

**Celebrating  
70 years**  
1954–2024

## **DPU News April 2024 Issue 74**

**DPU 70 Special Edition**

**Seventy Years of the DPU:  
Collective visions for change**



**The Bartlett**  
Development Planning Unit



# Focus on

## Seventy years of the DPU: collective visions for change

By Caren Levy

The DPU celebrates its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. It also recognises 40 years of the DPU Gender Policy and Planning Programme. The journey from the AA Tropical Architecture Studies in 1954 to a UCL Department in the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment in 2024 has been a full and eventful journey. It has been marked by wide ranging changes in the fields of international development and higher education. Over the same period, the DPU has expanded and re-configured its teaching, research, capacity development and public engagement initiatives. The words of Prof Patrick Wakely, former Director of the DPU, on the occasion of DPU's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, continue to resonate today. The DPU "has always been ahead of, or just outside the prevailing wisdom. It has not always led the field but it has always questioned it. It has been progressive and it has been pragmatic."

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Building on this legacy, the DPU's seventh decade reflects this view in at least three main ways. It has seen the interrogation, deepening and renewal of the DPU vision for a socio-environmentally just world, in its teaching, research, capacity building and public engagement. It has embedded an innovative range of practice-based methodologies to both co-construct knowledge and capacities for transformative change, as well as to support co-learning among staff, students and DPU partners in the UK and in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Framing these endeavours, in the last decade the DPU has also continued its reflexive approach to addressing the intersections between the unequal international political economy in higher education and the colonial inheritance of urban planning and the international development field more generally. How has the DPU addressed these three areas in its seventh decade and what are the emerging challenges for its next decade?

### A commitment to social justice and equality

The global context for DPU's vision of a socio-economically just world has changed fundamentally in at least two ways. It has seen the emergence of equality on global agendas, after years of domination by neoliberal goals promoting efficiency and the accompanying ideologies related to the withdrawal of the state and the promotion of privatization. Equality was a visible commitment in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, consolidated in the last decade through international conferences to promote action on the SDGs at national as well as local levels. Similarly, the New Urban Agenda, ratified in Habitat III in Quito in 2016, also put urban equality on the global agenda, a commitment that has been reinforced through successive WUF's through the decade. This

is not to say that basic tensions between equality, economic growth and neo-liberal influences relating to the role of the state, the market and civil society still do not abound. However, equality is now part of global development discourse, and it is up to critical institutions like the DPU to champion it in transformative ways - and to highlight the ambiguities and conflicts in its interpretation.

Both the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda also reflect commitments related to sustainable development in the context of climate change. Further, the concentration of knowledge and international advocacy generated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in the IPCC, and the annual review of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at COP has been impressive. The last decade is marked by at least two outstanding moments for our work. In 2015, the Paris Agreement was an outcome to COP21, with the aim to "substantially reduce global greenhouse gas emissions to hold global temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." In 2022, the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report produced three volumes on climate change and urban development, an endeavour in which DPU staff and partners contributed. Despite the urgency for action created by these international events, again it is important to acknowledge the basic tensions that exist in these global commitments to sustainable development, equality and economic growth, as well as the continuing resistance to change demonstrated by many key actors. As noted previously, it is the role of institutions like the DPU to highlight the ambiguities and conflicts, and to demonstrate transformative ways to localise these agendas in urban areas.

The global picture over the last decade would be incomplete without acknowledging the enormous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for the two years from March 2020. As we have noted elsewhere, on 2 June 2022 the majority of the 6.3 million deaths from and 528 million confirmed cases of

## DPU's research has focused on exploring the distributive dimension of socio-environmental inequalities in human settlements related to transport and mobility, housing and land, water and sanitation, energy and the city economy.

COVID-19 were in urban areas. Like all higher education institutions, the DPU had to adapt its teaching, research and other activities in innovative ways to address the government enforced constraints on movement and behaviour, even though these differed widely from country to country.

In its seventh decade, the DPU responded to this complex global context in different ways. We maintained our teaching offer and student numbers until 2018, when an additional MSc programme on Urban Health was launched, somewhat prescient in the light of the Pandemic two years later. In response to growing urban inequalities and the challenges of climate change, the DPU launched almost 55 research projects, the greatest number and with the greatest diversity of topics in its history.<sup>1</sup> One of these projects, with the largest grant in the history of the Bartlett, was the Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality (KNOW) Programme. KNOW directly addressed the multi-dimensional character of urban equality, developing over the life of the project a placeholder definition. This definition was embedded in the GOLD VI Report, an undertaking in which KNOW partnered with UCLG to co-produce the report entitled, "Pathways to urban and territorial equality: Addressing inequalities through local transformation strategies", complemented by 23 Working Papers and 67 Case Studies, many of which were produced by DPU staff and KNOW partners. Launched in October 2022 at the Seventh UCLG World Summit and Congress in South Korea, the largest global gathering

of local and regional government representatives, this body of work represents a substantial contribution to global debates about urban equality.

This multi-dimensional definition of urban equality is summarised in Figure 1. As is clear from the four dimensions, the definition acknowledges the intersection between equality and sustainability. It provides a useful lens through which to view how DPU sought to implement its vision since 2014. While the dimensions interact with each other, each dimensions offers an entry point for teaching and research.

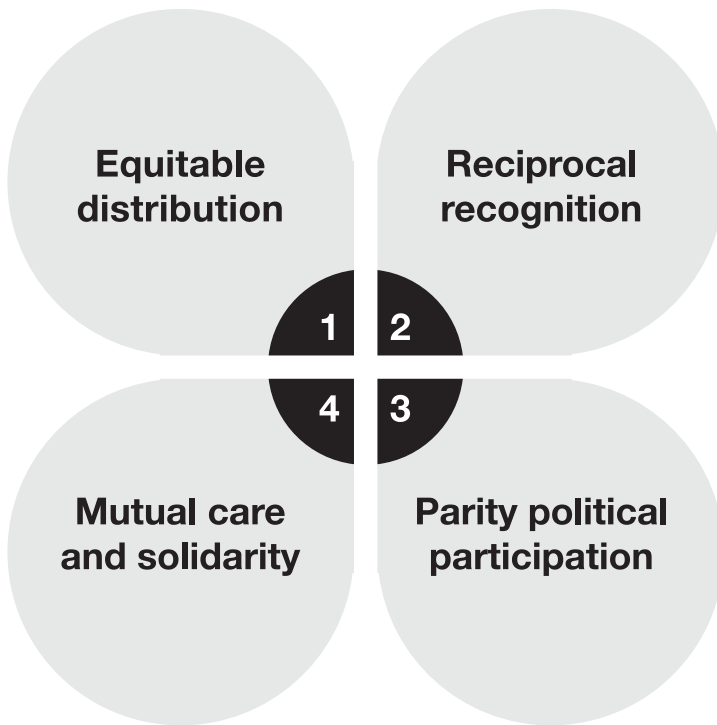
Building on the DPU's legacy of the recognition of informality as a legitimate form of human settlement and the challenge to the criminalisation of informality by traditional urban planning, over the last 10 years DPU's research has focused on exploring the distributive dimension of socio-environmental inequalities in human settlements related to transport and mobility, housing and land (Camillo Boano, Alex Frediani, Catalina Ortiz, Colin Marx, Paroj Banerjee), water and sanitation (Adriana Allen, Pascale Hofman, Jordana Ramalho), energy (Vanesa Cástan Broto, Rita Lambert) and the city economy (Le-Yin Zhang, Naji Makkarem, Alessio Kolioulis). Among these, DPU's work on transport has expanded enormously over the decade, starting in 2013 with the work on Metro cables in Medellin, led by Julio Dávila, and now developed into a fully-fledged programme, also involving Caren Levy and a new appointment Daniel Oviedo, and representing about 20% of all DPU

research. This work addresses equity and sustainability, and has been taken into teaching in a new MSc module. Another substantial grouping of DPU research addressed multi-hazard risk, environmental injustice and climate change (Cassidy Johnson, Emmanuel Osuteye, Adriana Allen, Rita Lambert). Research on conflict, displacement and refugees represents another key body of DPU's work (Camillo Boano, Andrea Rigon, Giovanna Astolfo, Haim Yacobi, Giorgio Talocci). The majority of these all these projects are linked to urban governance and parity political participation, or to participation in humanitarian aid. A cluster of projects have used political participation as their entry point, examining urban planning and community participation, as well as participation in an Election Observation Mission to observe the 2017 Presidential Election in Somaliland (Michael Walls, contracted by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

Yet other projects were also linked to reciprocal recognition. For example, based on their research, the OVERDUE project led by Adriana Allen, argued that "the experiences of everyday sanitation makers and users across urban Africa are deeply gendered and marked by intersectional asymmetries".<sup>2</sup> Gender was a transversal perspective in other projects touching on themes in the other dimensions of equality, for example, climate change and political settlement. As the UN Secretary-General recently declared, "achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls is the unfinished business of our time, and the greatest human rights challenge in our world." Further projects were framed specifically around other social identities, for example, linked to youth, refugees and health (Camillo Boano, Andrea Rigon, Haim Yacobi), while other were link to disability and mobility (Julian Walker, Daniel Oviedo), race in the curriculum (Kamna Patel), planning and diversity (Barbara Lipietz), religion (Raktim Ray, Azadeh Mashayekhi) and urban health (Donal Brown, Daniel Oveido, Haim Yacobi Liza Griffin). The COVID-19 pandemic not only highlighted the distributive inequalities related to healthcare, basic services,

Figure 1: Definition of Urban of Equality.

Source: Adapted from Yap, C., Cociña, C. & Levy, C. (2021) *The Urban Dimensions of Inequality and Equality*, GOLD VI Working Paper Series, #01, November.



- 1 **Equitable distribution** focuses on the material outcomes of equality that constitute a dignified quality of life, including equitable access to income, decent work, housing, health, basic and social services, and safety and security for all citizens in a sustainable manner.
- 2 **Reciprocal recognition** focuses on the ways in which citizen claims and urban and territorial governance recognise multiple intersecting social identities, across class, gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, migration status and sexuality, which have been unevenly recognised throughout history. This recognition intersects the way in which different actors co-produce knowledge, organise collectively, and plan, operate and manage urban and territorial activities.
- 3 **Parity political participation** focuses on the equitable conditions that allow democratic, inclusive, and active engagement of citizens and their representatives in processes of urban and territorial governance, and the deliberations, imagination and decisions about current and future urban and territorial trajectories.
- 4 **Mutual care and solidarity** focusses on how cities and territories guarantee the provision of care, prioritising mutual support and relational responsibilities between citizens, and between citizens and nature, and actively nurturing the civic life of cities and territories.

livelihood and accountable political decision making, but generated new meaning for the dimension of mutual care and solidarity. Within DPU research, the impact was increasingly visible with our partners undertaking a range of practical support and learning activities with their partner communities.<sup>3</sup> In some projects this resulted in a shift in the focus of research. For example, in the KNOW programme, the Lima City partner refocused its actions research on community kitchens in the face of the disruption of food markets and the supply of food in poor neighbourhoods due to COVID-19.

