

feminising urban struggles

Bodies, territories and policies in the
production of peripheral spaces

Final Report
March 2025

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1 BACKGROUND AND GOALS OF THE SEMINAR SERIES

This is the final report of the Seminar Series Award "[Feminising urban struggles: bodies, territories and policies in the production of peripheral spaces](#)". The original objectives of the series were, first, to strengthen scholarly debate and dialogue about feminist urban struggles, particularly in relation to peripheral territories, through grounded investigation and feminist methodologies. The second original objective was to expand networks of research and practice, promoting cross-regional exchanges between academics and female community organisers, with the goal of exchanging different strands of academic, practical and popular knowledge, and co-producing new knowledge.

We organised the series into four seminars. A virtual international seminar in November 2023, brought together researchers from different parts of the world and is available on LabCidade and IEAUSP's digital platforms. This event was followed by three face-to-face seminars: in São Paulo/Brazil in March 2024, and in Johannesburg/South Africa and Dar es Salaam/Tanzania in April 2024.

Through numerous virtual research panels, keynote speeches, site visits and deep interactions between academics and community leaders, the series fulfilled its goal of facilitating and expanding critical reflection about urbanisation through (different forms of) engagement between community leaders, practitioners and feminist scholars who employ gender, racial and intersectional lenses towards the production of grounded and transdisciplinary knowledge(s). It also forged a strong alliance of research and practice about feminist urban struggles, whose goal is to expand efforts towards critical research as well as action.

In total, the virtual seminar involved 115 participants, between presenters, moderators and keynote speakers, generating, until the writing of this report, 2,360 visualisations on the YouTube channels where the recordings are available (LabCidade, IHS and HIC). The face-to-face seminars involved approximately 610 people in São Paulo (194), Johannesburg (205) and Dar es Salaam (211), including the organisers, moderators and participants. Between the three cities there were 17 different projects and territories visited, in partnership with the local communities and local partners.

The virtual seminar's outputs were organised and published in the [proceedings](#). Recordings of all keynote sessions and research panels are available on a playlist at the [Youtube channel of LabCidade](#), and linked to the [CUBES website](#).

Exchanges about research methods and methodologies happened throughout the seminar and beyond the research training sessions. Due to the situated and

intersectional nature of most of the research work presented at the seminar, and/or the inquiries in which participants are involved, discussions about research findings and methods were always intertwined. These debates went beyond research tools and techniques and concerned epistemologies and positionality.

As the face-to-face events went on, the daily meetings, site visits, and the interactions between participants became a situated experience on research methods on their own. This was felt through the way in which participants of the seminar related with each other, how they entered and engaged in each site and with the host communities. In these site visits there was often an atmosphere of nurturing, solidarity, and curiosity. Hosts and guests were excited with the visits and the sharing of knowledge and experiences. The international guests often expressed wonder when experiencing similar struggles in different contexts. Participants also expressed feeling bonded by their commitment to fight for gender justice and the right to the city, also in different contexts.

Based on the seminar series' outputs, we chose to draw transversal considerations, in three axes of analysis presented below:

1) Feminist urban research methodology

This first axis relates to the goal of continuing to expand the debates on feminist methods and methodologies, as we did during the four events, particularly during the three face-to-face events, where we organised a workshop (São Paulo) and a special session (Johannesburg) on feminist research methods. The seminars promoted different forms of “critical pedagogies,” whereby “theory, knowledge and practice are constantly re-made through activism and resistance” (Allen et al., 2022, 447), based on the ideas put forward by educator Paulo Freire and feminist scholar Bell Hooks. The scholars from the different countries were startled by the energy, the strategies, and the nurturing environment of the communities visited. The female leaders who participated in all of the seminars were able to see their struggles in larger contexts, and this also surprised them. The representatives from South Africa and Tanzania mentioned their surprise to realise that in other countries “their struggle is the same”, while also pointing out differences, notably, the gains of the housing movements in São Paulo that have been able to acquire housing very near the city centre. It was in this context that they voiced that “this [network of feminist research, practice and solidarity], now that it started, cannot stop.” For the seminar organisers, this methodological axis will inform further plans and proposals for collaborations and partnerships within the topic of feminist urban struggles.

2) Feminist urban movements and struggles in their relationship with porous states

A second axis of analysis recovers the different political contexts and relationships of urban feminist struggles with the state, admitting that the actions of public authorities can be contradictory, and can either assist or not assist the struggle of local communities and social movements. In this axis of analysis we want to review how gendered and racialized urban struggles shape relations with the state, particularly through institutions such as housing forums, councils, government institutions, or even outside the state, in community-based organisations.

3) Strategies of struggle and resistance against daily challenges in the territory

A third axis involves strategies for resisting and confronting structural and daily challenges in the territory, such as poverty and unemployment, as well as lack of water, sanitation conditions, extreme weather events, gender-based violence, lack of electricity, etc. In these daily practices and actions of struggle and resistance, the seminar participants also saw power and joy, through practices of care. In this axis, it is also important to explore how feminist struggles are happening within a framework(s) of multiple crises, including climate disasters. While it seems clear to us that responses to calamities require state action and profound economic, political and spatial transformations if the right to the city is to be addressed, in the short term, it falls on women to care and protect the victims of environmental and urban disasters. It is against this backdrop that our research work on feminist struggles will continue to evolve.

As it will be described in this report, the seminar series allowed for a very rich exchange of situated knowledges, methods and methodologies, and the strengthening of networks of solidarity and friendship. In the words of a participant, “now that this [exchange and collaboration] has started, it cannot stop.” How to provide continuity to this project is indeed a main question and challenge to the co-organizers of this seminar series, as well as the individuals and organisations who joined the project.

The rest of this document is organised as follows: next, section 2 acknowledges the network of individuals and institutions that participated in the series; then, section 3 summarises the original objectives and main outputs of the seminar series, describing the results of each event, starting with the virtual seminar, followed by the face-to-face events in São Paulo, Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam; based on the seminars’ results, section 4 proposes three axes for future

work. Finally, section 5 presents our final considerations and lays down a preliminary working plan for future projects and initiatives.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all the institutions, organisations, networks and individuals, whose partnership and support made the seminar series possible.

We are grateful to the **Urban Studies Foundation** for its financial support and in particular to executive director Joe Shaw, who understood our urgent needs and requests, supporting us and suggesting possible paths, throughout the series.

We are thankful to the International **Institute for Urban Management and Housing at Erasmus University Rotterdam (IHS, Netherlands)** for their partnership, in particular to Carolina Lunetta for her coordinating and supporting roles at the virtual seminar and the seminar in São Paulo. We are thankful for IHS broadcasting the virtual events in their YouTube channel.

We are grateful for support of the **Institute for Advanced Studies of the University of São Paulo (IEAUSP)** and the **Habitat International Coalition (HIC)**, for co-hosting the virtual seminar on November 2023, making available their online platforms for the event (currently available on [IEAUSP Platform](#) and on a [YouTube playlist from LabCidade FAUUSP](#)). We are grateful that Adriana Allen, President of HIC at the time, gave the keynote address at the conclusion of the international seminar on 8 November 2023. At HIC, support from members of the **Feminist Approaches to the Habitat's co-learning space**, and the **Women and Habitat in Africa Working Group (WHAWG - HIC)**, led by Dr Ifeyinwa Ofong, was particularly helpful.

Our special thanks to the **Sesc Training and Research Centre (Sesc CPF)**, which provided the infrastructure for the face-to-face seminar in São Paulo on 12 March and the logistics for the field visits on the following days. We are also grateful to the **Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (FES) Tanzania office** for their logistical support during the seminar in Dar es Salaam on 17 April.

There are many scholars, activists and practitioners, as well as research groups and networks whose work and activities inspired and/or played a key role in this seminar series.

We would like to extend our special thanks to the **keynote speakers: Verónica Gago, Faranak Miraftab and Adriana Allen** during the virtual seminar, **and Marjorie Mbilinyi** during the Dar es Salaam seminar, whose keynote session was moderated by feminist artist and activist **Demere Kitunga**. Our very special thanks to **Prof Naomi Nkealah** (University of Witwatersrand) and **Prof Patricia Noxolo** (University of Birmingham) for accepting our invitation to join the virtual seminar's scientific committee, bringing important transdisciplinary and

decolonial perspectives of African feminism from the fields of Literature and Geography.

The widespread interest in this seminar series is also thanks to an ongoing articulation involving different academic and non-academic groups around gender and intersectional approaches to urban research in relation to transformations in the territory, and to public policies.

Internationally, these include the work of Dr. Margot Rubin (Cardiff University, UK), who currently convenes a research network on gender and cities centred on new epistemological and methodological approaches and exchanges between researchers from the Global North and South. Prof Paula Meth (University of Glasgow) seeks comparative approaches to gender and cities, on topics such as housing and informal work, from the perspective of legal geography. She also seeks to expand South-South research networks through comparative analyses of the lived experiences of marginalised women. Together with Associate Professor Sarah Charlton (University of the Witwatersrand), they explore male experiences of stigmatisation and marginality in peripheral territories, and in state housing.

In **Latin America**, we highlight the exchanges with Verónica Gago, who took part as keynote speaker in the international virtual seminar, introducing the work that she has been doing with Luci Cavallero and Paula Soto Villagrán. Paula Soto also coordinated a seminar session and participated in the scientific committee of the virtual seminar.

In **South Africa**, the Gender and Urban Research Network of the Gauteng City Region Observatory (GCRO), also led by Margot Rubin (then at the University of the Witwatersrand) in partnership with Dr Mamokete Modiba and Dr Alexandra Parker, brought together, between 2019 and 2023, researchers already involved in urban research through feminist lenses. Taking a broad approach to gender, it involved researchers working on gender and sexuality, feminist urban research and queer methodologies. They sought to explore intersectional approaches in the investigation of urban production and territories in their diversity and multiplicity.

In **Tanzania**, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), whose founding members include Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi and Demere Kitunga, is a key national advocate for transformative feminism (see Kitunga and Mbilinyi, 2009). Through intersectionality, TGGP investigates and disseminates the struggle of women and other marginalized groups against multiple forms of discrimination, working with community-based groups and governmental organisations towards leadership training, campaigns against gender based

violence, among other initiatives. TNGP's transformative approach informed the discussion about feminist practice and peripheral feminism in the Tanzanian context. Research into gender and territory through feminist lenses was put forward in the framework of the Dar es Salaam CityLab, a platform for action research and analysis of urban production at the Institute of Human Settlements Studies (IHSS) at Ardhi University. A 2020 action research project co-coordinated by Priscila Izar and Elinorata Mbuya with a team of CityLab research assistants, including Upendo Ubunda and Gwamaka Lucas, the Tanzanian Federation for the Urban Poor through the National Coordinator, Husna Shechonge, and the Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI), a Tanzanian NGO, set some of the foundations for this seminar series. At IHSS, Senior Research Fellow Dr. Tatu Mtwangi-Limbumba is promoting a research agenda centred on the lived experience of Tanzanian women in the transformation of their informal settlements.

In **Brazil**, an articulation between researchers and institutions for the preparation of the Dossier City, Gender and Intersectionalities of the Brazilian Journal of Urban and Regional Studies, organised by Diana Helene Ramos (UFAL), Gabriela Leandro Pereira (UFBA), Paula Freire Santoro (FAUUSP) and Rossana Tavares (UFFRJ) informed this seminar series. Together with LabCidade FAUUSP, researchers such as Larissa Lacerda, Marina Harkot, Gisele Brito, Kaya Lazarini, Isadora de Andrade Guerreiro and Raquel Rolnik, among others, are putting forward a critical feminist research agenda in Brazil. Feminist methods and methodologies that compose this agenda were discussed in this seminar series. Glória Figueiredo (UFBA), also played a key role, by supporting the development of grant proposals to increase participation of Brazilian early career researchers in the seminars in South Africa and Tanzania, being member of the scientific committee of the virtual seminar and participating in the seminar in São Paulo. Mariana Assef Lavez, master student at UFBA supervised by Gloria Figueiredo, attended the seminar in South Africa in person.

