © Benjamin Michelon

During the preparatory phase, clear, universally applicable rules on three very sensitive issues need to be established and publicised: the definition of "who stays and who goes"; how plots or housing will be allocated, the amount of compensation for the resulting losses and how such compensation will be made. During implementation, each family should be assisted to facilitate their move and shorten the transition between leaving their original home and settling in the new neighbourhood. Post-operational support should cover access to ownership/secure tenure, housing, basic services and economic development.

Diversifying means of securing land tenure

Le Most residents in the neighbourhoods studied have "irregular" land tenure status, meaning that they do not have rights that are recognised by the current legal and institutional framework. This situation is by no means peculiar to informal settlements, since it is estimated that only five per cent of land in sub-Saharan Africa was registered in 2010.[24]

24. Hubert Ouedrogo, *Mythes et impasses de l'immatriculation foncière et nécessité d'approches alternatives*, "Land Tenure and Development Technical Committee", December 2010.

Rather, it reflects the fact that existing legal frameworks are ill-suited to local realities in large parts of these countries.

With few appropriate national policies in place, residents use informal land supply chains that can make it very difficult for urban operations to deal with land tenure issues.

The four operations studied were not all undertaken with the objective of regularising residents' occupancy, and they dealt with the matter in different ways. When it is an explicit objective, land tenure is nearly always regularised by issuing individual ownership titles, although this does not automatically guarantee security of tenure. There is often some confusion between legal status and the risks of insecure tenure: title holders may have insecure land rights if their rights are challenged by their neighbours, while rights that are not covered by title deeds may be "secure" because they are locally recognised. Thus, a title is not sufficient to ensure that local residents have secure tenure, and may even be a source of insecurity if residents are unable to follow the procedures for obtaining ownership titles.

Occupancy can be secured by other means apart from ownership titles: prescriptive rights, taxation, collective ownership, hire-purchase, etc., which

need to be considered in the context of changing concepts of ownership and moves to create ownership from the "bottom-up". Such reforms and associated changes in perception are already under way in certain countries, where they have met strong resistance, especially in urban areas where there are considerable economic advantages in maintaining a "top-down" conception of ownership. This kind of societal choice needs to be made on the basis of democratic debate.

In the meantime, mechanisms can always be envisaged to help residents understand the range of different procedures for obtaining titles (Senegal). These could include access to information, help with administrative procedures or even assistance in establishing the necessary savings. Rather than targeting all families, they will be demand-led, and primarily designed to establish procedures to secure tenure.

Prioritising two strategic variables in financing operations: land and credit

The financial arrangements for operations should cover different budget lines for acquiring or making land available (the land base), installing infrastructure (road networks, urban water, sanitation and electricity services), constructing public amenities (schools, health centres, etc.) and local amenities (markets, mosques/churches, etc.), access to housing by building homes, help with access to credit or technical support for self-builds, possible assistance in connecting individuals to urban services, compensation in cases of involuntary resettlement, and the economic, technical and social engineering expertise needed to design, implement, monitor and evaluate operations.

The costs to be covered vary according to the nature of the operation (light upgrading, heavy restructuring, slum clearance), the amount of compensation given to displaced families, and the cost of land. The main types of funding used are loans and subsidies. The latter are particularly important in ensuring that operations can reach poor and low-income households.

Innovative financial mechanisms are needed to ensure that operations are balanced and replicable. The two strategic variables in this respect are land and credit. It is very difficult to make land available at a price that is affordable for the public authorities, operators and developers, and residents. Efforts to do so in Europe, Latin America and Asia currently use various tools, such as creating land

Badges issued to Mauritanian rights holders providing proof of identity
© Aurore Mansion

Post-operational problems on the resettlement site in Taddert, Agadir (Morocco) © Virginie Rachmuhl

agencies, land readjustment, land sharing, social concessions or social zones[25], etc.