## Practice-based methodologies and co-learning spaces

Based on this wide-ranging portfolio of research and its links into teaching, the DPU has deepened and extended its practice-based and ‘action learning’ focus by creating collective synergies between planning methodologies and learning. It has done this through the joint exploration and implementation of knowledge co-production and storytelling methodologies with partners in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The commitment to knowledge co-production is not only based on the

right of those affected by inadequate living conditions to participate and respond to often problematic planning responses. It is also predicated on the belief that engaging all actors involved – from civil society, and to the extent possible, from the public sector and the private sector where appropriate – the process of knowledge production builds a common commitment to change, it creates the spaces to learn together, building the capacities of all actors to make such change, and in the process, generates strategies that contribute to pathways to urban equality.<sup>4</sup> In a different, but overlapping manner, “storytelling helps to foster empathy, to understand the meaning of complex experiences and to inspire action.”<sup>5</sup>



**The creation of formal and informal learning alliances has seen the creation of a range of interesting learning spaces, from the nurturing of urban learning hubs with city partners to the co-creation of transmedia story telling platforms to advocacy platforms for change.**

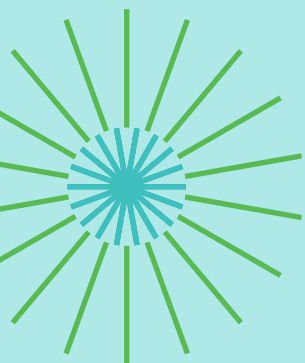
In the context of DPU's now seven MSc programmes, exploring knowledge co-production methodologies and collectively creating co-learning spaces has become a feature of the MSc Practice Modules. The addition in 2016 of Dissertation Fellowships that offer students the opportunity to write their dissertation on a research area relevant to the work of an NGO working in development, added to endeavours to create collective learning spaces on the MSc programmes. The creation of formal and informal learning alliances both within the teaching and the DPU's expanding research portfolio, has seen the creation of a range of interesting learning spaces, from the nurturing of urban learning hubs with city partners (for example KNOW) to the co-creation of transmedia story telling platforms (for example, CONVITE) to advocacy platforms for change (for example, OVERDUE and the 'We C.R.A.V.E. Just Sanitation for African Cities' campaign). An additional output from both teaching and research has been the co-production of film, celebrated this year in the DPU70 Film Festival.<sup>6</sup>

As in other higher education institutions, the Pandemic created the impetus for a range of innovations in the digital sphere of our teaching and learning. These new pedagogies continued to be embedded in our commitment to knowledge co-production, and looking back over the decade, it clear that DPU's teaching, research, knowledge and capacity sharing have been more explicitly been reframed within postcolonial and transdisciplinary approaches.<sup>7</sup> An essential part of this is the process of co-constructing strategic partnerships.

## **Co-constructing partnership with equivalence**

The intersection of the colonial inheritance of contemporary urban planning and of the unequal international political economy of higher education planning,<sup>8</sup> framed by the vestiges of coloniality in contemporary global and bi-lateral international relations, creates a challenging context for an institution like the DPU. These challenges ranging from the content and pedagogy of the higher education curriculum to the structures, methodologies and practices of research, TAS and public engagement. One entry point in the process of deconstructing this set of hierarchies and assumptions about the theories and methodologies of international development, are to co-construct 'partnerships of equivalence' in all aspects of international development educational practice.

First used in the context of the Bartlett International Strategy,<sup>9</sup> the practice of 'partnerships with equivalence' was deepened and extended in DPU's work over the last decade. In the context of teaching, for example, around 2014 the DPU staff engaged in a number of activities related to a critique of urban pedagogies, summarised in a multi-authored publication that identified our approach to learning through 5 principles. As stated, "(W)e believe that these principles emphasise the need for a decentered, open approach to global education for urban futures which emphasises the possibilities for progressive change and critical endeavours...When applied to how we 'learn cities', such interaction enables learning through a co-exploration of the city...". One of these principles is an approach to learning as collective, not only recognising that knowledge production in the city is a collective endeavour by actors in the state, civil society and the market, but also that the power relationships between actors in this endeavour is unequal, starting with "...the role of the expert and how discourses of expertise are constituted in particular contexts."



In DPU research over the last decade, this collective principle was further developed into the notion of 'partnerships with equivalence' in the context of the KNOW programme, where it was the central principle governing relationships inside and outside the programme (<https://www.urban-know.com/>). In KNOW, it was further operationalised by four ethical principles, consolidating and revising previous DPU practices. The establishment of mutual respect between the DPU, our partners and our partners' partners is foundational, understood as a value that is built on joint practice over time. This value is strengthened through transparency and accountability in all partner dealings related to expectations, budgets, donor policies and regulations (which may cause conflict), monitoring and reporting, and outputs. These values are exercised through the co-production of knowledge as a value in itself, and also as a means to produce, publish and use actionable knowledge through the engagement of all city actors in the process. As discussed in the previous section, these values are embedded and deepened through a commitment to co-learning, acknowledging the existence of multiple 'knowledges' and expertise that are essential in meeting the challenges in contemporary cities. The DPU's experience over the last 10 years abound in examples that sought to co-develop such partnerships, for example, the creation of and launch in 2016 of SLURC in partnership with Njala University, Sierra Leone. Similarly, the KNOW programme aimed to consolidate Urban Learning Hubs with partners within 12 cities, acknowledging the longer term and sometimes conflictive character of this co-learning process. This experience was valuable to researchers from academia, the community, government and business.

## Collective vision for 'our common future'

The 1987 Brundtland Report was a formal challenge at international level to recognise the interdependence of our planet and urgency of promoting more 'sustainable development'. Since then, although the debates about the meaning of the relationship between development and the environment has sophisticated and deepened, leading to the range of global initiatives outlined at the beginning of this Focus On, what has not changed is the absolute necessity to recognise the 'common' endeavour that this necessitates. Agenda 2030 is drawing to a close, and progressing global and local targets is as urgent as ever.

In its own way, the DPU has sought to contribute to this enormous challenge. Our vision for a socio-environmentally just world continues to be a critical part of this future, given widening urban inequalities, including the growing number of urban citizens living in informal settlements and the continued growth of multi-hazard risk and patterns of urban development that contribute to climate change. Alongside this, the tragedy of conflict, displacement of peoples and the creation of new generations of refugees continues. While political spaces by mobilised civil society open up, they are constrained in other contexts. These are great challenges indeed for the next decade and beyond, and the public role of the university<sup>10</sup> needs to be constantly reviewed and reframed to remain meaningful as a place of 'action learning' in partnerships of equivalence with academic, civil society and public sector organisations in urban areas in all over the world.

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## 01

A booklet entitled "Seventy years of Urban Development: A Short History of the DPU", will be produced shortly. This booklet summarises the key staffing, teaching, research, TAS and public engagement of the last 10 years of the DPU, and its relationship to global events.

## 02

See [www.overdue-justsanitation.net](http://www.overdue-justsanitation.net)

## 03

See for example [www.urban-know.com/covid19-stories](http://www.urban-know.com/covid19-stories) in the KNOW programme

## 04

See for example. based on the KNOW programme, Castán Broto, V., Ortiz, C., Lipietz, B., Osuteye, E., Johnson, J., Kombe, W., Mtwangi-limumba, T., Cazanave Macías, J., Desmaison, B., Hadney, H., Kisémbó, T., Koroma, B., Macarthy, J., Mbazi, J., Lwasa, S., Péres-Castro, B., Peña Díaz, J., Rodríguez Rivero, L. & Levy, C. (2022), "Co-production outcomes for urban equality: Learning from different trajectories of citizens' involvement in urban change", *Current Research in Environmental Sustainability*, Vol. 4, 100179 (doi.org/10.1016/j.crsust.2022.100179)

## 05

See [www.blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dpublog/tag/transmedia-storytelling/](http://www.blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dpublog/tag/transmedia-storytelling/), the CONVITE project.

## 06

See [www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/development/dpu70/dpu70-film-festival](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/development/dpu70/dpu70-film-festival)

## 07

See for example, three key publications by DPU staff in the process of reframing:  
-Allen, A., Boano, C., Apsan Frediani, A., Levy, C., Lipietz, B., Walker, J. (2015). *Decentering Urban Learning: DPU's Pedagogical Project*. *Urban Pamphleteer*, 5 35-38.  
-Allen, A., Lambert, R., & Yap, C. (2018). *Co-learning the city: Towards a pedagogy of poly-learning and planning praxis*. In G. Bhan, S. Srinivas, & V. Watson (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Planning in the Global South* (pp. 355–367). Abingdon: Routledge  
-Castán Broto, V., et al. (2022), *Ibid.*

## 08

See for example, Wesely, J. and Allen, A. (2019) "De-Colonising Planning Education? Exploring the Geographies of Urban Planning Education Networks" *Urban Planning* (ISSN: 2183–7635), Volume 4, Issue 4, Pages 139–151 DOI: 10.17645/up.v4i4.2200. This publication is based on research done through the KNOW programme.

## 09

Caren Levy coined this term in her capacity as Vice Dean International, the first such position in UCL (Bartlett International Strategy, 2012-2019). Initially phrased as 'partnerships of equivalence', the term was taken into UCL's Global Engagement Strategy by Dame Nicola Brewer, the first appointed UCL Vice Provost (International) in 2014. In the context of the KNOW research programme, Levy revised the phrase to 'partnership with equivalence'.

## 10

See the initiative by Barbara Lipietz in her role as Vice Dean International of UCL Bartlett, "Catalysing the public role of the university through international engagement" [www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/engage/international-engagement/bartlett-publics-pluralising](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/engage/international-engagement/bartlett-publics-pluralising)



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[www.unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement](http://www.unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement)

WHO, 2022 in Levy, Caren, Osuteye, Emmanuel and Anand, Geetika (2022) Urban Inequality and COVID-19: The Crisis at the Heart of the Pandemic (Introduction: Special Issue), Urbanisation, Vol. 2, Issue 1, pp. 7-16. doi.org/10.1177/24557471221117018

[www.goldvi.uclg.org](http://www.goldvi.uclg.org)

[www.un.org/en/global-issues/gender-equality](http://www.un.org/en/global-issues/gender-equality)

Desmaison, B., Jaime, K., Córdova, P., Alarcón, L., & Gallardo, L. (2022). Collective Infrastructures of Care: Ollas Comunes Defying Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Urbanisation, Vol.7, Issue 1, pp. 46- 65. <https://doi.org/10.1177/24557471221110951>

Allen, A. et al (2015). Decentering Urban Learning: DPU's Pedagogical Project. Urban Pamphleteer, 5 35-38.