During the organisation of the virtual seminar co-hosted by IEAUSP, we were joined by different researchers and research agendas, such as the work of Janaina Onuki, Kelly Agopyan (also from IRI USP - MaRIas), Roseli Lopes, Luciana Itikawa, among others. Also inspiring and supportive were the Queer City researchers, among whom we especially thank Clévio Rabelo for the exchanges. Also linked to research on São Paulo is the research work of Carolina Lunetta, from the International Institute for Urban Management and Housing at Erasmus University Rotterdam (IHS, Netherlands).

The research network involved in the Icolma Project Fapesp¹ at LaPlan (Planning Laboratory), coordinated by Bruna Mendes (NEG Gender Nucleo), Sandra (San) Momm, Rosa Scaquetti (Postdoctoral researcher supported by Capes scholarship), and the UFABCuir research group at UFABC collaborated with LabCidade FAUUSP in the seminar "Territories of gender: from body to space"², in August 2023. Subsequently, this group joined the scientific committee of the international seminar and hosted a field visit in the São Paulo event. Professor San Momm also attended the seminars in Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam.

In **Johannesburg, Dar es Salaam and São Paulo**, the cities that hosted the face-to-face events, the support and participation of social movements, community based organisations and non-governmental organisations was fundamental for the success of this series.

Petunia Mabuza, a member of the Asivikelane Campaign, which seeks to raise awareness of the living conditions and demands of residents of informal settlements in South Africa, played the role of the community representative from South Africa, travelling to Brazil and to Tanzania. Petunia is also a community leader in Phomolong, an informal settlement bordering the township of Mamelodi, in the east of Tshwane (formerly known as Pretoria). Her community in Phomolong hosted one of the seminars in **Johannesburg**.

Shumani Luruli, Programme Coordinator of the NGO Planact, not only supported the organisation of the events in Johannesburg but also provided key insights about the meaning of feminist struggle in South Africa. Shumani was also a participant of the seminar in São Paulo. Mamosweu Tsoabi, from the Serapeng saBasadi organisation in Waterdaal, Zelda Maasdorp, from the Eesterust community organisation, Jane Mogale, a member of the Stjwetla district committee, Kgabo Raphala, a founding member of the Alexandra Water Warriors (AWW) organisation, Mpho Tefo, coordinator of AWW's gender council, Manisha Ramarain, coordinator at the Tshwane Leadership Foundation and of the Potter's House programme, Mandisa Dyanty, Coordinator, Centre for Faith and Community, University of Pretoria and Nombulelo Buli Ndandani (Buli), TLF - Eesterust community liaison participated and/or helped organise the local events in South Africa.

¹

<https://bv.fapesp.br/pt/auxilios/109751/impacto-da-covid-19-no-modo-de-vida-mobilidade-e-acessibilidade-dos-grupos-marginalizados-icolma/>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoGIY1BiQ4A>

Husna Seif Shechongue, National Coordinator of the Tanzanian Federation for the Urban Poor, travelled to Brazil and South Africa as the community leader from Tanzania. Also, Husna coordinated several visits to areas in Dar es Salaam where the Federation is present. The events in **Dar es Salaam** also involved Theresia Ntanga from the Centre for Community Initiatives, Sakina Gumbo, coordinator of the Panakuna community organisation in the Vingunguti neighbourhood (part of the Federation network), Asanath Mohammed, leader of the Federation in the Chamazi neighbourhood, Asha Pembe, Coordinator of the Federation in Ialala, Sarafina and Acheni Athumani, members of the Federation in Karakata. Yusra Rajabu, Faria Shomari and Tina Mfanga, representatives of the UWAWAMA organisation, participated in the Dar es Salaam seminar. Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi and Demere Kitunga, founding members of the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), joined the programme in Dar es Salaam.

Graça a Xavier, Coordinator of the National Union for Popular Housing (UNMP), the Union of Housing Movements (UMM), and member of the Women and Habitat Network for Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the events in Tanzania and South Africa as the community leader from Brazil. The territories visited in **São Paulo** involved various leaders and members of housing, culture and agroecology movements, including Evaniza Rodrigues (a member of the Union of Housing Movements - UMM), Giulia Ramilo and Welita Alves Caetano Ribeiro (leaders of the Penha Pietras Occupation), Roseane Maria de Queiroz (leader of the Paulo Freire and União da Juta Mutirão), Vilma Martins (President of the Women's Association of the GAU - Urban Agriculture Group), Maria de Fátima dos Santos (activist, lawyer and legal assistant at UMM), Rita Dionísio (Bloco Mulheres do ABC), Fran Rocha (creator of the Ocupa Sapatão movement) and Roseli Simão (state coordinator of the Olga Benário Women's Movement).

Also in São Paulo we had the participation of researchers and activists involved in the daily life of the territories we visited, including Kaya Lazarini (FAUUSP researcher and Technical Advisor at USINA), Samira Rodrigues (FAUUSP researcher), Clara Ribeiro Camargo (MSc and PhD in Environmental Science from USP and activist with RAPPA - Rede de Agricultoras Periféricas Paulistanas Agroecológicas), Maria Lucia Ramos Bellenzani (UFABC researcher and RAPPA activist), as well as Bruna Mendes and San Momm).

3 SEMINAR SERIES' FORMAT, IMPLEMENTATION AND PARTICIPANTS

Originally, the main objectives of the seminar series were, first, to strengthen scholarly debate and dialogue about feminist urban struggles, particularly in relation to peripheral territories, through grounded investigation and feminist methodologies. The second original objective was to expand networks of research and practice, promoting cross-regional exchanges between academics and female community organisers, with the goal of exchanging different strands of academic, practical and popular knowledge, and co-producing new knowledge.

Without dismissing other urban modes and spatial patterns at the edge of cities and metropolitan areas, we approached periphery as a social and spatial process that is dialectical and involves the marginalisation of communities and territories from state and development policies, as well as the multiple and varied, daily practices of resistance against these conditions (Santos 2011). Such a notion of periphery puts less emphasis on geographical location (and being at the edge), while elevating popular practices, the formation of political subjects and a peripheral identity (D'Andrea 2022, Sardenberg 2009). It points to situated realities, networks and systems as (overlapping) mode(s) of urban production (Caldeira 2017). The seminar series also aimed at strengthening a gender lens in the debates about peripheral urbanisation.

In terms of outputs, originally, we proposed organising a special issue on women's urban struggles in peripheral territories through south- south comparison, expanding networks of research and practice, promoting training in feminist research methods and methodologies to early career researchers, producing recordings of the seminar series to be uploaded onto the website of our home institutions, facilitating writing of opinion pieces and other short essays and finally, writing up grant proposals to expand on the work of the seminar.

We organised the series into four seminars. A virtual international seminar in November 2023, brought together researchers from different parts of the world and is available on LabCidade and IEAUSP's digital platforms. This event was followed by three face-to-face seminars: in São Paulo/Brazil in March 2024, and in Johannesburg/South Africa and Dar es Salaam/Tanzania in April 2024.

The following, specific, practical and theoretical objectives were laid out in the organisation of the events and calls for participation

- To compile and facilitate debate about feminist urban research that draws from transdisciplinary, intersectional, situated and decolonial approaches,

allowing the “re-imagining” of different futures through deeper understanding of current practices;

- To increase understanding about the various forms of women's activism involved in the production and appropriation of peripheral spaces, both in urban and rural contexts;
- To identify the different forms of dispossession affecting peripheral women and their communities, due to forced removals and evictions, as well as their responses to these threats through resistance, insurgency, and (re)construction efforts;
- To explore women's collective care practices and solidarity circuits through feminist lenses, investigating how these practices and strategies shape the spaces that women occupy;
- To strengthen alliances, facilitating research partnerships and the exchange of research knowledge, with the goal of producing tangible results and influencing decision making;
- To inform and influence the design of urban policies and strategies that enhance the engagement of local communities through democratic participation, enabling the co-production of territories.

Through numerous virtual research panels, keynote speeches, site visits and deep interactions between academics and community leaders, the series fulfilled its goal of facilitating and expanding critical reflection about urbanisation. The events facilitated different forms of engagement between community leaders, practitioners and feminist scholars who employ gender, racial and intersectional lenses towards the production of grounded and transdisciplinary knowledge(s). The series forged a strong alliance of research and practice about feminist urban struggles, whose goal is to expand efforts towards critical research as well as action.

In total, the virtual seminar involved 115 participants, between presenters, moderators and keynote speakers, generating, until the writing of this report, 2,360 visualisations on the YouTube channels where the recordings are available (LabCidade, IHS and HIC). The face-to-face seminars involved approximately 610 people in São Paulo (194), Johannesburg (205) and Dar es Salaam (211), including the organisers, moderators and participants. Between the three cities there were 17 different projects and territories visited, in partnership with the local communities and local partners.

The outputs of the virtual seminar were organised and published in the proceedings. Recordings of all keynote sessions and research panels are available

on a playlist at the Youtube channel of LabCidade, also linked to the CUBES website, available to the public.

Instead of editing a special edition based on presentations prepared for the virtual seminar, we opted for co-writing a research article (in preparation as we write this report), based on the experience of the seminar series and more specifically on feminist research methods and methodologies that emerged from the debates.

A significant amount of debate and exchange on research methods and methodologies happened throughout the seminar and beyond the research training sessions. Due to the situated and intersectional nature of most of the research work presented at the seminar, and/or the inquiries in which participants are involved, discussions about research findings and methods were always intertwined. These debates went beyond research tools and techniques and concerned epistemologies and positionality. For example, in their talk about feminist research as epistemological *indiscipline*, at the methodologies workshop in the São Paulo seminar, Rossana Tavares and Diana Ramos spoke about their experiences of engagement with local women's groups involved in the transformation of their communities, and of their own intellectual work to re-frame the local practices that they each observe as architecture and planning practice.

As the face-to-face events went on, the daily meetings, site visits, and the interactions between participants became a situated experience on research methods on their own. This was felt through the way in which participants of the seminar related with each other, how they entered and engaged in each site and with the host communities. In these site visits there was often an atmosphere of nurturing and solidarity, as well as curiosity. Hosts and guests were excited with the visits and the sharing of knowledge and experiences. The international guests often expressed wonder when experiencing similar struggles in different contexts. Participants also expressed feeling bonded by their commitment to fight for gender justice and the right to the city, also in different contexts.

The next sessions will describe in more detail the day to day activities and outputs from each event of the seminar series

3.1. VIRTUAL SEMINAR

The virtual seminar was the first event of the series, on 6 to 8 November 2023. In addition to the three institutions coordinating the project, the virtual seminar was coordinated by Carolina Lunetta, from the International Institute for Urban Management and Housing at Erasmus University Rotterdam (IHS, Netherlands). It

had the support of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the University of São Paulo (IEAUSP) and the Habitat International Coalition (HIC), which made their platforms available for the event. Recordings are now available on the [IEAUSP Platform](#) and on a [YouTube playlist from LabCidade FAUUSP](#).

The virtual seminar was organised as a scientific event. The call for proposals issued during its preparation and all selected abstracts can be found in its [proceedings](#), which can be downloaded from the websites of CUBES and LabCidade. It is noteworthy that the call for abstracts received 181 responses, signalling the relevance of the topic and the urgency for new efforts and approaches in terms of research and transdisciplinary collaborations.