Urban operations can cause land values to increase substantially. That means that land can be a potential source of finance for urban investments – assuming that the State takes transparent measures to reappropriate some of the land rent currently captured by a minority of land speculators and politicians. This is possible through land taxes or equalisation mechanisms.

Local governments, operators, States[26] and low-income households must meet certain conditions in order to access loans. The lack of suitable mechanisms for personal credit is a major obstacle in enabling families to finance operations, and those who cannot rely on help and support from family and friends risk being excluded from operations or running into debt. International financiers and national governments need to encourage the creation of funding mechanisms such as guarantee funds, support for refinancing, and funding for staff to manage small progressive credit schemes for low-income families.

25. In Cambodia, this is known as "social concessions" and in Brazil they are called "ZEIS" (*Zona Especial de Interesse Social or Special Zone of Social Interest*).

26. See the work by Thierry Paulais: *Financer les villes d'Afrique. L'enjeu de l'investissement local*, coll. "L'Afrique en développement", Banque mondiale, AFD, Cities Alliance, 2012, 399 p.

Finding a balance between "free handouts" and making beneficiary families pay

Residents in affected neighbourhoods may be eligible for compensation or expected to make a financial contribution to the operation. Both type of payment come in various forms, and both played a key role in the operations studied. Financial contributions may be made in cash, or in kind by contributing labour, land,[27] existing buildings or building materials. These contributions usually go towards the cost of the plot, the housing and connecting the household to urban services. Money for housing is the most problematic area in this respect.

Compensation may also be made in cash or kind (with the allocation of a plot or housing). This may be paid at a flat rate, calculated according to various categories or even evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The level of compensation is set according to the estimated loss, which may or may not take account of a wide range of factors: whether properties are completely or partially destroyed, whether buildings were used solely for residential purposes, economic activities or a mixture of both, any

27. Families without ownership titles have often paid a fee to settle, and sometimes have temporary or permanent authorisation from members of the local administrations.

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Compensation cheques for displaced persons in Mauritania
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expenditures incurred, and the land, crops or cultivated agricultural parcels and tangible or intangible assets involved.

The main motivation in deciding whether residents should be given compensation or asked to make a financial contribution is encouraging them to subscribe to the process and ensuring that operations run smoothly. Both approaches run the risk of having the opposite of the desired effect: encouraging speculation, attracting people from outside the neighbourhood, or leading to the loss of housing.

Both approaches need to be well balanced. Levels of compensation should take account of what families have lost, while contributions should reflect the goods and services that households will be able to access as a result of the operation. It takes a fine, complex combination of financial and social expertise to establish this balance without excluding low-income families, something that is rarely achieved. This aspect of funding also needs to be seen in relation to the overall economy of the operation, with all its immediate and deferred costs. Very little work has been done on this field, which merits further research. It would also be useful to share experiences with credit/innovative mecha-

nisms for funding housing, estimating total costs, and comparative analysis of operations and larger-scale programmes, modes of evaluating losses, and socially and technically effective mechanisms for compensation.

Including social and urban indicators in monitoring and evaluation, and using them as a tool to help steer operations

Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are designed to aid decision-making; facilitate reporting on project execution, and help document learning and systematisation processes. Many projects are primarily concerned with reporting back to donors on the progress of operations and proper use of allocated funds. As the main objective is to lay the foundations for further funding and continued partnerships, these mechanisms tend to focus on procedures, quantitative indicators of progress and short-term results. While they provide useful data, they also have certain limitations as they value quantitative data more than qualitative data; technical and financial information more than institutional, social, urban or political considerations; and

short-term results more than medium- and long-term effects. They are symptomatic of a tendency to standardise approaches according to the demands of international public finance.

Voluntary procedures are needed to incorporate social, economic, urban and environmental impacts into monitoring and evaluation. Decision-making and steering processes also need to be improved by using more rigorous methods and tools, and conducting a public debate around operations.

Donors have a role to play in ensuring that the principles they promote are applied. This could be done through various measures: introducing the social aspects of operations into preliminary negotiations, financing mechanisms for long term technical assistance rather than periodic external expertise, planning projects with substantial and relatively autonomous monitoring and evaluation components, encouraging sistematisation processes and peer exchanges, and making funding for new operations conditional upon the results of evaluations of previous operations.