Ibid, pg. 35

Ibid, pg 36

[www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf](http://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf)



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## DPU70 events

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16 Jan | 17.30—19.00 GMT

## Valedictory talk from UN-Habitat Executive Director Maimunah Mohd Sharif

XLG1, Chemistry LT, Christopher Ingold Building, 20 Gordon Street, London, WC1H 0AJ

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17 Jan | 16.30—18.30 GMT

## Housing as a Verb: Treasuring the Legacy of John Turner

Lecture Theatre 421, Roberts Building, Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7JE

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24 Jan | 17.30—19.30 GMT

## Film Festival 01: Housing

1. Towards a Lima with energy justice and dignified housing
2. Sensing the City: Young people and regeneration in London
3. (Un)Homely City: Navigating houselessness in a pandemic

Lecture Theatre B17, 1-19 Torrington Pl

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07 Feb | 16.30—18.30 GMT

## Film Festival 02: Art and Intersectional Identities as Resistance

1. Gaza artists and desirable cities
2. Creative practice and the Anthropocene
3. We want to change everything

Lecture Theatre LG04, 26 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0DS

21 Feb | 16.30—18.00 GMT

## Advancing gender justice in policy and planning: Current and future challenges

508, Roberts Building, London

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06 Mar | 18.30—20.30 GMT

## Film Festival 03: Vulnerability and Capacity to Act

1. After the rain
2. Kelyan Barat: Building capacity and participation for community-led solutions
3. Empowering vulnerable communities through participatory design
4. Indefensible space

Lecture Theatre 1.03, Malet Place Engineering Building, 2 Malet Pl, London, WC1E 7JE

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13 Mar | 17.30-19.00 GMT

## Post Growth: planning after capitalism

Lecture Theatre 508, Roberts Building, Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7JE

29 May | 16.30—18.00 BST

## **(Local) actions shaping urban environmental trajectories in the global South: key turning points in research and practice**

Showcasing the contribution of  
Professor David Satterthwaite

Lecture Theatre B05, Chadwick Building,  
Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT

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12 Jun | 16.30—18.00 BST

## **Forefronting Local and Regional Government Actions to Achieve SDG11: Upcoming challenges for the UN High Level Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development**

G08 Sir David Davies Lecture Theatre, Roberts  
Building, Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7JE

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02 Oct

## **The feminist-turn of environmental justice: Radical care through the everyday**

Venue and time: TBC

30 Oct

## **Dilemmas of development planning: Southern subjectivities in flux**

Venue and time: TBC

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14 Nov

## **China-Africa Knowledge Exchange: Development Trajectories and Shared Paradigms**

Venue and time: TBC

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11 Dec

## **Shaping pathways to urban equality: Planning methodologies for collective strategic action**

Venue and time: TBC

# Head on

The **Habitat International Coalition (HIC)** is a global, independent, and non-profit network working for the defence, promotion and realisation of human rights related to habitat and a safe place for all to live in peace and with dignity across urban and rural areas. Adriana started her mandate as HIC's elected President in December 2019, which concluded the end of 2023. During this four-year period she led an institutional review aimed at strengthening the coalition's internal life and governance, convened a series of collective reflections on the critical pedagogies practiced on the ground by the social organisations affiliated to HIC, expanding their application through a series of cross-regional co-learning spaces, among other mechanisms devoted to pluralise and root the coalition's advocacy work across international fora. Externally, she worked tirelessly with the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Adequate Housing and others, and many HIC allies such as the Global Platform for the Right to the City, Huairou Commission, UCLG, and SDI, to push for the democratisation of the UN multilateral system, the recognition of climate justice as a collective human right, the convergence of social and feminist movements, while fighting against the hyper-financialisation of housing and land and the ongoing urbicide in Palestine and other parts of the world. Learn more about Adriana's work as HIC President over the last four years [here](#).



Adriana Allen completes her four-year mandate as President of the Habitat International Coalition. Photo credit: Alexander Macfarlane

**Top-down engineered solutions often fail to reach those most in need, and rarely include community perspectives and youth, who make up 70 percent of the population in Kenya and Tanzania yet remain excluded from urban planning and decision-making.**

To all: a massive thanks from Adriana and best wishes to the new elected President and Vice President of HIC, Grace Menzi Chikumo (from Zambia) and Guillermo Marzioni (from Argentina)! Adriana will continue working closely with HIC in representation of the DPU. In February 2024, Jordana Ramalho and Pascale Hofmann were awarded £2.25 million under UKRI's "Equitable nature-based climate resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa" funding call. Their project, entitled "**Listen, Learn & Leap: Co-producing Equitable and Sustainable Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Climate Resilience in East African Cities**" is a three-year action research collaboration between the DPU, the Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction, Kounkuey Design Initiative in Kenya, Ardhi University

and the Centre for Community Initiatives in Tanzania, and ICLEI Africa. The project will explore the socio-political factors that support the uptake, sustainability and institutionalisation of NbS in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. Interest in, and awareness of, the potential for NbS to support climate adaptation and mitigate environmental risks while also realising various social benefits has been growing. However, there is a lack of evidence and understanding of local experiences of NbS, particularly in low-income informal settlements. Furthermore, a preference for large-scale grey infrastructure projects and related hesitance in policy and planning circles to recognise and invest in localised NbS continues to hinder municipal resilience-building efforts. Top-down engineered solutions often fail to reach those most in need, and rarely include community perspectives and youth, who make up 70 percent of the population in Kenya and Tanzania yet remain excluded from urban planning and decision-making. This project will respond to these challenges by centring the perspectives of youth, especially adolescent women and girls, in the design and management of localised NbS, to ensure that urban resilience-building policies and interventions are both equitable and sustainable in the long term.

In November 2023, Liza Griffin co-organised a Bartlett **“Thinking Impact”** workshop on arts-based engagement along with Faculty Impact Lead Gemma Moore. The conversation focused on the nature of impact and how Bartlett staff and students understand and interact with it. Liza and Gemma were joined by DPU’s Raktim Ray, Bartlett’s Leah Lovett, and Lizzy Baddeley (Community Engagement Manager from UCL East). Participants shared examples of using creative methods (e.g. storytelling, performance, visual art, games) in research and teaching and discussed how these can be used to inform, inspire and involve a range of groups (e.g. communities, policymakers, practitioners). They examined the factors that made a difference to art-based engagements’ success and shared advice and ideas on how to create meaningful impacts through creative approaches.

In October 2023, Paroj Banerjee, contributed to a [joint submission to UN Special Rapporteurs on the right to adequate housing, and extreme poverty and human rights](#). The purpose of the call was to inform a report on efforts made to decriminalize offences associated with homelessness and poverty such as street vending, begging, staying, sleeping, eating or undertaking any other life sustaining activities in public spaces. A wide range of submissions from over 25 countries, submitted by 43 NGOs, 10 human rights institutions and global universities, sought to provide clearer insight into the laws and regulations that criminalize poverty and homelessness.

Haim Yacobi received The Bartlett Public Policy Support Fund with his partners Safiya El Ghmari (College of Engineering and Architecture, International University of Rabat) and Lahbib El Moumni (Mémoire des architectes modernes marocains - MAMMA). The project **“Modernist Architecture in Marrakech: Transforming Modernist Heritage Public Policy”** aims to democratize access to the city’s modernist cultural wealth, and to transform public policy towards its modernist architectural heritage.

This involves creating a repository accessible to all and ensuring that modernist architectural heritage is preserved to become a shared experience for a diverse audience. Importantly, this is not merely an archival effort but a policy-oriented project. It seeks to demonstrate the benefits of embracing digital tools in transforming public policy towards the built environment in Marrakech, serving as a model for future initiatives within Morocco and beyond.

Giovanna Astolfo, Camillo Boano, Estella Carpi and Harriet Allsop have been awarded a Arts Humanities Research Council (AHRC) grant for their project on **“Reframing Arrival infrastructures”**. Their research aims to reframe the paradigm of forced migrants’ arrival as a policy framework and a discursive realm. Building on the idea of “unfolding crisis”, the project will develop around different research strands. They will investigate how the actions and agency of refugees are shaped by and shape the infrastructure of arrival in different locations. They will examine specific housing choices and dwelling strategies that occur under conditions of constraint within the humanitarian systems of care. In particular, they will try to understand how different spaces of refusal or acceptance, care and repair, can be opened up to go beyond binary approaches of power and resistance, or humanitarian myths of self-reliance and resilience. In Italy, they will engage with “interstitial spaces of inhabitation: imperfect trajectories in the urban space”. In the UK, they will examine “austerity, arrival and dwelling strategies.” In Türkiye, they will assess “trajectories of displacement and housing choices of refugees in response to governmental policies”. In all these locations, they will take a more-than-relational approach to recognise the role that forced migrants play as housing seekers, providers and as hosts of other migrants broadening the categorical distinctions of hosts and refugees.

Paroj Banerjee has secured a UCL-wide grant under the UKRI Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Funding to conduct research in India, Kenya, and Bangladesh. Her project **“Forging**

**Pathways for Transformation through Transnational Knowledge Exchange”** aims to enhance developmental outcomes for street-connected youth in a post-COVID-19 world. Collaborating with the Consortium for Street Children (CSC), this project addresses the exacerbated vulnerabilities faced by street-based populations during the pandemic, particularly regarding housing and social security policies. The project focuses on three key objectives: forging pathways for transforming lives of street-connected youth (1); creating impact through transnational partnerships (2); knowledge exchange for coproducing policy actions for advocacy (3). The project will involve a series of transnational multistakeholder deliberations, the production of policy recommendations and the submission of policy documentation to high-level forums. The project is conducted in partnership with CSC and its network partners, the Child In Need Institute (CINI) in India, Glad’s House in Kenya and Grambangla Unnayan Committee (GUC) in Bangladesh.



Photo Courtesy – Glad’s House, Kenya.

# Research

The action research project

## **OVERDUE: Tackling the sanitation taboo across urban Africa**

led by Adriana Allen ended in September 2023. Yet, the team remains active and has produced a number of [tools to advance sanitation justice from a feminist perspective](#). One of the aims of the project was to interrogate the persistence of colonial sanitation legacies across urban Africa. While the everyday wording of sanitation was not initially considered in the project, it became a necessity to challenge the hegemonic language used to fix the sanitation crisis in the selected cities. Furthermore, throughout the project, language emerged as a crucial issue, revealing first and foremost the taboos and stereotypes associated with sanitation and sanitation work. There is an abundance of euphemistic expressions, local slang and body language to refer to latrines or human waste, through which power over bodies and practices is exercised. Interrogating the “way to say it” led the team to the production of two glossaries, which unlike other glossaries on sanitation did not aim to explain technical terms, but rather to operationalise a feminist decolonial approach. The first “Political Activist Glossary” was collectively produced by 55 African activists and practitioners who participated in a co-learning space on just sanitation held in July 2023. Released in Swahili, Wolof, Krio, French, Portuguese and English, this glossary includes key terms broadly related to sanitation and the contributors’ reflections on how each term is used, by whom, where and with which connotation. The second glossary emerged in Saint Louis (Senegal), led by the Observatoire Genre et Développement (OGDS) under the direction of Ndeye Penda Diouf, in collaboration with Professor Sambou and his students at the Université Gaston Berger Saint Louis and with the participation of Nelly Leblond and Claudy Vohue. This Wolof glossary deciphers key terms and expressions linking sanitation with gender (in)equality and social

norms. Taking into account linguistic practices, issues of polysemy, gestures and local intonation, it offers a critical tool to promote more inclusive and decolonising modes of communication.