Feminist scholars involved in critical studies - Verónica Gago³, Faranak Miraftab⁴ and Adriana Allen⁵ - delivered keynote speeches during the virtual seminar. The event included 53 presentations based on the selected abstracts, which were distributed across nine research panels, based on thematic areas (urban transformation, housing projects, mobility, black feminism, street vending and

³ Verónica Gago is a professor at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) and the University of San Martín (UNSAM) and a researcher at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET). She is also the author of several books such as *Neoliberal Reason: Baroque Economies and Popular Pragmatics* (2014). She has collaborated with the militant research experiences of the Situaciones Collective, as well as being part of the Ni Una Menos Collective, which fights against femicide in Latin America.

⁴ Faranak Miraftab is an urban scholar and professor of Urban and Regional Planning, with studies at the intersection of sociology, geography, planning and feminist studies. She is interested in global and local development processes and the contingencies involved in city formation and citizens' struggles for a dignified life - specifically, how groups disadvantaged by class, gender, race and ethnicity mobilise to obtain resources such as shelter, basic infrastructure and services, and how institutional arrangements facilitate and frustrate the provision of and access to these vital urban resources. A native of Iran, over the years his research and teaching have spanned several regions, including the Middle East, Latin America, Southern Africa and North America.

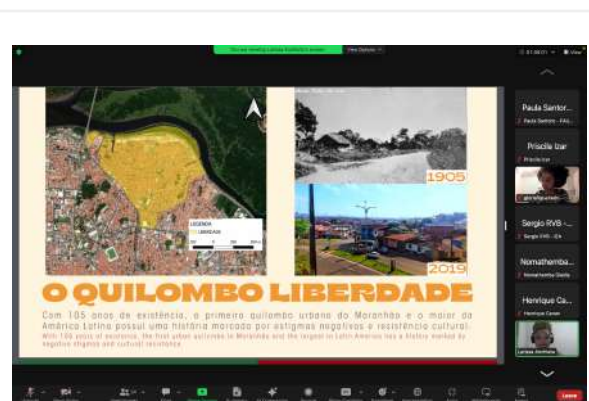
⁵ Adriana Allen is Professor of Development Planning and Urban Sustainability at the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU), University College London (UCL). She chaired the international network Habitat International Coalition (HIC) from 2019 to 2023. An academic activist with over 35 years of international experience in research, teaching and consultancy, she has worked in almost 30 countries in the Global South, including long-term assignments in Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Peru, Tanzania, Uruguay and Sierra Leone, among others. With a lens on land, housing, risk, water, sanitation, food and health, her work adopts a feminist and justice perspective to analyse the interface between everyday city-making practices and planned interventions and their capacity to generate transformative spaces, places and social relations. She is the author of several books, including *The Routledge Handbook of Urban Resilience* (2020).

migration, eviction, care, water and infrastructure and queer). Other abstracts were selected for the production of short videos describing situated experiences, life trajectories, and different ways of approaching research about feminist struggles. The videos are available with summaries in Portuguese [here](#) and with summaries in English [here](#).

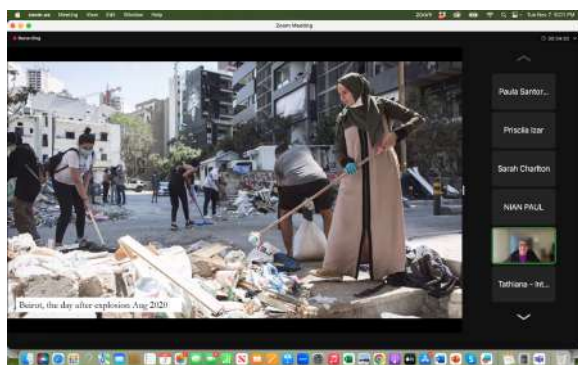
In addition to highlighting the relevance and urgency of the seminar series' main topic and associated themes, the virtual seminar helped strengthen networks of research and practice, as already described above. Moreover, the keynote sessions helped frame the discussions that would take place in the face-to-face seminars, in particular, Veronica Gago's discussion about the economic overexploitation of underpaid working women and their growing indebtedness, Faranak Miraftab's association of women's care to radical feminist practices of resistance and Adriana Allen's careful descriptions of the lived experiences of communities living off the sanitation grid in the African continent. Faranak Miraftab's talk inspired the organisation of a parallel event of HIC's co-learning space on feminist practices and the habitat at the 68th Annual Commission on the Status of Women, titled "Care, Territories and Violence: enhancing gender equality, women's land and habitat rights to accelerate poverty eradication."



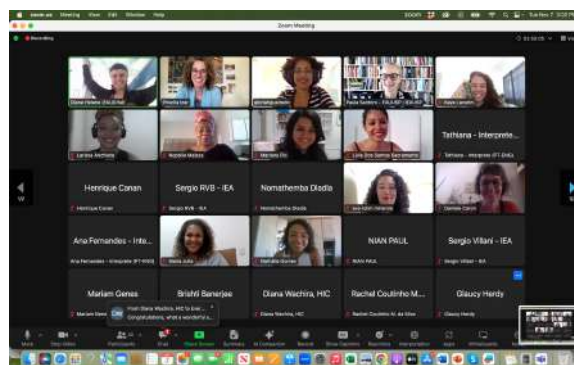
Letícia Vella presents work titled "The impact of the pandemic and the participation of women in research territories" during the session titled Urban and Housing Transformation and Indebtedness, moderated by Priscila Izar. Photo: Priscila Izar, 8 November, 2023.



Larissa Anchieta (below) presents her work titled "Feminist Afro Diasporic resistance: popular culture as basis for the transformation of peripheral spaces by black women in São Luís (MA)" during the session titled New Epistemologies, Ancestry, Black Feminism, moderated by Professor Gloria Figueiredo (above). Photo: Priscila Izar, 8 November, 2023.



Professor Faranak Miraftab keynote session titled “Feminist Lens and the Underworlds of Urban Struggles: *Sumud* as Everyday Practice of Radical Care and Resistance”. Photo: Priscila Izar, 8 November, 2023.



Closing session of the virtual seminar. Photo: Priscila Izar, 8 November, 2023.

3.2. FACE TO FACE SEMINARS



Opening session of the seminar series face-to-face event in Johannesburg, event at Wits University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 12 April 2024.

In addition to expanding on the scholarly exchanges that happened in the virtual seminar, the face-to-face seminars sought to disseminate knowledge about the

role of women in transforming their territories, encouraging innovation and the generation of new knowledge and partnerships between researchers and community leaders.

The face-to-face events were organised in two main sets of activities: a day-long research workshop and multiple days of site visits. The activities and debates that took place during the face-to-face events were interdisciplinary in nature, facilitating a process of situated, gradual learning. Generally speaking, the research workshops sought to strengthen scientific-academic cooperation through the exchange of knowledge between national and international researchers, national students and women leaders working in their territories. Meanwhile, the visits facilitated situated learning and exchange, through discussions with local leaders and other agents involved in local processes of transformation, such as technical advisory professionals and members of solidarity networks. In many cases the site visits were mediated by researchers and/or practitioners working in the territories. Local and international networks of solidarity were also forged and strengthened during the face-to-face exchanges.

3.2.1 SEMINAR IN SÃO PAULO

The face-to-face seminar in São Paulo took place between 12 and 15 March 2024, at the Sesc Research and Training Centre (Sesc CPF) and in territories in the Central, East and South zones of the city of São Paulo. The seminar in São Paulo was coordinated by Paula Santoro and Amanda Silber Bleich, both researchers at LabCidade - the Public Space and Right to the City Laboratory at FAUUSP. In addition to the partner universities mentioned above, the event in São Paulo was supported by LaPlan - Territorial Planning Laboratory and NEG - Esperança Garcia Gender Studies Centre, both from UFABC in São Bernardo, Brazil.

12 March 2024 - academic event

The event began on 12 March at Sesc CPF, with a programme focusing on the experiences of urban feminist struggles in South Africa and Tanzania, and a workshop on intersectional research methodology, centred on territories and the life experiences and struggles of local leaders and residents.

The first block, titled "Experiences of Feminist Urban Struggles in Africa", was marked by the speeches of African university professors and community leaders. They shared their experiences in the territories where they work, emphasising the central role of women in the struggle for their rights and in transforming their communities. The participants were Petunia Mabuza (community leader in the Asivikelane initiative and in the Phomolong neighbourhood in Tshwane, South

Africa); Husna Shechongue (National Coordinator of the Federation of the Urban Poor, Tanzania); Shumani Luruli (Programme Coordinator of the NGO Planact, South Africa), and Elinorata Mbuya (Professor at Ardhi University, Tanzania). The panel was moderated by Dr Priscila Izar (School of Architecture and Planning, CUBES, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa).

The second block brought together Brazilian and South African researchers, who presented their experiences and reflections on feminist research methodologies. In the first session, mediated by Professor Paula Freire Santoro, Professor Sarah Charton (School of Architecture and Planning, CUBES, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) presented research centred on the expression of the experiences of homeless people in Johannesburg, with feminist approaches used to access the hidden and precarious territories of marginalised men. Professors Rossana Tavares (Universidade Federal Fluminense, Brazil) and Diana Helene Ramos (Univ. Federal de Alagoas, Brazil) presented their recent research into "epistemological indiscipline" to propose a turn towards research that is embodied in social reality, with women as research subjects who put into question research approaches that naturalize patriarchy and other forms of oppression.

In the second session, Professor Paula Meth (Urban Studies and Planning, University of Glasgow, UK) presented her work that uses urban diaries as a way to explore the everyday experiences of individuals and communities in marginalized territories, who live through crime, inequality and unemployment. In dialogue with her work, Professor Gabriela Leandro Pereira (Federal University of Bahia, Brazil) presented her experiences in the classroom with themes linked to urbanism, ethnic-racial issues, gender and diversity, in research around urban history, memory, multimedia narratives, literature and visual arts. The panel was moderated by Professor Glória Figueiredo (Federal University of Bahia, Brazil).

The talks were recorded and are available on LabCidade's digital platforms and in a [LabCidade Youtube playlist](#).



From left to right, Elinorata Mbuya, Husna Shechongue, Petúnia Mabuza, Shumani Luru and Priscila Izar at the table "Experiences of Feminist Urban Struggles in Africa", at Sesc CPF. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 12 March 2024.



Sesc CPF auditorium during the seminar. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 12 April 2024.



Lecture by professors Diana Helene and Rossana Tavares at the panel "Exploring feminist methodologies: identities, diversities and experiences" at Sesc CPF. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 12 March 2024.



Sesc CPF auditorium during the seminar. Front left, Husna Shechonge, right: Elinorata Mbuya. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 12 April 2024.