BUILDING CITIES FOR ALL

Operations to rehabilitate/restructure/clear informal settlements are major concerns for cities in developing countries. The situation in African cities is extremely worrying due to the huge number of people living in difficult conditions[28] and projected demographic growth in the short and medium term.

In economic terms, urban operations have a decisive influence on a nation's capacity to develop (economic infrastructures, urban mobility, etc.). The building sector is particularly important in this respect as it will certainly be one of the driving forces of growth in Africa in coming decades. In socio-economic terms, informal settlements crystallise fears that violence and criminality will develop and

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28. Particularly with regard to the basic needs identified by the Millennium Development Goals: health, drinking water, sanitation, etc.

Informal settlements collide with urban development in Rwanda © Benjamin Michelon
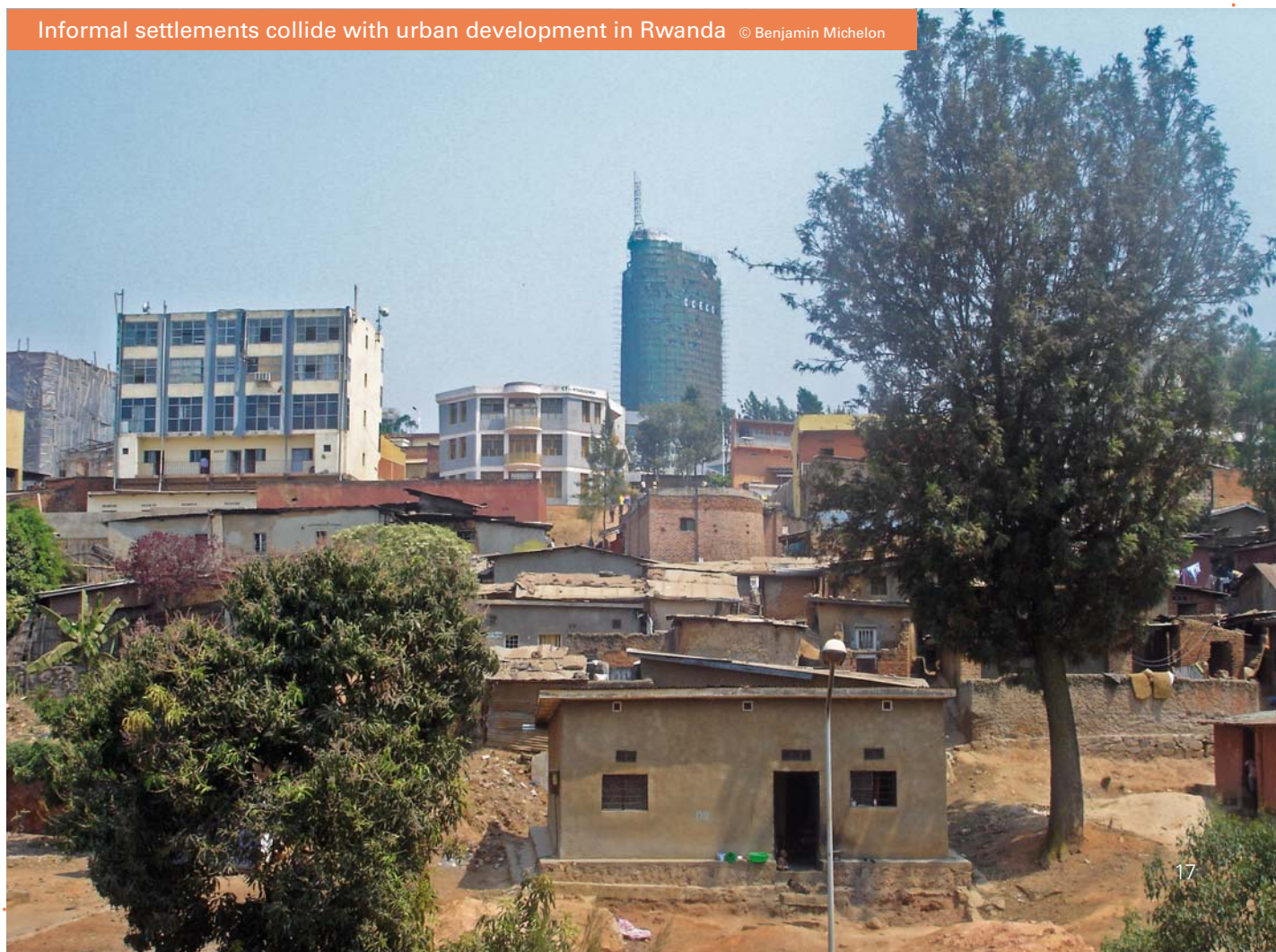
threaten public security; fears that are fed by the political weight and potential demands that residents of these neighbourhoods can bring to bear.