On 12 February 2024, Pascale Hofmann chaired the **29<sup>th</sup> meeting of SanCoP (Sanitation Community of Practice)**. This hybrid workshop hosted at the DPU also adopted a feminist perspective on sanitation justice. DPU colleagues from the OVERDUE team, Nadine Coetzee, Colin Marx and Julian Walker, provided key inputs throughout the day, which also included contributions from African project partners. Francis Refell (from CODOHSAPA in Freetown, Sierra Leone) spoke about how Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) formed the basis for rehabilitating public and community toilet facilities. Helder Domingos (from the NGO Face in Beira, Mozambique) shared insights into the unsustainability of large infrastructure investments and the double burden on residents in off-grid areas, which disproportionately affects low-income women. Tim Ndezi (from the NGO CCI in Tanzania) explained how the OVERDUE project helped to establish a City Sanitation Forum in Mwanza and a revolving fund that allows lower-income households to improve their sanitation facilities,

targeting particularly female-headed households. These discussions emphasised that a gender perspective in the sanitation sector is important. This role tends to be relegated to so-called gender experts while others in the sector often feel ill-equipped to talk about and engage with gender, which means that gender-sensitive approaches are yet to be mainstreamed in sanitation. All too often sanitation initiatives focus on women and girls rather than on gendered relations, while the increasing work on informal sanitation workers almost completely lacks a gender lens and thus invisibilises unpaid sanitation work that is largely carried out by women. The fact that sanitation by and large continues to be framed as an engineering problem might explain why gender is largely absent in sanitation discussions at the city scale. Breaking the taboo on gendered sanitation experiences and considering sanitation as a service – not just a piece of infrastructure – could be a step in the right direction.

**One of the aims of the project was to interrogate the persistence of colonial sanitation legacies across urban Africa. While the everyday wording of sanitation was not initially considered in the project, it became a necessity to challenge the hegemonic language used to fix the sanitation crisis in the selected cities.**



The OWS team in Bogotá at the project public launch event in October 2023.

Daniel Oviedo leads the **On the Way to School (OWS)** project, which aims to promote equitable collaboration and knowledge sharing between Mozambique and Colombia. Since starting in July 2023 the project has made significant progress. In September 2023, the DPU hosted a four-day inception meeting in London, the first of a series of collaborative work sessions. Co-investigators and team members from Colombia, Mozambique, the United States, and the UK met to co-produce a comprehensive framework and workplan for the project. The event provided a valuable space for collective reflection on ethical considerations, strategic planning for work packages and effective inter-institutional coordination. Also in September, the OWS Open Public Event hosted active mobility, health, and youth discussions. The event was split into two parts: presentations on active travel mobility interventions and a panel discussion on implementing a pilot project in Maputo, Mozambique.

In October 2023, the OWS team launched the project at Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia, and Daniel Oviedo presented the OWS project at the Kigali Walk21 Conference (more on this conference in the Networks & Meeting section of this issue).

The OWS team in Bogotá at the project public launch event in October 2023.

In November 2023, Daniel Oviedo and Natalia Villamizar Duarte presented the OWS project at the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD). Natalia Villamizar Duarte and Maria Jose Arbelaez joined the 2023 GACD Implementation Science Research cohort. Early-career researchers have also been deeply involved in the project. OWS research assistants and former DPU MSc students Johanna Florez and Maria Laura Torres will soon present the research conducted during their fellowship in 2023. The fellowship, directed by Daniel Oviedo and Julio D. Dávila, is expected to continue in 2024, involving new DPU students in the OWS project.

**On the Way to School (OWS) project aims to promote equitable collaboration and knowledge sharing between Mozambique and Colombia.**

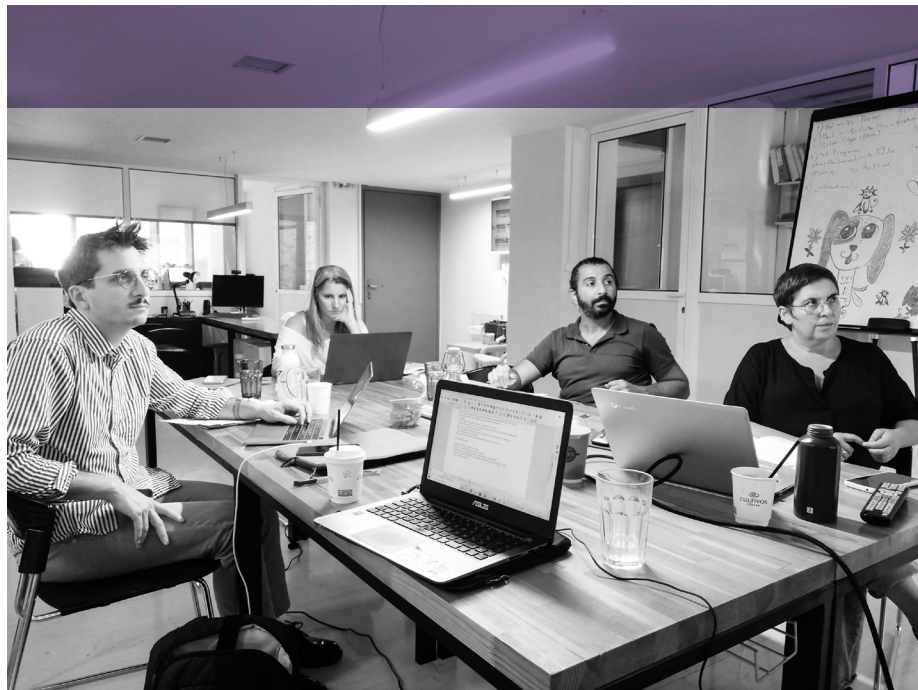


OWS team at the inception meeting hosted at the DPU in London in September 2023.



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference on Participatory Design, organised by COMMONSPACE in Athens on 20-22 October 2023, focused on addressing urban and environmental inequalities through participatory planning. The **Fairville Project** was introduced at the conference, engaging with the western areas of Athens and the Attika Region. Alessio Kolioulis contributed to the conference as both a speaker and a participant. In his presentation during the session on “Mapping Spatial and Social Inequalities of our Cities,” Alessio shared insights from his research on space-based solutions and hubs for night workers in London. On 23 October 2023, the Fairville team convened at the COMMONSPACE office in Athens to reflect on the project's progress and to outline future directions. The meeting kicked off with a focus on the Fairville Lab in Egypt, where Ahmed Zaazaa outlined the pressing challenges of solid waste management in the Dashour region. Attention then shifted to the West Attica Fairville Lab. A key outcome of the meeting was the decision to issue an open call for researchers interested in working on West Attica's challenges. Further plans were set in motion to develop a participatory Atlas for Athens' “backyards” aiming to systematically map, and address socio-spatial inequalities present in the region.

Barbara Lipietz and Alessio Kolioulis later travelled to Brussels to Fairville's **Open Citizen Meeting (OCM)**. The

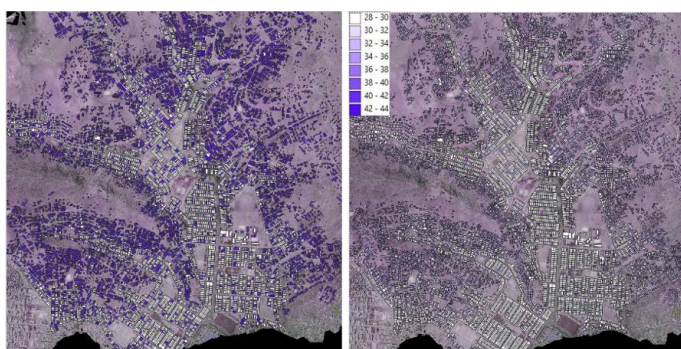


The Fairville Project Team meeting at the COMMONSPACE office in Athens.

Fairville team, in collaboration with EGEB, ULB, and CNRS, hosted the OCM at the Faculty of Architecture La Cambre Horta of ULB in Brussels on 7-8 November 2023. This event gathered citizens, researchers, professionals, associations, activists, and local authorities. Addressing the significant inequalities and democratic deficits impacting urban residents across eight cities in Europe, Senegal, and Egypt, the meeting facilitated a crucial dialogue between participants, including those directly affected or concerned by these issues. The discussions revolved around key questions aimed at fostering

community-led co-production. Insights were shared by participants from various countries on the progression of action research within Fairville labs, alongside suggestions for evaluating Fairville initiatives and broader public policies. The first day's theme “Exploring Inequalities Together” focused on understanding how people and locations are affected by inequalities. On the second day, the focus shifted to identifying expectations for co-production through several focus groups. The OCM in Brussels marked a productive gathering, paving the way for a next meeting in Marseille in Summer 2024.

Rita Lambert completed her research as part of an interdisciplinary team based in Lima, Ahmedabad and London on the **GEMDev (Grounded Energy Modelling for Equitable Urban Development in the Global South)** project. The 3-year project ended in December 2023. It was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). GEMDev focused on the nexus between energy and housing and aimed to contribute to inclusive decision-making by developing tools for better energy planning, particularly for off-grid and partially off-grid communities with limited or precarious access. The research aimed to understand how, in the face of climate change, planning



MAXIMUM INDOOR TEMPERATURE IN °C: CURRENT (LEFT), RETROFIT (RIGHT)

Current (2022) vs Roof Retrofit scenario images of modelled thermal dis-comfort in Lima's peripheral settlements. Source: Argyris Oraipoulos.

and policies on low-income housing in the Global South can lead to lock-in scenarios that perpetuate injustices. There is a prevailing assumption that a household can satisfy its energy needs and move out of energy poverty. This overlooks several factors at the nexus of housing and energy that can trap inhabitants in energy vulnerability and have health and wellbeing implications. The research developed novel methodologies and counteracted the institutional silos from which energy and urban planning are conventionally approached. It demonstrated what kind of knowledge and actions are needed to strengthen collective action, to prevent energy risks, to improve thermal comfort, to reduce vulnerability to energy poverty by retrofitting, and to generally avoid pathways that lead to carbon intensive futures. The fantastic array of outputs from journal articles, conference papers, films, policy briefs, 3D energy models and recordings of impactful events for policy change, can be accessed [here](#).