13 to 15 March 2024 - visits to the territories and community dialogues

On the following days, a group of around 40 participants, made up of professors and researchers from different regions of Brazil and the world, and community leaders from across São Paulo, visited territories led by feminist leaders in the Central, East and South regions of São Paulo. The group visited housing

occupations, joint housing projects and agroecological gardens. The locations visited and the workshops involved are shown in the tables below:

13TH MARCH		
Location	Location	Workshops
Mutirão Carolina Maria de Jesus	Belém, Central Zone	Evaniza Rodrigues (MSTLI) Kaya Lazarini (USINA);
Penha Pietras Occupation	Consolação, Central Zone	Welita Caetano (leader of the Front for the Struggle for Housing); Guilia Ramilo (coordinator of Penha Pietra); Samira Rodrigues (researcher at FAUUSP)

14TH MARCH		
Location	Location	Workshops
Mutirão União da Juta	Fazenda da Juta, São Mateus, East Zone	Roseane Maria de Queiroz S(MSTLI) Kaya Lazarini (USINA);
Women of the GAU	Vila Jacuí, East Zone	Vilma Martins de Oliveira (Women of the GAU) and Maria Clara Ribeiro Camargo (RAPPA)

15TH MARCH		
Location	Location	Workshops
Dandara Task Force	Jardim São Savério, South Zone	Maria das Graças Xavier (UMM - Mutirão Dandara / Habitat Network); Maria de Fátima dos Santos (UMM - Mutirão Dandara)
Street Boys and Girls Project	São Bernardo do Campo	Roseli Simão (Olga Benário Movement); Fran Rocha (Ocupa Sapatão); Rita Dionísio (Bloco Mulheres do ABC)

The housing project is located next to Belém Metro Station in a Special Zone of Social Interest (ZEIS). After almost 30 years of struggle, the area was allocated to the Landless Movement East 1 (MSTL1) for construction of a housing project through self-help (*mutirão*). The legal transfer of the land to the movement was only finalised in 2016 after several occupations and negotiations with the São Paulo Metropolitan Housing Company (COHAB). Since 2015, various activities have been carried out to organise the group and develop the project in conjunction with USINA, a technical assistance NGO. The project was approved in 2022 with funds from the São Paulo City Hall's "Pode Entrar" programme to assist 227 low-income families.

In the round table discussion, Evaniza Rodrigues (MSTL1) and Kaya Lazarini (FAUUSP/USINA) presented the project, emphasising the importance of the participatory process in the design and execution of the work. Other community members as well as members of the advisory team were present. Their speeches emphasised the role of women in the management of the project and on the construction site. The location of the land was also a point of discussion: as it is in the city's expanded centre, close to the metro station, community members recounted the difficulties of the 30-year struggle to occupy and maintain the land until it was legally transferred to the movement. Another point of discussion was the bottlenecks faced in the *mutirão* model, compared to the construction market. Issues such as the conflictual relationship with the public authorities, with the suspension of the transfer of funds during the work, lead to delays in the delivery of the units.

We went on to visit the building site, where we learnt about three different flats under construction, representing the project's three housing types. Two of them have two bedrooms and a balcony, and one has three bedrooms without a balcony. The area of the flats varies from 62 to 67 square metres, significantly larger than the social housing units built in the conventional market. The units are divided into two buildings: an L-shaped blade with 11 floors, and a tower with 17 floors. On the ground floor, various community facilities will be built, such as a party room, playroom and kitchen. There are also plans to build an institutional area, to be occupied by a day care or after-school facility, the headquarters of the East 1 movement, as well as the concierge.



Conversation round at the Carolina Maria de Jesus Mutirão, Belém. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.



Visit to the Carolina Maria de Jesus Mutirão construction site. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.



A worker from Carolina Maria de Jesus and Husna, a speaker from Tanzania, holding the project banner. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.



Participants gathered in the community space of the Carolina Maria de Jesus Mutirão. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.

Penha Pietras Occupation

The occupation is located in one of the most expensive areas of the city, at the corner of Av. Consolação and Av. Paulista. The Penha Pietras building used to house a hotel which closed its doors during the Covid-19 pandemic. The building was abandoned until November 2021, when it was occupied by a group of 260 people, mainly homeless women from the Movement for Housing and Social Inclusion (MMIS). The occupation's legal situation is fragile, with repossession proceedings in progress. Today, the occupation is established, built and organised

in a popular way, structuring itself to be a space for art and culture made by and for the community.

We were welcomed by Giulia Ramilo, Welita Ribeiro, leaders of the occupation, and Samira Rodrigues (FAUUSP), who presented the history of the struggle to remain in the building and their experience over the years of occupation. The role of women was also a topic discussed, as they are at the forefront of the movement and the day-to-day organisation of the occupation. The issue of access to water also appeared as a central point, since at the beginning of the occupation there was only one water point on the ground floor of the building, and after much struggle they achieved water connections for all the flats.

During the tour, we walked up the 11 floors of the building, since it doesn't have a lift in operation. We saw the communal recreational and meeting spaces and a communal kitchen. We also visited furnished and empty flats. We ended the tour on the terrace, which has a privileged view of the city. There we could also see the rapid expansion of the real estate market in the area.



Conversation round at the Penha Pietras Occupation. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.



Conversation round at the Penha Pietras Occupation. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024



Visit to the Penha Pietras Occupation building.
Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.



Terrace of the Penha Pietras Occupation. Photo:
Paula Freire Santoro, 13 March 2024.

Mutirão União da Juta

Mutirão União da Juta was the result of an intense process of struggle by housing movements in the East Zone of São Paulo, involving various occupations in the region. In 1992, the Landless Movement East 1 (MST Leste 1) won land from the São Paulo State Government's Urban Development Company (CDHU) and invited USINA to develop the housing project. The complex was inaugurated in 1998 and houses 160 families. One of the most striking aspects of the project was the early construction of a community centre - which, during the construction work, served as the site headquarters and nursery. With the inauguration, the day care began operating under an agreement with the City Council, and the rest of the space was adapted for other community uses, such as a bakery, library, rooms for training courses for young people and a chapel.

Roseane Maria de Queiroz, a resident of the Paulo Freire mutirão and involved in the struggle and construction of the União da Juta Mutirão, presented the project together with four residents. The focus of the talk was the ongoing community engagement work carried out by the movement, led by women, which has ensured the involvement of new generations in the management of community spaces and the continuity of the movement's work in the region, even after the buildings have been constructed.

Three residents opened the doors of their flats to visitors. The units are two-bedroom flats, each with a different typology, ranging from 63 to 68 square metres - a size that also stands out compared to the social housing units built on the market.



Conversation round at Mutirão União da Juta.
Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.



Residents of Mutirão União da Juta telling about the history of the movement. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.



Visit to the Mutirão União da Juta housing estate. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.



A visit to the flat of a resident of the União da Juta Mutirão. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.

Women of the GAU

Located in Vila Jacuí in São Miguel Paulista, the GAU Women's Association (Grupo de Agricultura Urbana - GAU) is an association of women who work as urban farmers in the East Zone of São Paulo. In addition to raising environmental awareness, they promote healthy cooking by taking agro ecological products to corporate events, workshops and other activities that promote the importance of agroecology and ancestral knowledge. They work hard to raise awareness among the region's children about how to properly cultivate the land, thinking not only about the present but also about the future. They share their knowledge in order to improve people's diets, recover ancestral and popular knowledge, learn about

the local realities on their territory, while also experimenting with innovative practices of urban agriculture, biodiversity, sustainability and food sovereignty.

GAU currently has two spaces: a head office with a community garden and a dining area, and another community garden recently occupied on an idle COHAB site under the Vila Jacuí Viaduct, where they grow a variety of organic food.

We were greeted by “the neighbour,” an elderly woman who is part of the movement, who welcomed all the participants with a hug at the door of the space. Afterwards, a hearty lunch was served, prepared with food grown in the space. We visited the second vegetable garden built by the Association, where the president of the GAU, Vilma Martins, told us about the history of the movement and its relationship with the neighbourhood and public authorities. The gardens are now part of the Sampa+Rural network, a City Hall platform that brings together agriculture, tourism and healthy food initiatives.

Back at the headquarters, the conversation circle was led by Vilma Martins, Clara Ribeiro and Maria Lucia Bellenzani, both representing RAPPA, and other members of the GAU were present. Once again, the strength and protagonism of women appeared as the central topic of conversation, with revealing accounts of how their involvement in the movement rescued them from situations of domestic violence. The struggle for permanence in the face of the advance of the property market was also a central topic, brought up by a woman farmer who recently had her vegetable garden destroyed under these circumstances. At the end of the activity, RAPPA donated seedlings for the farmer to start planting again.



Certification of GAU Women by Sampa+Rural as a Healthy Food Hub. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.



Lunch prepared by the Women of GAU. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.



Visit to the garden of the Women of GAU project. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.



Conversation round at the Women of GAU project. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 14 March 2024.

Dandara Task Force

The Dandara Project was born in 2015 as a result of the work of the Association of Housing Movements of the Southeast Region and the Union of Housing Movements (UMM), which conquered the land in Jardim São Savério, in the South Zone of São Paulo, through a public call. With the Association's continuous struggle and persistence, it aimed to guarantee adequate housing and win the right to housing for 50 families, the vast majority of whom are female heads of household.

The joint effort was included in the Póde Entrar Programme in 2022. With the start of construction in March 2023, the beneficiary families began meeting monthly to hold assemblies and participate in social work. The construction monitoring and financial management committees held ongoing meetings to deal with the demands of the project, with the support of the Ambiente Arquitetura Technical Consultancy and the Coordination of Housing Movements of the Southeast Region.

Graça Xavier and Maria de Fátima dos Santos, UMM leaders, led the visits to the construction site, which is scheduled to be finalised later this year.

Leaving the construction site in the direction of the community centre, we walked through various housing estates. Their history was told by the UMM leaders present at the talk. Although Dandara is a recent project, the struggle for housing in the region dates back to the 1990s, when residents began organising to demand the production of affordable housing. In 1990, the first contract was signed with the city hall, which made it possible to build 200 houses through a

joint effort, forming Jardim Celeste I. The following year, a second agreement was signed, also for 200 houses, making up Jardim Celeste II. In addition to the houses of approximately 70m², a community area for meetings, leisure, a day care, a collective kitchen and a sports court were also built. During the years of the Maluf-Pitta mayoral administrations, work was paralysed due to their own political agendas, which opposed the mutirão model, but in 1997 a new contract was signed for Jardim Celeste IV, with 156 units also built through mutirão. Between 1997 and 1998, some of the residents in risk areas were relocated to another housing estate built by the city council, with funds from the Água Espraiada Urban Operation. In 2003, the work was completed, totalling 1076 housing units, including houses and flats.⁶ The role women played in winning the land and building the units was emphasised throughout the conversation.



Mutirão Dandara construction site. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 15 March 2024.



Visit to a flat in Mutirão Dandara. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 15 March 2024.

⁶ The history of the struggle for popular housing in the region is detailed in: Regino, A.N.; Sanches, D.; Xavier, M. da G. The empowerment of women in the struggle for housing: Mutirão Jardim Celeste in São Paulo. A: Seminário Internacional de Investigación en Urbanismo. "XII Seminario Internacional de Investigación en Urbanismo, São Paulo-Lisbon, 2020". São Paulo: Faculty of Architecture, University of Lisbon, 2020, DOI 10.5821/siiu.10071.



Surrounding Mutirão Dandara, with units from the various phases of Jardim Celeste. Photo: Paula Freire Santoro, 15 March 2024.



UMM activists at the round table discussion on Mutirão Dandara and the housing estates in Jardim Celeste. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 15 March 2024.

Feminist social movements in Greater ABC

The São Paulo seminar ended at the headquarters of the Meninos e Meninas de Rua do ABC Project, a social organisation located in São Bernardo do Campo that serves socially vulnerable children and adolescents and their families and works to build and intervene in public policies and cultural actions.

Through dialogue with UFABC professors Bruna Mendes and Sandra (San) Momm, representatives of three feminist social movements from the Greater ABC region were present: Fran Rocha, from Ocupa Sapatão ABC, a collective of lesbian women who organise artistic meetings, soirees, conversation circles and entrepreneurial fairs; Roseli Simão, from the Olga Benário Movement, which organises women to fight against patriarchal-capitalist oppression and in the struggle for socialism; and Rita Dionísio, from Bloco Mulheres do ABC, an independent carnival block that promotes women's empowerment actions, such as percussion initiation workshops and conversation circles.

After the round table discussion, the seminar ended in celebration with a performance by the Bloco Mulheres do ABC, with rhythms from Afro-Brazilian indigenous popular culture and original songs.