Finally, the urban elite are extremely sensitive about ground rents generated by urban growth and the land and property development processes associated with these operations. All these factors combine to make urban operations priority actions for many States and donors. The latter have invested substantial sums in adjusting intervention methodologies, with mixed results.

At the end of this exercise, the following lessons can be drawn from the review of these four experiences:

- It would be a mistake to limit operations to technical and economic dimensions. More account needs to be taken of their fundamentally political and social nature. The key question is how decision-makers position informal settlements and their inhabitants in their plans for improved and modernized cities.

- Social support should play a more important role in these operations. This will entail working on resource allocation – especially in the preparatory and post-operational follow-up phases – political and institutional support, having good, reliable information and effective participatory strategies.

- The local administrations and governments responsible for territorial management should be much more closely involved in steering operations. Their skills in this domain need to be strengthened. Sectoral administrations and competent bodies for education, health, employment, professional training, transport, water, sanitation and electricity also need to be more closely involved in preparing for the end of operations and the transition towards a common management system.

- Operations need to be much more closely attuned to current thinking and ongoing urban, housing and land policy reforms. The issue for the future is being able to link technical mechanisms (in the broad sense) with urban policy

Slum clearance in Douar Skouila, Casablanca (Morocco) © Olivier Toutain
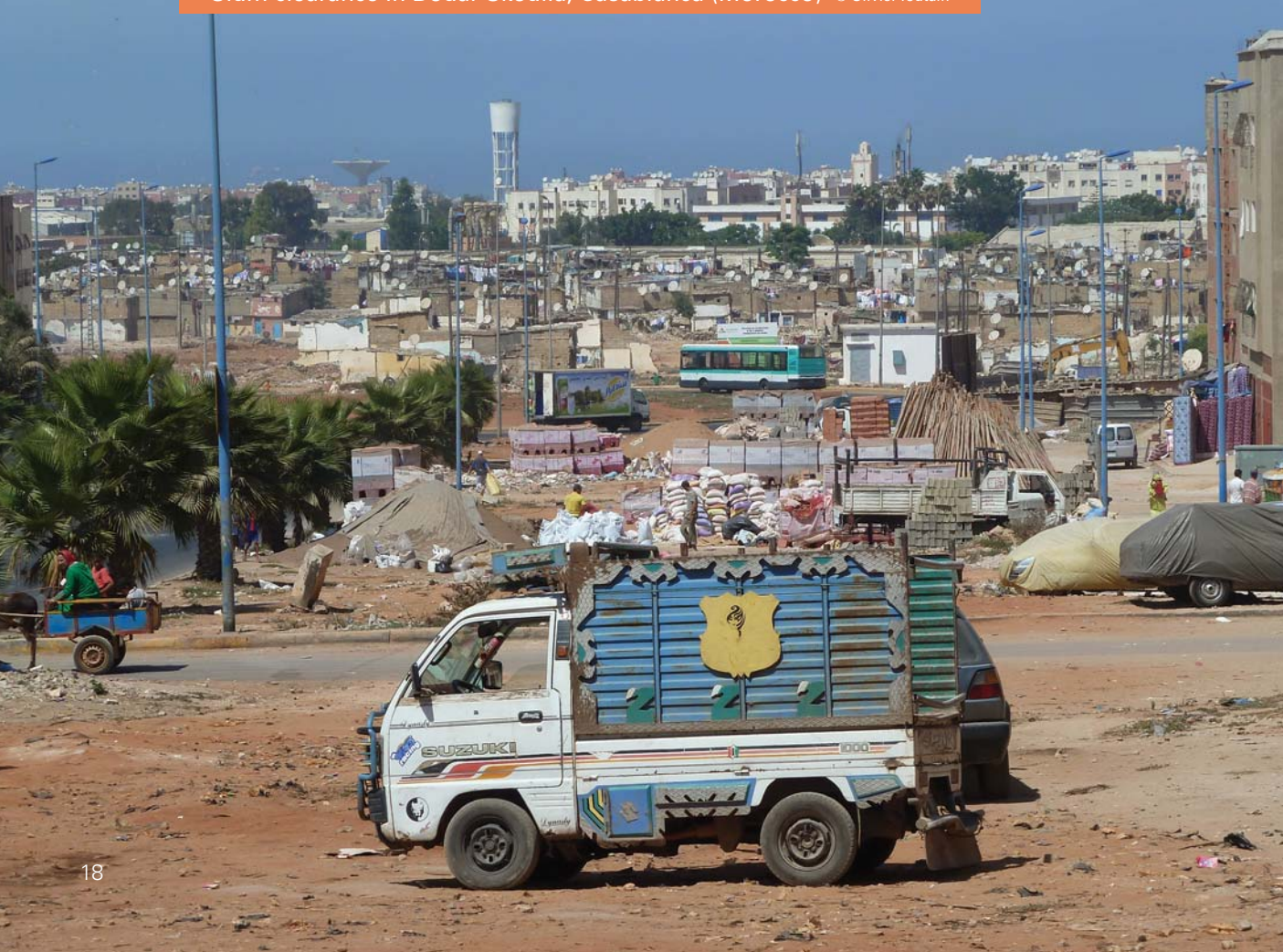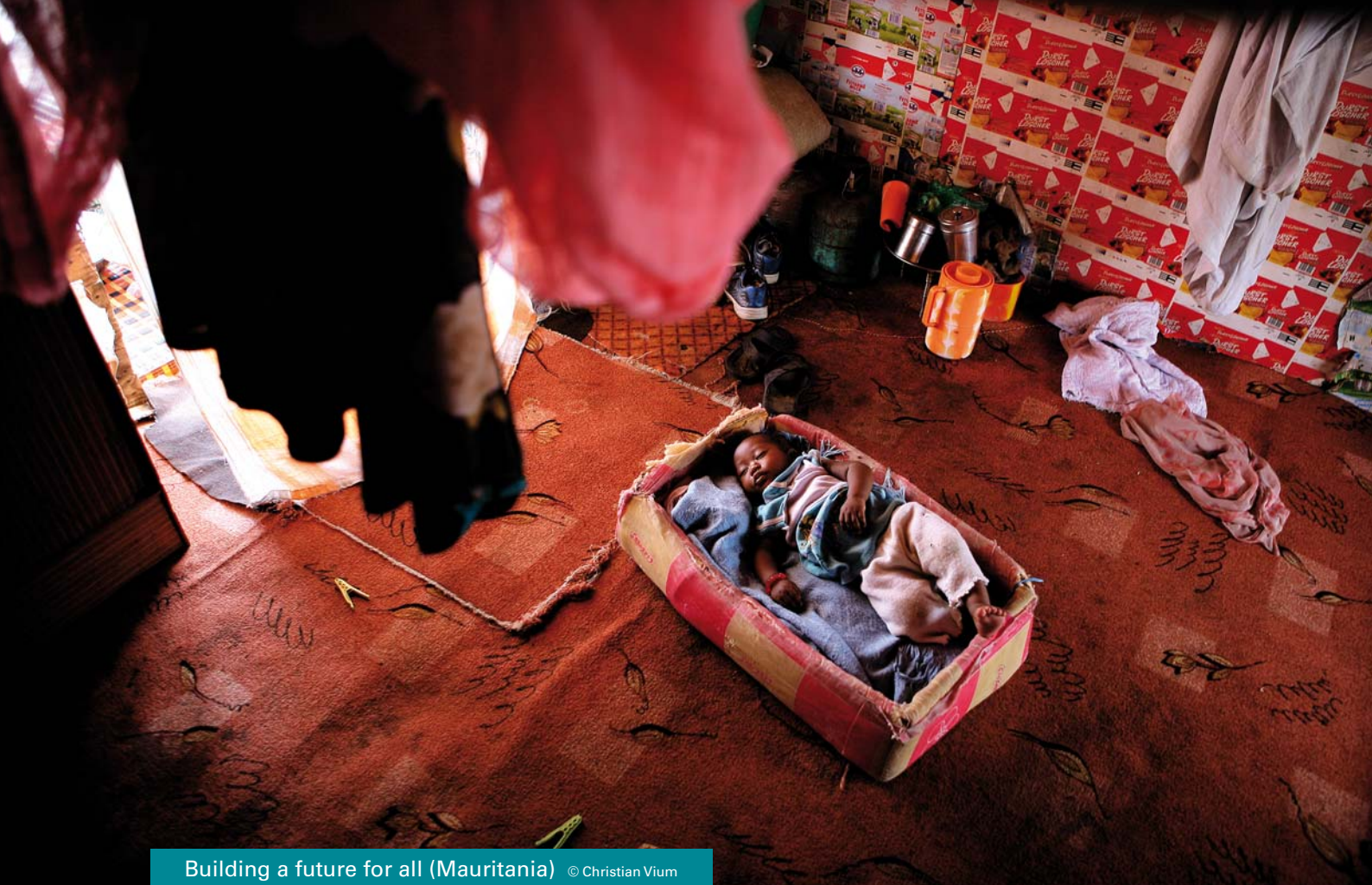
Building a future for all (Mauritania) © Christian Vium