In collaboration with the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) and Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI) the DPU was awarded the British Council Exploratory Grant to **evaluate the curricula of various disciplines**

**across Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in India.** Daniel Oviedo is the project's principal investigator, and it is co-led by Amir Bazaz (IIHS). The project has identified “sustainability and linked innovation” as a core strategic pillar. This project provides an opportunity to integrate this core learning pillar within engineering education institutions in India. By establishing a partnership with MBRDI, the project will leverage its ecosystem to strengthen teaching capacities and institutionalise an entrepreneurial mindset that focuses on problem-solving. It aims to transform the current engineering curricula in India, which are rigidly tied to disciplinary goals, by promoting interdisciplinary and sustainability-integrated curricula. The project will collaborate with select engineering colleges, assess their needs, and integrate sustainability through sustainable cities, transport, and urban mobility agendas, while localising sustainable development through an educational framework. The curriculum will be structured as modular blocks, incorporating the local sustainability agenda into specific engineering disciplines, enabling students to appreciate context-specific mobility and other urban issues. It aims to develop a propositional and solution-centric mindset and capacity among learners.

Julian Walker and Andrea Rigon are co-leading a new research project called **“YUP” (Co-producing Youth Inclusive Digital Urban Governance)** funded by Fondation Botnar. The project is implemented through a partnership with three organisations, all led by DPU alumni: Rifai Ahmed (KotaKita, Indonesia), Joana Dabaj and Riccardo Conti

**The project will collaborate with select engineering colleges, assess their needs, and integrate sustainability through sustainable cities, transport, and urban mobility agendas, while localising sustainable development through an educational framework.**

Winning posters of YUP Project Launch.  
Left: Indonesia winner, by Rania Sukmana, 22 y.o. Right: Lebanon winner, by Malak Fallaha, 15 y.o.





“Public Building Blocks” Art Installation in Karantina, Beirut.

(CatalyticAction, Lebanon), Anna Kydd (SHM Foundation). Daniel Oviedo is a Co-Investigator on this project. The research aims to understand young people’s role in urban planning and governance in four cities in Indonesia (Surakarta and Denpasar) and Lebanon (Bar Elias and El Mina), and to explore how young people could collaborate with their local governments to address urban issues that are important for them, using digital platforms. The project will use citizen science to co-produce these digital platforms and document the process. The project will also provide opportunity for research-led teaching as students from the MSc Social Development Practice will do their Overseas Practice Engagement in Surakarta, documenting case studies of young people collective action to contribute to the project’s database. The project was launched with a poster competition calling young people to express what they thought is the role of young people

in the city. The winning posters (pictured below) will be used to develop the visuals for the project.

The project called “**Participatory analysis of co-designed public spaces in Beirut post-blast reconstruction**” was completed in 2023. It delivered a database of 53 public space reconstruction projects, as well as a report with a synthesis of the co-learning process. It was accompanied by a documentary showcasing the public art interventions conducted in Karantina, a diverse and marginalised neighbourhood of Beirut which was strongly affected by the port blast in 2020. The art installation consisted in displaying differently coloured cubes with distinct weights forming a heart shape in an empty space that is used as playground by children. The documentary observed how children and other residents interacted with and appropriated the cubes until they completely disappeared

after some days. The project was led by Andrea Rigon in partnership with DPU alumni Joana Dabaj and Riccardo Conti from CatalyticAction. Programme funding for the **Transitions to Sustainable Mobility in Sub-Saharan Africa (T-SUM)** project commenced in March 2019 and ended in September 2023. Caren Levy and Daniel Oviedo were involved as co-investigators, while Julio D. Dávila sat on the T-SUM international advisory board. It aimed to identify the conditions under which paths to sustainable and inclusive transport and land-use development can be accelerated in fast-growing cities across Sub-Saharan Africa. During the four-year programme, the team published two city profiles (Maputo-Mozambique and Freetown-Sierra Leone), multiple peer-reviewed articles, project reports, and policy briefs. In Maputo, T-SUM partners, the Eduardo Mondlane University Policy Analysis Centre and the Mozambique Mobility and Transport



Participatory workshop with stakeholders about visioning walkability in the Bahamas at IDB house in Nassau, Bahamas in November 2023

## Walking the Bahamas project's overarching objective is understanding how walking conditions are interconnected with social inclusion, poverty, and climate change.

Observatory (OMT) facilitated Agence Française de Développement (AfD) and the Agência Metropolitana de Transporte De Maputo (AMT) in establishing a sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP). In Freetown, T-SUM participatory policy workshops and steering committee meetings led to a direct collaboration between the Sierra Leone Ministry of Transport and Aviation and the Freetown City Council to plan a mass transit cable car network as well as other transport infrastructure to address traffic congestion and enhance the accessibility and safety of vulnerable transport users. Members of the steering committee brought together by T-SUM research activities in Freetown are now also members of the World Bank-funded Integrated Resilience Urban Mobility Project (IRUMP) steering committee. New international research projects have been established based on the working relationships and cross-sectoral partnerships created through T-SUM. This includes the Walking

Cities Lab, the VREF Walkability project, the OWS project, and the "Transitions" project. T-SUM concepts were incorporated into a Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) entitled "Achieving Transitions to Zero Carbon Emissions and Sustainable Urban Mobility". T-SUM findings have also been incorporated into the syllabus of UCL's MSc Transport and Mobility Systems, Njala University's undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and a transport and logistics module at Joaquim Chissano University.

The UKRI-ESRC funded project **Gridding Equitable Urban Futures in Areas of Transition (GREAT)** has concluded with a remarkable local impact in Cali, Colombia. Catalina Ortiz contributed to this project as co-investigator and Julio D. Dávila as part of the advisory board. Through sustained engagement with communities and local authorities, the GREAT project has brought about positive societal, legislative, and economic impacts to the residents of Comuna 18, an informal settlement in Cali, the third-largest city in Colombia. With support from the ESRC, the project team collected evidence between 2020 and 2023, in an area identified by the local authorities as the first pilot of their policy on "Integrated Neighbourhood Upgrading". The equitable partnership of academia, authorities and communities, made possible by the GREAT project, resulted in positive changes to the residents' quality of life through the granting of legal titles to 1,174 households and further plans for four new public spaces agreed between the community and municipal

authorities. This instrumental impact, the first of its kind in the city, was reported as "a historical landmark for Cali's future" by the Mayoral Office (El País, 18 November 2023). Finally, the team released ten policy briefs aimed at enhancing the quality of life in popular neighbourhoods by influencing urban governance and the implementation of the SDGs.

The DPU is working with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) on the **Walking the Bahamas** project to study walking behaviours and conditions in Nassau, The Bahamas. Daniel Oviedo is the lead investigator and is supported by Orlando Sabogal. The project's overarching objective is understanding how walking conditions are interconnected with social inclusion, poverty, and climate change. By doing so, the project hopes to inform future development and infrastructure investment in the city. The team aims to provide valuable insights that can guide urban planning and policy-making processes by understanding the current walking conditions and behaviours in Nassau. The project team visited Nassau from 25-30 November 2023 to conduct research on walking behaviours and conditions in Nassau. The team used technology to map the walking environment, including a drone for capturing aerial images, 360-degree cameras and photographs to map the studied walking environments. This data will play a crucial role in their ongoing research. During the visit the team also arranged three workshops, one with the University of The Bahamas community, another with the Nassau disabled community, and the last one with stakeholders

from the government and civil society. These workshops provided insightful information and helped establish valuable connections for the project. From October 2023 to October 2024 Le-Yin Zhang is working as a Co-Investigator on a project facilitated by a UCL-Peking University Strategic Partner Grant. Titled “**Towards a low-carbon city: a collaborative study on UK-China environmental governance on climate change**” and aimed to develop a collaborative environmental governance study on climate change, the project investigates both Chinese and British policies and interventions that promote low-carbon cities.

Liza Griffin, along with a team from the Bartlett including Maurizio Marinelli, Selcuk Cidik, Cristobal Diaz Martinez and Martina Rotolo, were awarded a small grant from the **Cities Partnerships Programme Stockholm** to work with Stefan Peterson, Jhon Alvarez and Johan Nordensvard to explore the theme “food security initiatives in post-COVID-19 European cities”. They plan to examine how community-based activities and organisations have provided food support in London and Stockholm since the COVID-19 pandemic using the concepts of urban food systems and social sustainability.

Liza Griffin is part of an Open University Open Societal Challenge research network called “**Governing and designing urban artificial intelligence and robotics to attain more just and sustainable urban mobilities**” initiated by Matt Cook. The inter-disciplinary research network (with members from Sheffield, Open and UCL) explores the development of institutional capacities that enable urban populations to live well with urban artificial intelligence and robotics, as well as to contemplate on the more sustainable urban mobility futures they may want to attain (and avoid) with these technologies.

The project **Archivo Vivo (Living archive): weaving gender (hi) stories of urban reclamation in Moravia, Colombia** led by Catalina Ortiz, launched its digital repository and website. The Archivo Vivo Moravia represents a community tool for collective action and a political tool for territorial resistance and reclamation. The digital platform aims to support the work of organisations in Moravia advocating for the defence of the territory, as well as researchers, students and individuals interested in self-built neighbourhoods, living heritage and living archives. Part of the project was funded by the second phase of the Imagining Futures Through Un/Archived Pasts Award, led by the University of Exeter and sponsored by the AHRC and the Global Challenges Research Fund.

Catalina Ortiz’s paper “Storytelling Otherwise: Decolonising Storytelling in Planning” was nominated by the Editorial Board of Planning Theory for the **AESOP Best Published Paper Award 2024**.

Liza Griffin, along with Bartlett’s Gemma Moore, health and place consultant Catherine Max and North London Mental Health Partnership’s recovery lead Cedric Hall, have received a Grand Challenges Mental Health and Wellbeing Network and Community Building Grant for their project “**Green Head Space - Rooting Mental Health Institutions in Place**” to explore relationships between mental health and place with a focus on greenspace. The team plans to investigate how mental health facilities can draw upon their wider locale to support better health outcomes for service users and facilitate knowledge exchange between mental health trusts in the UK.

**The Archivo Vivo Moravia represents a community tool for collective action and a political tool for territorial resistance and reclamation.**

# Connections

Jessica Álvarez ( ● **MSc BUDD** 2019-20) is currently working as a senior consultant at IDOM Engineering, Architecture, and Consulting, specifically involved in the development of a Master Plan in South Korea as part of the “Corporate City” government-led programme. Her responsibilities encompass the execution of spatial and land use analyses, as well as the realisation of wellness concepts.

CatalyticAction co-founder Joana Dabaj ( ● **MSc BUDD** 2013-14) was shortlisted for the W Awards 2024 Moirá Gemmill Prize for Emerging Architecture. This prize recognizes bright future designers under the age of 45 who are leading their own practices. The award recognized Joana’s impactful work responding to the Beirut port blast in 2020.