The extremely rich and diverse experiences in São Paulo will be the objective of further reflection by participants of the seminar and research partners, particularly: (i) resistance against the expansion of the property market, particularly in relation to the practices of the social movements (as discussed in the Penha Pietras Occupation and at Women from GAU); (ii) continuity of the

struggle after housing is achieved, something that came up during the visits to the different mutirões; and (iii) Occupation of COHAB (public housing projects) residual areas, which became more evident during the visit to the housing states near the Dandara project). In the final session of this report we point to some of the future projects emerging from reflections based on these site visits, while acknowledging that this plan is a work in progress.



Conversation round at the ABC Street Boys and Girls Project. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 15 March 2024.



Court of the ABC Street Boys and Girls Project, with banners of organised social movements. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 15 March 2024.



Presentation by the ABC Women's Bloc at the close of the Seminar. Photo: Amanda Silber Bleich, 15 March 2024.



Seminar participants at the closing event. Photo: Author unknown, 15 March 2024.

3.2.2 SEMINAR IN JOHANNESBURG

12 April 2024 - academic event

The seminars in Johannesburg were coordinated by Priscila Izar (CUBES, Wits University), with support from Mariam Genes (Wits University and IHSS/ Ardhi University). The preparation phase involved important contacts with social movements and research and social assistance organisations such as the Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF) and the Centre for Faith and Community at the University of Pretoria (UP). TLF and the UP Centre work in partnership with marginalised communities in Tshwane, such as Mamelodi, Eesterust, Salvakop, Plastic View and with residents of the city centre. Another relevant aspect in the organisation of the seminar in Johannesburg was CUBES' current involvement in a multi-year, extended research project, the Kelvin-Alexandra-Frankenwald City Studio, close to Alexandra Township, which includes the informal settlement of Sijwetla and several temporary shelters (TRAs). Associations of residents from these territories took part in the seminar in Johannesburg, and welcomed participants in their communities, sharing their experiences of struggle.

The first day of the seminar, 12 April, was in the new block of the School of Architecture and Planning (SoAP), at Wits University, on the Braamfontein campus. In addition to the academics and community leaders participating in the series, representatives from the UP Centre for Faith and Community, TLF, PLANACT, Serapeng sa basadi le Ditlhare and the Eesterust Residents' Association took part.

The morning session brought together female community leaders working in different territories of South Africa to introduce their work to each other and facilitate a collective reflection of their struggle. Zelda Maasdorp spoke about the living conditions and struggles of women in Eesterust, a neighbourhood built during the Apartheid regime to resettle the population, then defined as coloured, who had been evicted from other central city neighbourhoods. Currently in Eesterust, the residents' demands are for basic infrastructure services, education and to combat domestic violence. In addition, the Eesterust Women's Association is fighting against the erasure of the violence they suffered during the apartheid regime, and for fair compensation for their forced eviction and relocation to Eesterust.

Mamosweu Tsoabi spoke about her work in Waterdal, a predominantly rural area currently undergoing a rapid process of land occupation, with the establishment

of small farms in the town of Emfuleni, south of Johannesburg. This occupation is the result of private groups subdividing the land and selling it to families who have been waiting decades for the state to provide them with housing. Because they are on private land, the state refuses to bring infrastructure to these subdivisions, which have a precarious road structure, very little lighting and water supply. Along with this situation of urban precariousness and economic poverty, there is a growing condition of urban violence, whether it's the theft of water tanks installed by residents and other basic structures, or domestic violence. The residents, who have some resources such as their own vehicles, try to fill the gap left by the state in terms of urban services and social assistance through community associations.

Serapeng sa Basadi le Ditlhare (Serapeng) is a women-led co-operative working to promote agroecology and energy renewal in Waterdal, mainly involving women, including victims of domestic violence. Mamosweu Tsoabi is one of the leaders of the organisation, working on a number of actions, from the production of thermal bags to reduce energy consumption when cooking meals, to the construction of a biodigester and a community kitchen with the capacity to serve 200 families in Waterdaal. An award made it possible to build the biodigester on Serapeng's premises. The operation of the community kitchen is a theme that cuts across various feminist struggles in Waterdal, such as healthy eating, the fight against malnutrition, care and the fight against climate change.

Mamosweu's presentation on Serapeng's many activities raised a lot of interest among the seminar participants and their desire to develop similar projects in their communities. Invitations were made to Serapeng members to promote training courses for women, the production of thermal bags and the adoption of agroecological principles in the construction of community gardens, pointing to a gap in integrated government actions and programmes to meet the multiple demands and realities of the territories. Training to local communities by organisations such as Serapeng requires funding, which then places another burden on local communities and their partner NGOs and research centres, to raise such funds.

After lunch, Professor Paula Meth facilitated two round table discussions. The first addressed, from a historical perspective, the strategies and daily practices of feminist struggle within urban social movements in Brazil, and how these struggles have been transformed by the institutionalisation of some of the grassroots demands. The panel included a female leader, Graça Xavier, representing the National Union for Popular Housing (UNMP) and the Women

and Habitat Network, and a researcher of women's activism, Mariana Assef, from UFBA (Brazil).

Graça presented an overview of the struggles and challenges for housing in the state of São Paulo, associating UNMP's creation to grassroots response to the lack of housing policy, and the gradual political empowerment of the movement's members, mainly women. In this context, the housing movements began to address the issue of gender and, based on critical reflections on the conditions and rights of women (and later the LGBTQIA+ population, albeit more timidly), finally began to participate in the construction of public policies on gender. An important victory was the adoption of a rule in national housing programmes to give priority to victims of domestic violence. Mariana discussed, from her research in Salvador, Bahia, on the production of knowledge about feminist activism and from engaged research, how her own engagement affects her academic, social and political practice, and the significance of this formation for urban practice and politics, and the feminist struggle.

The second panel, with the participation of Professors Paula Santoro (FAU USP), and Tatu Limbumba (Ardhi University) and SoAP Lecturer Nqobile Malaza (Wits), discussed their situated, feminist research approaches. The panel addressed questions such as how to enter the territory(ies), how and with whom to relate, what meaning to give to research. Speaking about her experience as a researcher and supervisor of undergraduate, master's and doctoral studies, Paula Santoro also highlighted the role of academic institutions in denouncing situations in which local populations and/or social movements are neglected, despite their established rights. One example is the eviction observatories, which simultaneously map forced removals and offer technical and legal assistance to the victims of removals. Tatu Limbumba stressed the need for a research institution like the IHSS to more broadly adopt critical approaches to gender and urbanisation research in the context of Africa, going beyond descriptive analyses of gender equality and female empowerment and expanding research agendas on feminist practices in the territories. In her presentation, Nqobile Malaza explored her role and positionality as a black teacher, teaching predominantly black students in a society still divided by the legacy of colonisation and apartheid. She spoke about the importance of bringing black popular culture into the classroom and other spaces for academic discussion, as well as recovering ancestral traditions, such as storytelling, as a way of recording existing and producing new knowledge(s).

While covering a broad range of topics, there was a noticeable separation during the seminar's sessions, between the realities and feminist struggles of the poorest population in Gauteng, who are fighting for access to land, adequate housing and guaranteed access to university education, and the feminist struggles in academia. The intersectional approach brings these realities closer together and situated research is a method of engagement and partnership, but there are major challenges ahead, including the establishment and continuation of extended research projects across, something that would enable longer term, transdisciplinary work and collaborations.

The seminar at Wits University was simultaneously broadcast on YouTube by LabCidade FAUUSP, with presentations in English, and parallel translations into Swahili and Portuguese by seminar participants fluent in those languages.



Participants in the academic event at Wits University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 12 April 2024.



Participants in the academic event at Wits University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 12 April 2024.



Special session Experiences of feminist urban



Special session Experiences of feminist urban struggles, at Wits University. Right: Mandisa

struggles in Africa and Latin America, at Wits University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 12 April 2024.



Special session Experiences of feminist urban struggles in Africa and Latin America, at Wits University. Eesterust Women's Association (centre, Zelda Maasdorp). Photo: Priscila Izar, 12 April 2024.

Dyantyi, Coordinator, UP Centre for Faith and Community. Next to her, Nombulelo Buli Ndandani, TLF. Photo: Priscila Izar, 12 April 2024.



Graça Xavier presenting the strategies of the housing movement in São Paulo. Special session Experiences of feminist urban struggles in Africa and Latin America, at Wits University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 12 April 2024.



From left to right, Mamosweu Tsoabi, Zelda Maasdorp, Paula Santoro translating for Graça Xavier, Petunia Mabuza. Special session Experiences of feminist urban struggles in Africa and Latin America, at Wits University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 12 April 2024.



International round table: feminist studies and territorial analysis: contexts, trends and research agendas. Standing, Nqobile Malaza, seated: Paula Meth and Tatu Limbumba, at Wits University. Photo: Priscila Izar, 12 April 2024.

13 to 16 April 2024 - visits to the territories and community dialogues

Between 13 and 16 April a group of fifteen scholars and community leaders visited different territories in Johannesburg and Tshwane. Seminar participants were greeted by large numbers of residents who belong to social movements and local community organisations. The locations visited and the workshops involved are shown in the tables below:

13TH APRIL - Phomolong, Tshwane		
Location	Location	Workshops
Phomolong neighbourhood	East Tshwane	Struggles around water and sanitation in Phomolong Petunia Mabuza and Busi Nhlapo, ASIVKLANE Shumani Luruli, PLANACT
		Walking as Research Method Dr. Alex Halligey, Rhodes University

15TH APRIL - Stjwetla and Alexandra, Johannesburg		
Location	Location	Workshops
Green House TRA	Sjjwetla	Care practices and struggles in Stjwetla: community organising, health and patrolling Jane Mogale, Ward Committee Member for the elderly and disabled Kgabo Raphala, Alexandra Water Warriors
Alexandra Water Warriors	Alexandra	Struggling for social and economic opportunities in Alexandra: the AWW Women's Forum Mpho Tefo, Chair of AWW Women's Council Kgabo Raphala

16TH APRIL -Tshwane Leadership Foundation		
Location	Location	Workshops
TLF Potter's House	Tshwane CBD	TLF's approach and work around GBV, economic insecurity, housing Maninha Ramarain - TLF Buli Ndandani - TLF Mandisa Dyanty - UP Center for Faith and Community

Phomolong

On April 13th, the first visit to the Phomolong territory in Tshwane took place. The theme of the visit was women's struggle for water and sanitation in the territory.

Phomolong is an informal settlement neighbouring Mamelodi Township in the North East region of Tshwane. Townships emerged mostly during South African apartheid's segregationist policy, mainly between the 1920s and 1960s. Mamelodi was established in 1953. Phomolong emerged from the resettlement of 40 families from Marabastadt in central Tshwane, already in the post apartheid era. Phomolong is currently divided into four sectors: A, B, C and C-shacks.

Petúnia Mabuza, participant in the feminist urban struggles seminar, is one of Phomolong's community leaders, working in the Asivikelane campaign, in partnership with PLANACT. Priscila Izar, one of the organisers of the seminar series, works on Phomolong through her postdoctoral research .

The South African government, through the policies of the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) and subsequent revisions, guarantees the right of the low-income population to decent housing, offered by the state, mainly through production by private agents. However, provision is sparse and families often wait for decades to access housing. The South African Informal Settlement Upgrading Programme (UISP) promotes the upgrading of informal settlements. Based on the policy, UISP should prioritize incremental, in-situ upgrading over relocation and promote resident engagement, but program implementation is often fragmented and top-down. Phomolong is currently undergoing upgrading work, but only in one of its sections. Overall, the provision of infrastructure and services in Phomolong is still inadequate in relation to residents' needs.