procedures, knowledge and expertise and a strategic vision of urban development, local experiences and public policy formulation.

Several issues raised in this paper need to be explored in greater depth. The three most important points that merit further investigation are:

- looking at finance options in relation to the overall economy of the operation;
- alternatives to individual ownership as a means of securing land tenure;
- taking account of the environmental aspects of operations.

International donors, and the World Bank in particular (as the principal financier and instigator of these operations), have a role to play in facilitating public debate at the local level, providing financial support for innovation, and increasing investment in monitoring and evaluation.

Finally, we need to resolve the contradiction between promoting modern, competitive cities in a globalised world on one hand, and sustainable and inclusive cities that serve the needs of their inhabitants on the other.

In short, the objective is to build cities for all the citizens of Africa. ●

Main findings of the publication

"Building Cities for All

Lessons from Four African Experiences"

Nearly 500 million Africans currently live in slums. Urban operations are one of the main tools for improving living conditions in informal settlements, where land tenure, housing, development and services largely function outside any official system. While progress has undoubtedly been made over the last decade, these operations have had mixed social, economic, urban and environmental impacts.

Crosscutting analysis of four experiences in Mauritania, Morocco, Rwanda and Senegal is used to highlight some of the problems associated with the design, implementation and monitoring of

operations to improve or restructure informal settlements. Particular attention is paid to social assistance, which is an aspect of these initiatives that tends to be ignored.

This paper was written for the designers, decision-makers and agencies involved in these operations, to help them ask relevant questions, understand the issues that they raise and thus deliver better services. In short, its objective is to contribute to more inclusive urban policies and practices and greater progress in building cities for all types of resident in every kind of neighbourhood.

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