Alice Murfitt ( ● **MSc ESD** 2022-23) has started joined the ClimateShot Investor Coalition (CLIC) at the Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) as a Programme Associate. The role will support CPI’s work in sustainable agriculture and food systems globally. The primary goal of CLIC is to accelerate and scale finance towards low-carbon, climate-resilient, and nature-positive agrifood systems by supporting research, impact and investment in the sector.



Narendra in conversation with Paroj.

Julian Reingold ( ● **MSc ESD** 2019-20) worked with Climate Action Network Latin America during COP28 as they awarded Colombia with “The Ray of the Year” for its performance in favour of climate justice. He also published a story in BBC Future Planet on how digital monitoring tools are helping rangers protect wildlife in South America.

The DPU hosted Narendra Singru ( ● **MSc DAP** 2000-01) in conversation with Paroj Banerjee at a lively event attended by staff and students. Narendra has worked at the Asian Development Bank for well over a decade and has been head of mission in Afghanistan since 2019. In a fascinating and broad-ranging discussion, he shared some of his exciting experience of working at the highest levels in one of the world’s most important regional development

banks, including the challenges faced by international donors such as the ADB in the aftermath of the rise to power of the Taliban.

The latest LIMAPOLIS Workshop, held every year in Lima, Perú, was co-curated by Alejandro Torero ( ● **MSc BUDD** 2019-20), with the title “LIMAPOLIS 2124: Futures of the Popular City”. The workshop was organised by the School of Architecture at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Perú.

# Staff news

**Barbara Lipietz** has been promoted to Professor of Urban Development Planning.

**Andrea Rigon** has been promoted to Professor of Participatory Development Planning.

**Giovanna Astolfo** has been promoted to Associate Professor.

**Emmanuel Osuteye** has been promoted to Associate Professor.

**Alexandra Panman** has been promoted to Associate Professor.

**Jordana Ramalho** has been promoted to Associate Professor.

**Chris Seal** has joined the DPU as a Unit Administrator.

**Tom Greenwood** has joined the DPU as a postdoctoral research fellow for the YUP project. Tom holds a PhD from Goldsmiths, University of London. Tom’s PhD thesis focused on citizen media practices during the Covid-19 pandemic in northeast Medellín, Colombia.

# PhD news

In September 2023, **Nour Gazarin** successfully defended her thesis, “Exploring The Relationship Between Transport Accessibility and Women’s Empowerment in Informal Settlements in Cairo”, arguing that relationships between transport and women’s empowerment can both influence and be influenced by the gendered construction and organisation of individuals, households, urban space and wider society.

In September 2023, **Jing Zhang** successfully defended her thesis, “Investigating the Politics of Policy Learning: The Industrial Park Programme in Ethiopia and its Engagement with China”, arguing that coalitions among domestic elites that ensure legitimacy and align interests also reveal political opportunities and constraints on which the learning of industrial policy may facilitate processes of institutional building.

In January 2024, **Rawya Khodor** successfully defended her thesis, “Health system resilience through coordination and learning: The NGO ecosystem of primary healthcare in Lebanon”. It centres on how coordination and learning in an NGO ecosystem contribute to health system resilience by examining these relationships in the context of Lebanon’s primary health system, predominantly managed by NGOs through contracts and heavily funded by donors.

Congratulations to **Rachel Valbrun** (DPU PhD alumna) the winner of the Early Career Researcher Award (part of the RTPI Awards for Research Excellence 2023) for her doctoral thesis, “Land, disasters, and built-environment professionals: Examining urban design for post-disaster reconstruction”. Her thesis examined how urban designs intended to rebuild physical space consider and potentially replicate vulnerability to disasters in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, following the earthquake

in 2010. The findings demonstrated how land tenure influences vulnerability and the necessity for urban designers and planners to incorporate a comprehensive understanding of local methods to secure land in reconstruction plans to support recovery.

On 4 January 2024, **Sara Granados Ortiz** attended an inter-disciplinary panel on “The Abysmal and the Amphibious” at the CTS2024 (Conference on Science, Technology and Society) organised by the Chilean Network of Social Studies of Science and Technology. She shared insights from her research on how to live better with water. The conversation provided an excellent opportunity to explore the amphibian territories as a metaphor for change and disrupted relationships with essential systems.

As a part of his doctoral ESRC grant, **Jonas Le Thierry d’Ennequin** has been awarded additional funding for an International Institutional Visit to the African Centre for Cities (ACC) at the University of Cape Town. Jonas will be visiting the ACC in July and August 2024, where he will share his PhD research findings and continue his collaboration with postdoctoral researchers on the Infrahub.Africa project. On 18 April 2024, Jonas is co-hosting a panel discussion on “Colonised Flows: a Cross-Disciplinary Approach to Migration and Urban Infrastructure” facilitated by the Dutch Association for Migration Research (DAMR) at the University of Amsterdam.

In April 2024, **Stefano Mastromarino** is attending the “Keywording the European irregularised Migration Regime: reflections from/on the peripheries” conference at the The Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research in Zagreb, Croatia.

**Hanadi Samhan** has been nominated for the “PhD Students or Early Career Researcher Award” by the Widening Participation and Student Success Community of Practice Awards 2023-24. She has taken on a guest lecturer role for the course “Geographies of Global Migration” at LSE in the spring and summer terms of 2024. On 28

September 2023, Hanadi joined a panel discussion on “Refugee Camps in Focus”, as a part of the Forced Migration and The Arts online series. In collaboration with Camillo Boano and Dina Mneimneh (MSc BUDD alumna), she released a video (password: impact) celebrating their community engagement project “Lebanese yawmiyat (diaries)”. Hanadi presented her paper, “Living Beirut: Archiving unfinished stories of spatial violence” at the Annual International Conference for the Royal Geographical Society with IBG. Alongside Camillo Boano and Tomà Berlanda, Hanadi also produced a series of four drawing reflections for the article “Resisting Aphasia: Keywords from Gaza”, published in the Italian Magazine Urbanistica Informazioni. See one of her drawings with the corresponding passage below:



The voice of Hind lingered incessantly in my mind. I found myself replaying the recorded call she made to the Palestinian Red Crescent, her words echoing through the chambers of my soul. Her plea for help reverberated around the world, shaking it to its core with the stark reality of an innocent child in peril.

The medics who responded to her call stirred tears in the eyes of millions worldwide. How did our world sink into such depths of violence and atrocity? Taking her life did not end her existence; instead, it reaffirmed her right to live. Through her unwavering bravery, Hind challenged the very fabric of our reality and exposed the harsh truths of our existence. Even in death, she asserted her presence, defiantly confronting the oppressors who sought to silence her. Hind transcended mere mortality: she ascended to the status of a hero, imparting upon us the profound lesson of courage.

Hind, you will remain in my thoughts always, every time I call out for my daughter “Hind”. Your memory floods back with poignant clarity. May you forever rest in peace, my dear Hind; your courage and spirit are eternally remembered.

More on the story of Hind Rajab [here](#).

# Hands on

On 19-20 September 2023, the United Nations held the **SDG Summit in New York** to agree on a new phase of accelerated progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with high-level political guidance and commitments towards the realisation of Agenda 2030. The outcome of the SDG Summit was a **Political Declaration** that reaffirms the 2030 Agenda, while recognising that the SDGs are in peril and commits Member States to “bold, ambitious, accelerated, just and transformative actions, anchored in international solidarity and effective cooperation.”

Adriana represented the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) to mobilise support towards a collective Declaration jointly produced with the Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C), while working hand in hand with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Huairou Commission, among other allies. As a takeaway from the Summit, Adriana reflects:

“Given that in many vital areas, including reducing inequality, lowering carbon emissions and tackling hunger, progress since 2015 has either stalled or reversed, it is clear that the SDGs do not just require acceleration but a rescue plan. Such a plan cannot move forward without the bold pursuit of a rights-based approach, the articulation of a feminist perspective beyond tokenism and the recognition of the vital role that local communities

already play in commoning and protecting the social and ecological functions of human settlements. In short, localisation understood as “local implementation” is not enough, we need to continue struggling for a profound democratisation of the 2030 Agenda and the revitalisation of the New Urban Agenda, understanding that citizen participation is not only the exercise of a political right but also the opportunity for policies to be more legitimate, more inclusive, and more transformative.”

Adriana Allen with Lorena Zarate (from GPR2C) at the New York SDG Summit.



**Citizen participation is not only the exercise of a political right but also the opportunity for policies to be more legitimate, more inclusive, and more transformative.**



On 16 January 2024, UCL signed an **MoU with UN-Habitat**. Within the framework of this collaboration, UN-Habitat and UCL will actively promote capacity development through training, learning engagements, and event opportunities, facilitating knowledge exchange. The partnership will also guide discussions on topics related to sustainable urban development. By facilitating knowledge exchange on sustainable urban development, the collaboration will bridge the gap between theory and practice owing to UCL's cutting-edge research and UN-Habitat's real-world experience, enhancing the potential to guide the development of impactful solutions for sustainable urban development. The DPU's Michael Walls and Emmanuel Osuteye played an integral role in facilitating the relationship-building and MoU development on behalf of UCL.

## UN-Habitat and UCL will actively promote capacity development through training, learning engagements, and event opportunities, facilitating knowledge exchange.

On 26 January 2024, MSc BUDD students joined the last session of the **Urban Design Otherwise Series** for a walking tour of the Seven Sisters Market, joined by DPU alumnus David McEwen and campaigners from the Community Wards Organisation. Through walking, talking and engaging with the people and places of this dynamic urban centre, students were exposed to a unique juxtaposition of temporality and permanence of preservation and innovation and understanding as well as responses that are present in the migrant geographies of the Latin Village in Seven Sisters.

Haim Yacobi has been appointed as the Co-Leader of the **UCL Urban Health Community**.

Liza Griffin, Gemma Moore and place and health consultant Catherine Max were part of a National Lottery Heritage winning bid with North London's Highgate Cemetery Trust. Highgate received funding for the development phase of their **Unlocking Highgate Cemetery strategy**, a major conservation and public inclusion programme. Liza, Gemma and Catherine will be playing a small role by helping to scope a new "Healthy Cemeteries Framework", ensuring that health and inclusion are at the heart of decision-making in the cemetery's development.



Signing the MoU between UCL and UN-Habitat in January 2024.

Catalina Ortiz has been appointed as the new Director of the **UCL Urban Lab**. She has also been invited to join the editorial team of the **Urban Studies journal**. Catalina will be taking on both of these roles in June 2024.

Julio D. Dávila was invited to record a [presentation](#) for the **online Faculti platform**, in which he discussed the contributions of aerial cable-cars to social and economic development in contexts of urban poverty, with a particular focus on Medellín, Colombia, a city about which he has published extensively.

Julio D. Dávila has been invited to be a member of the **Editorial Board of Latin American Transport Studies**, a new refereed international journal published by Elsevier in collaboration with the Pan-American Society for Transport and Logistics Research (PANAMSTR).