Phomolong's female leaders are part of Asivikelane, a campaign coordinated by a series of non-governmental organisations, including PLANACT. Asiveklane emerged during the Covid-19 pandemic, when restrictive measures imposed on the population of South Africa, especially in the poorest and densest neighbourhoods, prevented the local circulation of social workers and other interlocutors between the population and government bodies. Adopting the methodologies of "social audits" or social community surveys, and using social media platforms, residents of informal settlements began to collect information about the conditions in their territories, mainly in relation to sanitation. Compilation of data by partner institutions like PLANACT allowed neighbourhood organisations to demand better services from local governments, particularly in relation to sanitation. Thus, in Phomolong during the pandemic, the distribution of drinking water was expanded with the installation of taps in public areas. New

chemical toilets were also installed, and the cleaning schedule was improved. However, this provision occurred unevenly across the territory, with Phomolong sectors A and B receiving more services than sectors C and C-Shacks. Moreover, since 2022 water provision has become unstable around the Gauteng region and particularly in informal settlements. During our visit, there was no running water in Phomolong and trucked water is still widely used in the area.

The visit on April 13th began with a conversation, coordinated by local leaders, Petunia Mabuza and Busi Nhlapo. Local leader, Mr Malukelo, was the first to speak and welcome the seminar team. Then the local participants, mostly volunteers from SEF/Asiveklane in Phomolong, introduced themselves and spoke briefly about their experiences living there.

The leaders described the neighbourhood as divided into 4 sections: A, which is a settlement in the process of formalisation, B, C and C-shacks. All sections have detached houses on the lot, but with different density patterns, sector A is denser and sectors C and C-shacks have an almost rural appearance. During the conversation, residents described how Phomolong developed from section A, resulting from the removal of families from Marabastadt. On that occasion, some houses were built, on large lots, with front gardens. They were later accompanied by occupations of surrounding lots, in a process of densification of the area.

After the conversation, we went on a walk through the different sections of Phomolong, to understand the different realities, mainly in relation to the provision of water and sanitation, but also in terms of social activities. When leaving for the walk, a water truck arrived and it was possible to understand the community's social and spatial patterns to obtain water. The different ways of storing water in houses are also visible, such as the presence of buckets, as well as their sale at the entrance to the community. Furthermore, it was possible to observe many temporary installations made to obtain electricity, in precarious arrangements that pose a great risk to the community, especially children. When we arrived at the Section C-shaks we visited Thoko Shabangu's house. Thoko volunteers on a climate change awareness campaign. She participates in disaster assistance during floods and in a fire brigade during the dry season.

After the walk we returned to Busi's backyard, where the morning conversation circle was organised. There, a lunch with typical South African food was served, prepared by Mamelodi residents and local caterers, Zodwa Khoza and Simangele Ndlovu. After lunch, Alex Halligey, lecturer in the Department of Drama at Rhodes University, offered a workshop on walking as a research method for the seminar

participants. The Phomolong community will be part of a comparative research project titled: "Inequality in Walking the 24 hour city: temporality, intersectionality and the embodied experience in Dar es Salaam, Tshwane and Cardiff", led by Dr Margot Rubin (Cardiff University), and with the participation of Professor Sarah Charlton and Priscila Izar. The workshop addressed the theme of walking based on sensations and perceptions of the body, and the memories of the participants. While a way to let off energy and emotion, the workshop was an opportunity to reflect on possible ways in which to co-produce feminist and situated research, as well as to engage with local leaders and communities in ways that are different from traditional in-depth qualitative research.



Conversation Circle in Phomolong, Tshwane.
Photo: Paula Santoro, 13 April, 2024.



Walking in Phomolong, Tshwane. Photo: Paula Santoro, 13 April, 2024.



Visit to one of the sites where SEF volunteers cleaned up. The site which became an illegal solid waste dump during the Covid-19 pandemic will be transformed into a



Visit the next area to be reclaimed in Phomolong, Tshwane. Photo: Paula Santoro, 13 April, 2024.

community garden. Phomolong, Tshwane.
Photo: Paula Santoro, 13 April, 2024.



Phomolong Setor B. Photo: Priscila Izar, 13 April, 2024.



Phomolong Setor C. Photo: Priscila Izar, 13 April, 2024.



Phomolong Sector C-Shacks. Photo: Priscila Izar, 13 April, 2024.



Thoko Shabangu, resident and community leader in Phomolong. Photo: Priscila Izar, 13 April, 2024.



Craftswoman in Phomolong, Tshwane. Photo: Paula Santoro, 13 April, 2024.



Workshop on research methodologies based on walking. Phomolong, Tshwane. Photo: Priscila Izar, 13 April, 2024.

Stjwetla

On Monday 15 April, the seminar toured Stjwetla, an informal settlement in Alexandra Township, in Johannesburg. The visit was organised by Tatenda Sonono, PhD candidate at SoAP, Wits University, and involved important local leaders such as Ma Ellen Chauke, an elderly in Sjwetla and well known female leader and advocate for the rights of residents of informal settlements in Johannesburg; Jane Mogale, who is also part of the Ward Committee Member for the elderly and disabled, and Kgabo Raphala, founding member of Alexandra Water Warriors and interlocutor between the communities of Sjtwetla and Alexandra.

As previously described, an interdisciplinary City Studio coordinated by Prof. Marie Huchzermeyer, Director of CUBES and a number of teachers and researchers, is being developed in this area which also includes Frankenwald, a large plot of land that was once owned by Wits University, donated to the institution for the construction of a new university campus, but later inserted in the university's real estate development projects to generate resources. It is against a backdrop of uncertainty about the future of Frankenweld and the surrounding communities that the City Studio is being structured. As a whole, the territory exemplifies the profound socio-spatial inequality characteristic of Gauteng and South Africa. From the pedestrian bridge that connects Sjtwetla to Alexandra, one can observe the silting of the Jukskei River due to the accumulation of domestic and industrial

waste, as well as, on the horizon, the luxurious neighbourhood of Sandton, one of the most expensive square metres in the country.

At the entrance to Sjtvetla there is a temporary accommodation (TRA) known as Green Houses, built in 2014 by the Gift of the Givers Foundation to house families that were evicted from the Jukskei river banks. The temporary housing project, planned for six months, continues to this day. Gift of the Givers also maintained the TRA until it was officially handed to the government of Johannesburg. There are 70 units, which are closed off using an external gate with various locking mechanisms. Residents of the TRA add steel reinforced screen doors for extra security. The modules have improvised internal divisions, whose program involves kitchen, living room and bedroom. The units do not have a bathroom and residents have a common bathroom, with individual toilets that are shared by about 5 families. Each unit is closed with a padlock for user control. As it is a public project, it has paving and street lighting, it is fenced, and the houses have electricity.

Sjtvetla neighbours the TRA Green House and expands towards the Jukskei River and Alexandra township. The neighbourhood became denser during the Covid-19 pandemic. Based on demand from residents, the Johannesburg government installed taps, where residents can access water that is carried in buckets and basins into their homes. There is no drainage system in the neighbourhood and the water, after being used, runs in the open towards the Jukskei River. Long rows of portable toilets mark the landscape. As in Phomolong, the units are allocated to a number of families who are responsible for cleaning and controlling entry with a padlock. Although the community cleans the units, there is an accumulation of trash next to the chemical toilets. This adds a health risk to the already risky use of these collective bathrooms by residents, including women and children. Particularly in Sjtvetla, where occupation is denser in comparison to Phomolong, it is possible to understand Professor Adriana Allen's reference (in her keynote speech) to the lack of dignity and humanity that is imposed on residents of marginalised areas, such as informal settlements in South Africa, due to the precariousness of the sanitation systems offered by the public authorities.

The visit began with a conversation in the TRA Green House community room, involving residents of the Green House and of Sjtvetla. The community leaders spoke about their struggles and the different forms of care they provide to the neighbourhood's residents. Their description of their daily challenges and lack of assistance by the government can almost be described as a condition of

destitution. The lack of security, especially at night and the occurrence of a series of brutal attacks on residents recently, motivated women to participate in neighbourhood patrol teams. This is organised as voluntary work to control who passes through the neighbourhood after dark. The presence of women in this role also reduces harassment of other women who walk around the neighbourhood at night, arriving home from work or commuting internally. The female patrol teams helped to reduce the feeling of insecurity in Sjt wetla, however, in a context of extreme precariousness and insecurity to the whole community.

On a daily basis, the women of Sjt wetla and TRA work together and organise themselves into committees for health, protection of the elderly population, children, pre- and post-natal care, etc. All this work supports social reproduction in Sjt wetla; there is very little to no remuneration for this voluntary work. The portion of the population that has formal employment is very small, including among residents with university education. Unemployment and poverty are very high in the area.

“Ma” Ellen Chauke, a prominent community leader in Sjt wetla and Johannesburg, summarised the feelings of residents and community leaders by expressing that the living situation is getting worse, not better. And so hopelessness also affects the daily life of the community. Still, the exchange of experiences with other community leaders from Gauteng, as well as Brazil and Tanzania encouraged Sjt wetla's leaders. The possibility of making their struggles and lives more visible seems to be, in the short term, an important cause. Jane Mogale, another important leader in Sjt wetla, insisted on taking the seminar participants to her house, a small room where nine people sleep at night. When it rains, Jane explained to us, the house fills with water, which is why the beds are high off the floor. From her life experience and politicisation, Jane is fully aware of the condition of poverty and destitution of the residents of Sjt wetla, at the same time she continues to work to protect them from the extreme precariousness which they currently experience.

Alexandra Water Warriors (AWW)

After visiting Jane's house, we continued walking towards Alexandra and the Alexandra Water Warriors (AWW) project. This is an organisation of residents dedicated to cleaning the Jukskei River to improve the neighbourhood's sanitation conditions, as well as exploring its tourist potential, both historical and in the potential beauty of the river. The work already carried out by AWW on the

banks of the river is impressive. A linear park was built on the banks where garbage was removed by volunteers. The river, however, is quite polluted, including by industrial waste. During our visit the river was red due to the disposal of waste from a paint industry.

AWW has several initiatives around the Jukskei River. In addition to cleaning, including through solid waste retention by a fishing net that crosses the river, there are patrollers who seek to prevent garbage from being disposed of in the river and the linear park. There are teams of garbage collectors and a recycling centre built with the support of private companies. There is an AWW Women's Forum, coordinated by Mpho Tefo, who also coordinates teams of volunteers involved in garbage collection and sorting (more information about AWW's work can be accessed at <https://alexandrawaterwarriors.org.za/>).

At AWW headquarters there is a restaurant, where lunch was served to seminar participants by chef Sifizo Molotshwa. Typical South African dishes were also served. After lunch we had a conversation with the AWW volunteers, particularly the members of the Women's Forum. AWW depends on the participation of volunteers, who currently number more than 2000. Through application for funds for social grants and other programs, AWW can raise resources, which can then pay for the work of volunteers. It became clear in the second round of conversation at AWW headquarters that many volunteers are dissatisfied with the lack of pay and face, as in Stjwetla, conditions of extreme poverty. The AWW leaders, however, have another interpretation, not only because they receive a small stipend but because they understand that only collective organisation will allow the community to transform their living conditions. Kgabo Raphala pointed to the cleaning of the banks of the Jukskei River and the recyclable waste deposit as concrete evidence of the transformative potential of the collective work of residents which, in his view, and that of other leaders, should continue to expand.



TRA Green House. Photo: Tatenda Sonono, 15 April, 2024.



Conversation with the Sjtwetla community. Standing: Kgabo Raphal, member of Alexandra Water Warriors. Photo: Tatenda Sonono, 15 April, 2024.



Left: Ellen Chauke, leadership at Stjwetla with the team of volunteers. Photo: Tatenda Sonono, 15 April, 2024.