Over the past year, Cassidy Johnson has been a member of the 28-person **UK Earthquake Engineering Field Investigation Team (EEFIT)** that has looked at the damage and recovery from the massive Kahramanmaraş earthquakes that affected the south-east of Türkiye in February 2023. She was on the ground in the earthquake-affected region in March and June 2023. Through hybrid methods of fieldwork and online research, the team produced a [detailed report](#) that examines geo-technical aspects and how the ground movements led to structural and infrastructure damages, as well as an overview of what has happened in the recovery so far. She is currently working with colleagues from UCL Civil, Environmental and Geomatic Engineering (CEGE) and in Türkiye to develop more research about the earthquakes.

Paroj Banerjee has been appointed as the Editor of **City: Analysis of Urban Change, Theory and Action**, a high impact peer-reviewed journal of the Taylor and Francis group.

Daniel Oviedo (DPU) and Florencia Rodriguez Touron (Bartlett alumna) have launched **the Inmóviles podcast**, where they discuss mobility and equity with guest speakers from across Latin America and the Caribbean. The podcast is available on [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#). They recorded a special episode with Carlos Moreno, proponent of the 15-minute city concept in celebration of DPU's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**Through hybrid methods of fieldwork and online research, the team produced a detailed report that examines geo-technical aspects and how the ground movements led to structural and infrastructure damages, as well as an overview of what has happened in the recovery so far.**

# Networks and meetings

Catalina Ortiz was a chair and a contributor at the conference **Gridding Equitable Urban Futures in Areas of Transition** held at Lancaster University on 21-22 September 2023. Her paper was entitled “Territorial Healing: a spatial spiral weaving transformative reparation”.

In October 2023, DPU's Walking Cities Lab was part of the **Walk21 conference in Kigali**, presenting the one-year project funded by Volvo Research and Educational Foundation about transforming the unwalkable city. Partners from two case study cities, Accra (the University of Environment and Sustainable Development and Cape Coast University) and Maputo (Architects Without Borders Spain in Mozambique), Jim Walker (Walk21 founder) and Daniel Oviedo, held a

**Emmanuel Osuteye highlighted the need for long-term solutions to multiple (linked) crises across the African continent and a renewed agenda for inclusivity in partnerships, coordination and delivery of humanitarian responses.**



Partners of the Walking Cities Lab at the Walk21 conference in Kigali, Rwanda, October 2023

round table to reflect on the findings of the local stakeholder engagement workshops developed in each city with politicians, technicians, and residents. A councilman from Maputo joined the research team at the conference after participating in Maputo's workshop. The round table stressed the importance of positioning walking as a mode of transport to aspire to and structure the content of the project [Research Note](#).

Catalina Ortiz was invited to contribute to a seminar on “**Circulations of social urbanism and informal settlement upgrading: between alternative and mainstream urban models**”, held at Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico on 26-27 October 2023, as part of the Urban Studies Foundation Series.

In early November 2023, Adriana Allen gave a keynote speech at a hybrid international seminar titled “Feminising Urban Struggles: Bodies, Territories and Politics in the Production of Peripheral Spaces”. The seminar attracted over 100 scholars and activists from all over the world. Drawing from the OVERDUE project, in her [keynote speech](#) Adriana explored three typically overlooked dimensions across the disciplines and professions that aim to address sanitation injustices (explicitly or implicitly): bodies, practices and things.

On 9-10 November 2023, Catalina Ortiz was invited as a keynote speaker to the Interdisciplinary Symposium on “**Decolonial Imaginaries in Literary and Urban Studies**” at the University of Basel, Switzerland.

On 17 November 2023, Alessio Kolioulis spoke at the **Stadt Nach Acht** conference in Berlin, focusing on the need for a common EU approach to studying nightlife. He explained how nightlife businesses and workers are identified and classified, using London as an example. The conference attracted over 1,250 people from more than 20 countries.

On 2 October 2023, Le-Yin Zhang was an invited panellist of a roundtable discussion at the **World Habitat Day 2023 celebration** in Baku, Azerbaijan.

On 28 November 2023, Emmanuel Osuteye was invited to speak at the **11<sup>th</sup> African Union Humanitarian Symposium**, where he highlighted the need for long-term solutions to multiple (linked) crises across the African continent and a renewed agenda for inclusivity in partnerships, coordination and delivery of humanitarian responses.

On 29 November 2023, Catalina Ortiz co-hosted a DPU [Dialogues in Development](#) session entitled “**TheoriSE: Debating the Southeastern Turn in Urban Studies**” together with Chandrima Mukhopadhyay. Other speakers included Faranak MirafTAB and Oren Yiftachel.

On 5 December 2023, Rita Lambert was invited to present at the **Spatial Justice in Practice Symposium** at TU Delft, Holland. She presented her co-authored paper “Spatial Justice in Low-Income Settlements in the Global South: Using Grounded Data from Ahmedabad and Lima to Explore Thermal Comfort and Wellbeing”.

On 15 December 2023, Rita Lambert was invited to present at the **Comfort At The Extremes Conference 2023** in Ahmedabad, India. She presented her co-authored paper “Slum redevelopment and its gendered implications on thermal comfort: the experiences of female residents in Ahmedabad”.

Paroj Banerjee and Catalina Ortiz were invited to contribute to the event entitled “**TANGLES: Dialogues on the politics, spirits and technics of urban inhabitation**”, held at the Urban Institute, University of Sheffield. On 31 January and 1 February 2024, they contributed to a panel on “Popular Territories in Uncertain Times”.

On 11-13 January 2024, the IIHS held its **8<sup>th</sup> Annual Urban Arc Research Conference**, themed “Unpacking Marginalities”. Barbara Lipietz convened and chaired a roundtable discussion exploring universities’ public role in addressing such marginalities. The hybrid discussion brought together a group of international colleagues to explore ways in which universities/ knowledge institutions can contribute to more sustainable, generous, and even hopeful urban futures. They explored the meaning of marginality in their contexts, and how marginality is addressed in their universities’ education, research or public engagement functions.

This included exploring support to marginalised groups of students, co-producing research with people living in marginalised neighbourhoods, or fore-fronting marginalised voices in knowledge production on the Urban. Following the panel, a two-day research workshop allowed colleagues to elaborate on local, regional and international levers of change for fostering more publicly oriented higher education institutions in a world of sharpening polycrises.

On 18 January 2024, Haim Yacobi hosted **Yossef Ben Meir, President of the High Atlas Foundation**, Morocco for a DPU Dialogues in Development session discussing development and post-disaster following the earthquake in September 2023.

On 8 February 2024, Raktim Ray (DPU) and Shajedur Rahman (University of Birmingham) co-hosted a lively roundtable on “**Decolonising Methodologies in Education and International Development**”. The organisers had secured seed funding for the roundtable and aimed to engender new, critical conversations around the premises for decolonisation as a pedagogy in the discipline of education and international development; the limits to decolonisation agenda; and the alternative methodologies, vocabularies and archives needed for decolonial research in

non-western contexts. Key discussion points centred the notion of liberatory linguistics (led by Kamran Khan), the political-economic conditions for decolonial work and the primary of racism in UK research environments (led by Kalwant Bhopal), and the conceptual distinctions between critical thinking and decolonial thinking at this time (led by Kamna Patel). The roundtable feeds into ongoing thinking on epistemic justice and research methodologies.

On 20 February 2024, Michael Walls and Emmanuel Osuteye organised a seminal public event focusing on the climate crisis affecting **the Somali Horn**. This invited a critical debate on the causes, impacts and regional approaches that can be adopted to respond to the environmental and socio-political fragilities that the climate crises pose to the region and its residents. The public event was preceded by a policy dialogue on a similar theme on 19 February 2024, which brought together selected policymakers, senior government officials, diplomats, business leaders, researchers and civil society organisations based in or operating within the Somali-Horn, launching a research and policy agenda to be facilitated by UCL.



Michael and Emmanuel hosting experts on the Somali Horn.

Michael Walls  
presenting at the  
Fourth Silk Cities  
International  
Conference in Tunis.



### The **Fourth Silk Cities International Conference** was held on 4-6

March 2024 in the elegant and beautifully restored Dar Lasram in the historical Medina of Tunis, Tunisia's capital city. Michael Walls, Julio D. Dávila and Yves Cabannes actively participated with submissions and seminar presentations, as well as chairing sessions. As in previous conferences, the DPU provided considerable institutional support to this commendable initiative by alumna Farnaz Arefian (PhD 2015) who has been the force behind this effort.

The conference brought together researchers, practitioners and policy makers from four continents, including from across a vast region along the ancient Silk Roads, extending from North Africa to China, in countries where valuable tangible and intangible heritage must be celebrated and protected. It was also attended by DPU PhD student Nihal Hafez as well as Tunisian students who benefitted from reduced fees. Silk Cities worked in close partnership with the local Association for the Protection of Tunis Medina (ASM), the Municipality of Tunis and the communications agency Blue Fish.

On 20-21 March 2024, Catalina Ortiz was invited as a keynote speaker to a seminar on "**Gender and care: New agendas in the formation and circulation of urban policies in Latin America**", held as a part of the Urban Studies Foundation Series at the National University of Colombia, Bogotá.

Julio D. Dávila participated in a discussion panel on "**The entrepreneurial state in developing countries**" organised by Carolina Alves (Bartlett Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose). Julio outlined the contributions that local government in middle income countries can make to development innovations, in areas like transport, spatial planning, and social development.

Julio D. Dávila gave a lecture on "**infrastructure and local government dilemmas**" at an online training course run by the prestigious Tecnológico de Monterrey university in Mexico. The course was funded by the overseas aid agency of the Spanish government, and was aimed at local government officials in a range of countries in Latin America.

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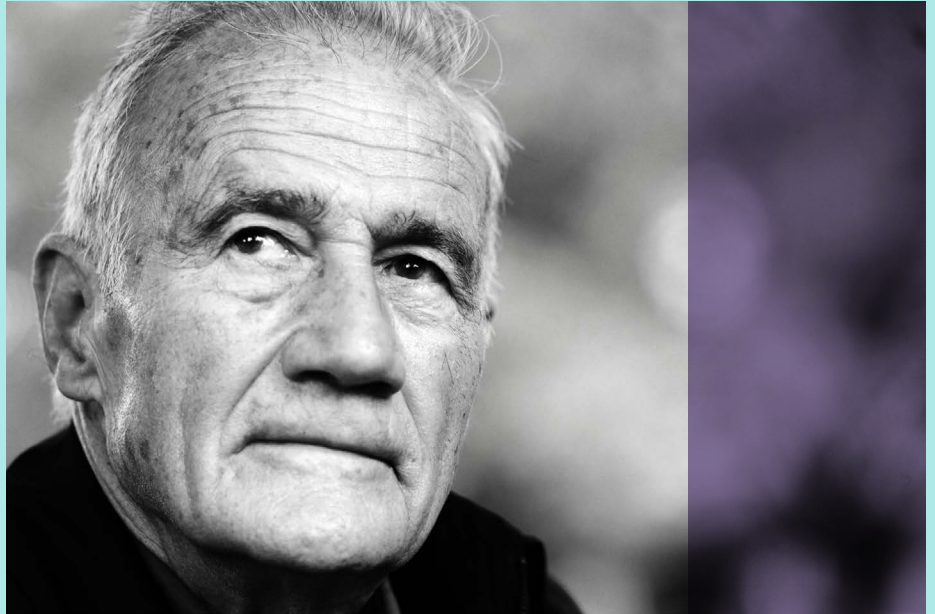
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# Obituaries

## John Turner, 1927- 2023: An Appreciation

Written by Geoffrey Payne,  
published on [DPU Associates](#)



Architect impressed by urban squatter settlements in Peru who then set about persuading the wider world of their value.