Standing: Jane Mogale, leadership in Stjwetla with the team of volunteers. Photo: Tatenda Sonono, 15 April, 2024.



Row of portable toilets in Stjwetla. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Water running in the open sky towards the Jukskei River. Photo: Priscila Izar, Stjwetla, 15 April, 2024.



Jane Mogale near her home. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Jukskei River red due to waste disposal from a paint factory. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Linear park next to the Jukskei River in Alexandra. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Linear park next to the Jukskei River in Alexandra. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



AWW volunteer team. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Garbage collection network on the Jukskei River in Alexandra. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



AWW recyclable waste sorting center. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Conversation circle with AWW volunteers. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Center: Mpho Tefo, Director of the AWW Women's Council. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.



Participants of the feminist urban struggles seminar field visit to Stjwetla and Alexandra. Photo: Priscila Izar, 15 April, 2024.

Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF)

On the morning of April 16, seminar participants visited the headquarters of the Tshwane Leadership Foundation (TLF), in the city centre of Tshwane (formerly Pretoria). TLF is a faith-based non-governmental organisation dedicated to assisting extremely vulnerable populations, including people without homes and victims of domestic violence. A large portion of the population served by TLF are women, as well as LGBTQIA+ individuals. TLF's approach is to welcome, recover and reintegrate the individuals that they serve through a series of projects, some

in shelters and centres built and/or coordinated by TLF, others based on social and legal counselling for marginalised populations in their own territories (more information about TLF is available at <https://tlf.org.za/>).

TLF's history started with the transformation of vacant parking lots of religious temples in the central area of Pretoria into housing for the homeless. This happened in the 1990s and early 2000s, when the city's predominantly white population moved to the suburbs and parishes became unoccupied. Since then TLF has established different projects based on the concrete needs of the populations that they assist. With specific regard to gender based violence, TLF has shelters exclusively for women and their children. Manisha Ramnarain is the coordinator of Potter's House, a TLF drop-in centre in central Tshwane for women who are victims of gender based violence..

The visit to TLF was in the format of a conversation circle. After a round of introductions, Manisha Ramnarain and Buli Ndandani, TLF interlocutor in the Easterust community, coordinated the initial presentations. They discussed some of the challenges that TLF faces, with an increase in vulnerable and marginalised populations in the Tshwane region, one of the richest in South Africa. The coordinators of TLF's different projects are constantly faced with a lack of resources, both financial and in terms of personnel, to address the needs of marginalised populations that they assist. What was very impressive in these speeches was the crucial role of each of the coordinators, and how the experience of each of them informs the work of the TLF. This work takes place in different dimensions, in coordination with city officials, police officers and research centres.

After the coordinators' presentation, it was time for residents of one of the TLF projects to introduce themselves and tell their stories. It was a moment of great strength and emotion in which all participants sang religious hymns, celebrating overcoming and hope.

An important issue that was raised by the coordinators and participants of the TLF projects is the fact that the condition of vulnerability is a continuum; contexts may change and certain vulnerabilities may be overcome, but not completely due to structural challenges such as poverty and lack of housing security. For example, individuals and families who sought the TLF to escape situations of domestic violence may overcome these conditions, but will still face multiple forms of violence in their lives outside the TLF, such as precarious housing, lack of nearby

schools or facilities that are suitable for their children, or the impossibility of afford university fees. At the same time, TLF and other civil society organisations such as PLANACT, are part of a structure that supports marginalised communities, particularly women and children, in their moving through situations of violence. One of the goals of feminist research is to investigate and experiment with different forms of engagement. This is something that academic centres such as the UP Centre for Faith and Community are also exploring, and it is important that the organisations in South Africa that joined the local seminar continue to engage.



Conversation circle at the Tshwane Leadership Foundation with beneficiaries of the programs. Photo: Paula Santoro, 16 April, 2024.



From left to right: Sandra Momm (UFABC), Graça Xavier (UNMP), Mariana Assef (UFBA) in the conversation circle at TLF. Photo: Paula Santoro, 16 April, 2024.



Final considerations in the conversation at TLF. From left to right: Paula Meth (Un. Glasgow), Buli Ndandani (TLF and beneficiaries of one of TLF's programs. Photo: Priscila Izar, 16 April, 2024.



Final considerations in the conversation at TLF. Photo: Priscila Izar, 16 April, 2024.

3.2.3 SEMINAR IN DAR ES SALAAM

The seminar in Dar es Salaam was organised by Priscila Izar and Mariam Genes, researcher at IHSS, Ardhi University and doctoral candidate at SoAP, Wits University. Husna Shechongue, National Coordinator of the Federation for the Urban Poor, coordinated the organisation of the site visits. The relationship between the IHSS at Ardhi University, the Federation and the Center for Community Initiatives (CCI), a Tanzanian NGO partner with the Federation, is long-standing. IHSS research teams carry out work in various territories in Dar es Salaam and other Tanzanian cities where the CCI and the Federation operate, in research work under a co-production approach. Priscila works with Husna Shechongue on Priscila's postdoctoral research in Tanzania and South Africa.

April 17, 2024 - academic event

The opening event of the Dar es Salaam Seminar took place at Ardhi University, in the DMTC auditorium, organised by the Institute of Human Settlements Studies (IHSS). Makariums Mdemu, Director of IHSS opened the activities. The local office of the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (FES) supported the event through filming and online streaming (via the IHS YouTube channel), and translating the Swahili

presentations into English. The IHS at Erasmus University Rotterdam made its YouTube channel available to broadcast the event at Ardhi University.

The first session brought together female leaders in Tanzania, who spoke about their struggles against structural and daily difficulties, and their achievements. In Dar es Salaam, we chose to bring together, in the first session, the leaders of the territories to be visited in the following days. There were two reasons for this choice. First, the possibility of completely translating the leaders' speeches from Swahili into English (and later into Portuguese), unlike what happens during field translations, where translations are summarised and the essence of the original argument can be lost. Second, the participation of female leaders whose experiences and practices are often made invisible to the general public on a research seminar at one of the most important public universities in Tanzania.

The first session was indeed very powerful. In addition to talking about their work, the women sang songs as they usually do at community meetings, and socialised with the leaders of Brazil and South Africa. This created a welcoming atmosphere that continued throughout the days of the seminars in Dar es Salaam. This nurturing environment was not strange and was also felt in Brazil and South Africa, but in Tanzania it had a special meaning. The many songs and affectionate treatment that the leaders from different local organisations in Tanzania extended to the participants of the seminar and to each other seemed to seek to compensate for the lack of basic services and infrastructure in their territories, and also to overcome differences in their own approaches. It was a type of radical care practice, as described by Faranak Miraftab in her keynote speech of the virtual seminar. This is not to say that different ideas and visions of urban struggle were disregarded in the discussions. Rather, there was a commitment to expand on networks of solidarity, and to promote learning, despite differences, through care and nurturing.

Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi delivered the special lecture titled "On the struggles of marginalised and working women in urban and semi-urban areas in Tanzania against patriarchy and neoliberal globalisation: issues, dilemmas, alternatives", moderated by Demere Kitunga, feminist activist, writer and storyteller. The lecture provoked the audience to reflect about the relationship between the daily urban struggles of poor and marginalised women, as it is explored in the seminar series, and the historical feminist struggle to overcome oppressions against patriarchy, colonialism and neoliberal capitalism in Tanzania.

The presentation started with a historical review of feminist struggle(s) in Tanzania in rural and urban contexts, during colonisation and in the post-colonial

period. It highlighted how the colonial regime expanded patriarchy through the pressure and exploitation of women's work in rural areas. The post-independence period in Tanzania, the Arusha Declaration in 1967, coined on the principles of Socialism and self-sufficiency in 1967, together with an education project for self-sufficiency, represented an opportunity for society in Tanzania, and women specially, for emancipation from colonial exploitation.

The short socialist period represented for Tanzania, a poor country in East Africa, “the highest levels of adult literacy, school enrollment and the lowest levels of infant, child and maternal mortality in low-income countries in Africa.” Subsidised financing allowed the expansion of family farming projects and the independence of small farmers from multinational companies. However, the violence of forced removals to form rural villages in Tanzania revealed contradictions. Ultimately, the global oil crises in 1970 and the indebtedness of countries that depended on external credit, such as most African countries, forced Tanzania to adopt a policy of structural readjustment to build a “free market society”. The reversal of subsidy policies and the adoption of the “fee for service” principle and encouragement of entrepreneurship were accompanied by an “increase in the importance of women’s informal work in family income in rural and urban areas in Tanzania,” and an increase in the exploitation of female labour.

In this scenario, Professor Mbilinyi reflected on the meaning of urban feminist struggles, including in this repertoire the daily struggles for water, sanitation, shelter, education and health, etc. She highlighted an aspect observed in many face-to-face events of the seminar series, which is, women in their territories do not identify their struggles with a feminist cause, but their action aims to confront patriarchy and capitalist exploitation, demanding dignified treatment.

Indeed, seminar participants repeatedly experienced during the face-to-face events, how women living in marginalised conditions described the difficulties they face in their daily lives with indignation, speaking about the urgent need to transform their realities of oppression. Although lacking full clarity on future strategies and paths, these women express a common desire and urgency to design alternatives, including through exchanges of experiences and alliances. There is, however, a need to obtain resources, and this can be a dilemma. As organised women move from outlining strategies to seeking resources to implement them, their initial intents might get lost. Professor Mbilinyi concluded her speech on feminist struggles as permeated by losses and gains, and as process(es) in permanent construction and evolution. The morning session ended with the presentation of the short movie “Mama Mishe”, produced by Gertrude

Malizeni, who was present in the session. A conversation with Gertrude was moderated by Anna Mbise (FES). Annex 1 of this report reproduces Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi's keynote.



Opening of the event at Ardhi University. Photo: Paula Santoro, 17 April, 2024.



Opening of the event at Ardhi University. From left to right: Anna Mbise who translated from Swahili to English, Paula Santoro and Priscila Izar. Photo: Richard Prosper, 17 April, 2024.



Keynote speech. From left to right: Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi Demere Kitunga and Anna Mbise who translated from Swahili to English. Photo: Paula Santoro, 17 April, 2024.



Discussion after presentation of the movie Mama Mishe. Standing front, Gertrude Malizeni, back, Anna Mbise. Photo: Paula Santoro, 17 April, 2024.



Feminist leaders from Brazil, South Africa and Tanzania at the opening session of the Dar es Salaam seminar. Left to right: Graça Xavier (UNMP, Brazil), Petunia Mabuza (Asiveklane, South Africa) and Faria Shumari (UWAWAMA, Tanzania), with Anna Mbise (FES Tanzania). Photo: Paula Santoro, 17 April, 2024



Keynote speech. Professor Marjorie Mbilinyi and moderator Demere Kitunga Photo: Paula Santoro , 17 April, 2024..



Talk on feminist struggles in Tanzania at the opening session. From left to right: Faria Shumari, Anna Mbise, Sakina Gumbo, Graça



Opening of the event at Ardhi University. Photo: Richard Prosper, 17 April, 2024.

Xavier and Petunia Mabuza. Photo: Priscila Izar, 17 April, 2024.

17 to 20 April 2024 - visits to the territories and community dialogues

Between the afternoon of 17 April and 19 April, a group of twenty five scholars and community leaders visited different territories in Dar es Salaam. Like in Johannesburg, seminar participants met with a large number of residents in their neighbourhoods. The locations visited and the workshops involved are shown in the tables below. Due to heavy rains, the visit on 20 April was postponed.