In the 1950s and 60s John Turner, who has died aged 96, addressed the housing challenges faced by members of rural communities in Peru when they migrated to urban areas in search of a better life. Official planning and design approaches were neither appropriate nor affordable to such people, and Turner was immensely impressed by their resourcefulness in creating their own housing developments and even complete neighbourhoods. Turner's writings, as John FC Turner, presented Peru's urban squatter settlements – *barriadas* – to a global audience as not a problem but a resource.

Predominantly poor people moved on to land on the urban periphery, subdivided it into residential plots and places for community facilities, and built their own housing using whatever materials came to hand. Settlements were improved gradually as people became integrated into the urban economy, making urban development effectively self-financed.

Such achievements were widely regarded as “unplanned” or “informal” and therefore to be removed or prevented. However, Turner argued that it was an approach that worked for the people involved, and that professionals should learn from

them. His views came to influence generations of architects, planners and other built environment professionals globally and inspired a wide range of sites and services projects and in-situ upgrading programmes.

While studying architecture at the Architectural Association (AA) School of Architecture in London, he had himself been influenced by the ideas of Patrick Geddes, [Lewis Mumford](#) and the anarchist newspaper *Freedom*, edited by [Colin Ward](#). He qualified in 1954, and three years later was invited to work for state housing agencies in Peru, where he was joined by his friend [Patrick Crooke](#) after an earthquake in 1958. They built the case for incremental development based on the fact that, given adequate access to land, basic resources and freedom to control key local development decisions, people and their local organisations can and often do build and maintain attractive places.

These principles formed the basis for seminal articles such as [Squatter Housing: An Architecture That Works](#) (1968) in the journal *Architectural Design*. He started by editing an issue in 1963 and continued until 1976, showing how squatter-barriada builders who choose to invest their life savings in an environment that they create transform themselves in the process. He saw housing as a verb, an action rather than a

thing, with value in social not just economic terms. The process of production, from planning to design and construction, should reflect the needs, aspirations and resources of the people to be accommodated.

His research coincided with an increase in people's opportunities to move freely from place to place. The mass migration into urban areas that began then, and has continued since, needed a fresh approach.

Together with his colleagues the US anthropologists Lisa Peattie and William Mangin, Turner produced compelling evidence that communities should be actively engaged from beginning to end if urban areas were to be socially inclusive. He expanded on this approach when in 1965 he moved to the Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies in the US. In 1970, the government commissioned him to lead an evaluation of self-help housing in the US, material from which led to the publication of his book *Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process* (1972), co-edited with Robert Fichter.

Turner returned to the UK in 1973 as a lecturer at the AA and then at the Development Planning Unit, University College London. He directed short courses for senior professionals from countries that were being urbanised. On one occasion he ended his introductory lecture on



participatory housing and announced that there would be a 15-minute break. The course participants sat still, indicating that they expected the door to open and a trolley to arrive with refreshments, at which point he asked: "Who is going to buy the tea and coffee and who will help with the washing up?" That was when they realised that he meant what he said about the need for active participation. It was a key moment, and within days the course members were bantering in the kitchen as a group of friends.

Rather than seeing issues through the conventional political lens of left-right, Turner viewed the concept of power from the perspective of "top-down" or "bottom-up", and strongly advocated the latter. He distilled his views in his book *Housing By People* (1976), which coincided with the first global Habitat conference in Vancouver, where he was a keynote speaker.

He was appreciated by international aid agencies such as the World Bank and UN for providing frank, incisive comments about the need to understand how local processes worked. In 1988 he was awarded the Right Livelihood award for "championing the rights of people to build, manage and sustain their own shelter and communities".

Born in Kensington, central London, and brought up in Kent, John was the son of Jocelyne (nee Gaskin), daughter of the artist Arthur Gaskin, and Austin Charlewood Turner, an architect. His twin brothers, Richard and Arthur, died in their 20s; his sister Mary Ann became a botanical illustrator. After attending St Edmund's school, Hindhead, Surrey, and Wellington college, Berkshire, he enrolled at the AA.

His first marriage, to Catherine Wilson in 1950, ended in divorce. David, their one child to survive into adulthood, died in 2019.

In 1971, he married Beth (Bertha) Berry, and she edited *Building Community: A Third World Case Book* (1988), which they produced together.

Turner's documentary *A Roof of My Own* (UNTV, 1964) was incorporated into a video for which he wrote the script, made in 2016 by the architect and urbanist Kathrin Golda-Pongratz of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona. It was shown to the community that he had studied on the outskirts of Lima.

Many current residents recognised themselves helping their parents build their homes and provided personal testimony for Golda-Pongratz's film *City Unfinished – Voices of El Ermitaño* (2018). She arranged to house Turner's extensive archive in the Historical Archive of the College of Architects of Catalonia (COAC). The arguments for empowering local communities and to make those in power listen to those in need remain as valid today as when Turner promoted them.

He is survived by Beth, his stepchildren Heidi, Jayne and Christopher, grandchildren Vanessa, Amarun, Paccha and Tomi, and Mary Ann.

John Francis Charlewood Turner, architect, author and campaigner for community-led housing, born 9 July 1927; died 3 September 2023.



Housing in the El Ermitaño settlement, Lima, Peru, taken by John Turner as part of his research in 1963. Photograph: John FC Turner.

## In loving memory of Katarina Mouakkid Soltesova

It is with immense sadness that the DPU says goodbye to a dear alumna and colleague. Katarina was an extraordinary professional and a passionate feminist and advocate of people's right to live in a better world.

Katarina was a truly interdisciplinary and cosmopolitan professional. She studied Social Anthropology at University College Utrecht and at the Central European University in Budapest. In 2008, she joined the DPU first as a UDP MSc student and soon after as a colleague. Between 2011 and 2017, she pursued her doctoral research at UCL Center for Urban Sustainability and Resilience under the supervision of Adriana Allen and David Dodman. Her research focused on urban disaster risk reduction and offered an insightful exploration of the local governance practices adopted on the ground to manage flood risk across low-income settlements in Dakar's urban region (Senegal).

She then worked as a researcher and a freelance consultant until 2018, when she joined UNDRR as a Programme Management Officer on Risk Knowledge based in Nairobi, where she passed away in a tragic accident in September 2023.

Her contributions throughout her professional life encompassed her work with human rights NGOs focusing on housing, on urban development planning and grassroots resilience to everyday and episodic disasters. An inquisitive nomad by heart, during her early formative years she lived in the Algerian Sahara, as she used to say, it was the desert that inspired her urban focus.

Katarina's vibrant personality, contagious laugh and multiple contributions will continue to live in the hearts and memories of the DPU.



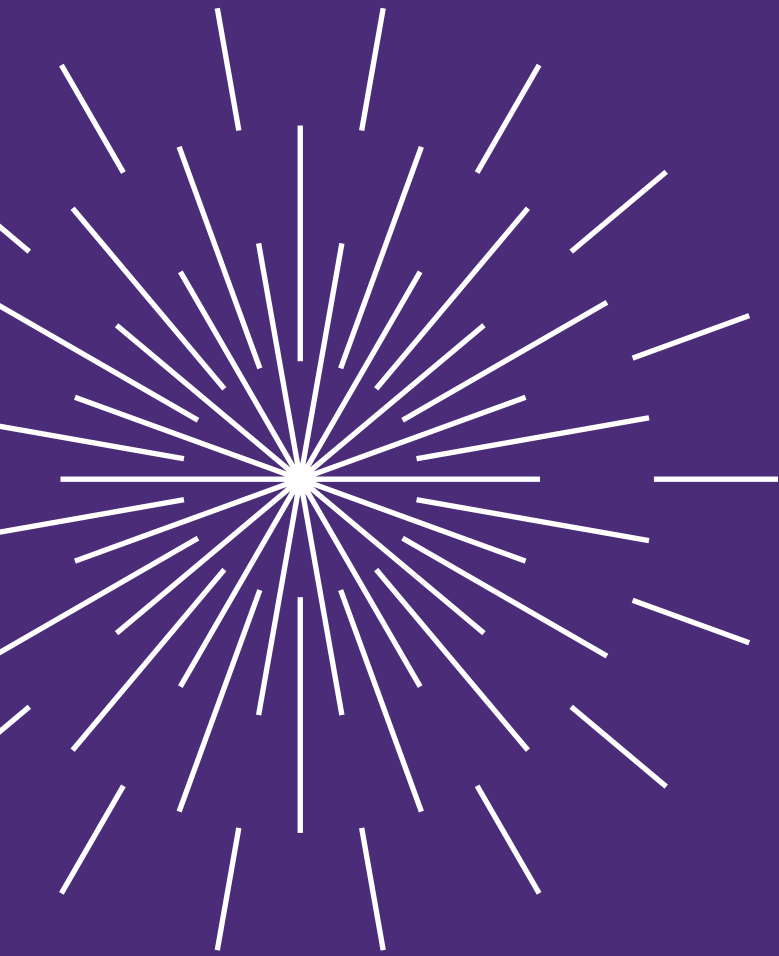
## In memoriam of Abdullah Khan Sumbal

The DPU is very sad to report the untimely death of DPU alumnus Abdullah Khan Sumbal (MSc DAP 2003/4) in September 2023. Abdullah was a distinguished career civil servant in Pakistan, holding the post of Federal Interior Secretary at the time of his death.

He had fruitful and diverse career within Pakistan's civil service, most recently as Punjab Chief Secretary from September 2022 to January 2023 before being appointed Federal Interior Secretary. He had also served

as chairman of the Planning and Development Board, Punjab, and Commissioner of Lahore division.

Aged only 53 when he passed away, he was much admired and appreciated by his colleagues in Pakistan's civil service, as well as by his DPU former colleagues and professors. The numerous tributes that poured in since his passing reflect his unwavering integrity, profound dedication, and remarkable humility. While a student at the DPU, he worked under Julio D. Dávila's supervision on a dissertation entitled 'The Deficiencies, Challenges and Constraints Faced by Fiscal Decentralization in Developing Countries'.



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Cover Photo: Children playing with the "Public Building Blocks" Installation in Karantina, Beirut. Credit: CatalyticAction.

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