17TH APRIL (afternoon) - Uwawama

Location	Location	Workshops
UWAWAMA	Manzese	Practices and the struggles of the Uwawama comrades around street vending and living Yusra Rajabu, Faria Shomari and Tina Mfanga

18TH APRIL - Self-construction in peripheries: water, sanitation and housing initiatives

Location	Location	Workshops
KEKO MACHUNGWA	Temeke District	Women, construction and sanitation in Keko Machungwa Husna Shechongue, Federation Theresa Ntanga, CCI
CHAMAZI	Temeke District	Women and housing in Chamazi Asilatu Asinangu, Federation Theresa Ntanga, CCI

19TH APRIL - Vigunguti and Karakata

Location	Location	Workshops
VIGUNGUTI	Ilala	On the work and struggle of the local federations for sanitation and adequate living Sakina Gumbo, Federation Theresa Ntanga, CCI

KARAKATA	Ilala	Karakata community's struggle against flooding and eviction Asha Pembe, Sarafina, Acheni Athuman
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20TH APRIL - Kisarawe (POSTPONED)		
Location	Location	Workshops
Mhanga Village	Kisarawe	Women in construction in Kisarawe Victoria Hailman and Joyce Said, TAWAH

UWAWAMA

In the afternoon of 17 April, we visited the headquarters of UWAWAMA, an organisation of informal urban workers that seeks collective solutions to the oppressions of the capitalist system such as financial debt, labour exploitation and the housing crisis. Information about UWAWAMA's agenda can be accessed at <https://roape.net/2022/03/17/women-who-sweat-working-women-organising-in-dar-es-salaam/>.

It was also an opportunity for two different movements with feminist causes, UWAWAMA and the Federation, to discuss their different strategies: UWAWAMA with a more blunt criticism of the capitalist model and the financial exploitation it promotes, particularly through high interest loans charged by financial organisations, but without a wide range of options for its members. And the Federation with a less radical discourse but a solid practice of forming community savings funds, which members can access for low-interest loans.



A presentation by Tina Mfanga from UWAWAMA to Federation members about UWAWAMA's history, goals and strategies. Left to right: Asma Asha Pembe, Sakina Gumbo, Tina Mfanga. Photo: Priscila Izar, 17 April, 2024.



Graça Xavier hands a t-shirt from UNMP to UWAWAMA leaders, Tina Mfanga and Stella Mwasa. Photo: Paula Santoro, 17 April, 2024.



Leaders and participants of various women-led movements, after the conversation at UWAWAMA about practices and struggles surrounding street vending. Photo: Paula Santoro, 17 April, 2024.

Keko Machungwa

On April 18th we visited the neighbourhoods of Keko Machungwa and Chamazi and the Federation's projects in both areas. The Federation is a network of local organisations, mostly led by women. In their practices, they follow the model popularised by the Slum Dwellers International network, which associates the mobilisation of residents with the creation of community savings funds. There is criticism that this model reduces the struggle of the urban poor and women to the financial sphere and associates female empowerment with a concept of “financial literacy”. In the case of Tanzania, the creation of community savings is not new; the lowest-income population refrains from taking out bank loans, which are too expensive to them, and instead participate in VICOBA, or community banks.

As described by Federation members, more than establishing some form of financial discipline among members, savings funds serve to ensure that the Federation “has a seat at the decision-making table.” With significant funds based on individuals’ daily savings, the Federation can negotiate, for example, the payment of a deposit on a parcel of land for the settlement of Federation members who were victims of forced removal. Resettlement processes mediated by the Federation are preceded by geophysical and topographic studies, so that new settlements take place in areas that are not subject to risks. However, through this strategy, the Federation does not deal directly with the fact that the Tanzanian government, the largest property owner in the country, maintains idle properties in areas well served by urban infrastructure. For example, the Tanzanian National Housing Corporation incorporates these public properties in high-income real estate projects, rather than promoting social housing projects and policies.

In Keko Machungwa, the conversation began under a canopy in front of the local government office. Under heavy rain, the meeting moved to a covered area. Federation leaders in Keko Machungwa told about the origins of the organisation, which happened after local residents, including Husna Shechongue, participated in a meeting of another federation and realised the opportunity to bring improvements to their neighbourhood. The federation in Keko Machungwa operates in the areas of water, sanitation and waste collection. The members received training to build ecological toilets that replace pit latrines, which contaminate the water table and/or overflow during the rainy season. Recently, the Federation won a tender and became responsible for garbage collection in the neighbourhood.

Field visits allow for participants to reflect on the experience of transformation described by the communities who promote such transformation, at the same time as they are getting to know and explore the territory. The narrative alone of the Federation's achievements could convey the idea of complete overcoming of conditions of urban precariousness in Keko Machungwa. It's not the case. The site visits showed how the community still faces many difficulties, while there are important gains from the work of the Federation, such as overcoming cholera epidemics during the rainy season, in addition to the significant improvement in the quality of life of families who are able to contract the construction of an ecological bathroom with the Federation. The Federation's participation in garbage collection was also transformative for the neighbourhood whose streets are currently cleaner than before.

We briefly visited some of the eco-toilets built by the Federation in Keko Machungwa and then headed to Chamazi, on the edge of Dar es Salaam and the Pwani region.

Chamazi

The Federation's project in Chamazi is a model of gradual production of houses, organised into a popular housing complex with space for vegetable gardens, a water treatment plant and other innovations. Chamazi's project originated from the forced removal of families living on rent in the central area of the city, near the port of Kurasini. Faced with the threat of forced eviction without compensation, as the state does not recognize the housing rights of tenants, a Federation was formed in Kurasini. With the support of the NGO CCI, the Federation in Kurasini negotiated the purchase of land in Chamazi, through collective ownership, for the construction of the housing project. The negotiations with the government included lowering down building standards concerning housing and plot sizes (see Izar, Limbumba and Nyiti, 2023).

The conversation in Chamazi included, in addition to the history of the residents' struggle, discussion about how access to land and good quality housing permeates the life experience of the community, many of them women. Several houses are headed by women who left abusive relationships with ex-partners and their families. For these women, the experience of organising and fighting in the Federation, conquering land in Chamazi and training in various aspects of construction was transformative. For most families, their homes in Chamazi represent their first opportunity to live in secure housing.

Still, the population suffers from a lack of opportunities, which they attribute to living in a neighbourhood that is still far away. However, even a process of rapid urbanisation nearby did not favour the Federation in Chamazi as they expected. In Chamazi the Federation specialises, among other projects, in the production of interlock bricks, using local materials such as earth and sand. However, the new houses built around the Federation plot in Chamazi by small contractors are made of cement blocks to speed up construction, another sign of a lack of coordination between government and social movements in the countries that the feminising seminar series has visited.

In general, Chamazi remains a model of women's struggle, and a mode of popular urbanisation of significant quality and potential, which could be reproduced in other communities in Tanzania, but remains a specific case. Even the academic community in Tanzania knows little about Chamazi's experience and would do well to seek to understand the project broadly in order to offer relevant contributions.



Husna Shechonge opens up the activities of the seminar in Keko Machungwa, in front of the



Antonia Lucas, Temeke Federation Coordinator offers a history of the Federation in Keko

ward leader's office. Photo: Paula Santoro, 18 April, 2024.



Participants of the seminar in Keko Machungwa, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Richard Prosper, 18 April, 2024.

Machungwa to seminar participants. Photo: Paula Santoro, 18 April, 2024.



Seminar participants travel from Keko Machungwa to Chamazi in Dar es Salaam. Photo: Priscila Izar, 18 April, 2024.



Seminar participants arrive in Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Paula Santoro, 18 April, 2024.



Husna Shechongue shows to the seminar participants the first house built in Chamazi's Federation project. Designed to be constructed incrementally, this house is now fully built. Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Priscila Izar, 18 April, 2024.



Conversation circle in Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Federation Coordinator Mr. Telesphol Mhina (standing) recalls the project's history. Photo: Richard Prosper, 18 April, 2024.



Profs Sarah Charlton and Paula Meth (back row), and Paula Santoro (front). Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Richard Prosper, 18 April, 2024.



Asanath Mohamed, Chamazi Federation member at the conversation circle in Chamazi, Photo: Richard Prosper, 18 April, 2024.

Sheila Ahmada, Chamazi Federation member at the conversation circle in Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Richard Prosper, 18 April, 2024.



Chamazi Federation member, Rose Liheta welcomes seminar participants into her home. Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Priscila Izar, 18 April, 2024.



Participants of the seminar in Chamazi, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Richard Prosper, 18 April, 2024.

Vigunguti

On the 19th of April, we visited Vigunguti, a neighbourhood in Dar es Salaam close to the city's central neighbourhoods and the airport. Vigunguti is home to the city's largest slaughterhouse and one of the city's sewage treatment pond, under the responsibility of DAWASA. Informal urban expansion in Vigunguti takes place around the treatment plant. We visited the sector south of the lake, limited by a collector road inside the neighbourhood.

Vigunguti was an occupation where sewage flew in the open. The residents formed a federation whose acronym is PANAKUNA. In Swahili, “pambana” means fight, “kubaliana” means understanding and “naasili” means origin. The

PANAKUNA organisation emerged from the community's struggle to overcome structural problems in their territory, which are floods, lack of sanitation and the diseases that result from these conditions. Starting in 2018, PANAKUNA, with support from the CCI (to develop the project and seek financing) developed a simplified sewage system that transformed the neighbourhood. The system works in independent modules of "improved bathrooms", external units in which the sewage is retained in a chamber - that is, it is not absorbed by the soil - and then directed, by gravity, to a larger, central chamber, which also functions as a biogas generating system. These structures are built in the already constituted neighbourhood and because they are relatively small and adaptable to the space, they avoid major demolitions. With the construction of this system, the sewage was completely removed from the street surface. Biogas production can fuel the stoves of neighbouring houses. Thus, fully functioning, the project developed by the Panakuna organisation and the CCI addresses issues of sanitation and energy consumption for family nutrition. In addition to the simplified sewage system, rainwater collectors in a cistern system were installed in Vigunguti.

Regarding sanitation, the system works very well. Regarding the supply of gas, there are problems, as production in the bathrooms has not been sufficient to produce much gas. Additionally, families are charged a fee for gas connection, and many families do not want to pay the fee. Therefore, the operation is still partial, and there are some difficulties to overcome, as in the case of Chamazi. From the point of view of the community organisation and decision-making process for project development, Vigunguti's simplified sewage system is revolutionary. As with Chamazi, this is a project that needs to be made visible and adopted in other parts of Dar es Salaam and Tanzania. However, a difficulty in this process of reflection on the meaning of the Federation and CCI's intervention in Vigunguti is the quick association, practically automatic and without reflection, that the project's failures have to do with the lack of payment of maintenance fees for the simplified sewage system by the families involved. This fee, equivalent to less than \$1 (one dollar) per month, is negligible from the point of view of project cost, although it can be significant for families living in poverty. However, this quick explanation serves to cover up the negative effects on the project of the lack of institutional buy-in, from public authorities, from sanitation companies like DAWASA and even from private agents to these systems developed by local communities. This lack of support, which is also observed in Chamazi and other neighbourhoods and projects developed by the Federation, is one of the big "knots" to be untangled in Tanzania.

Living conditions in Vigunguti are difficult, even with the construction of a simplified sewage system. Industrial waste is dumped in the DAWASA lake, in water networks running in the open. This represents a major health risk for the population, especially children. There is also the problem of density in areas where the simplified sewage system was built. As new homes are not connected to the system, pollution from open sewage may once again become a reality.

Karakata

After visiting Vigunguti we headed to Karakata. This is a neighbourhood on the banks of the Msimbazi River, in an area prone to flooding and defined as unsuitable for use in the Dar es Salaam master plan. However, the eviction of communities to expand the Dar es Salaam international airport, led to their resettlement in Karakata, very near the river banks. In January 2024, heavy rains and flooding caused the destruction of more than 60 houses. The families were left homeless and without assistance. From then on, the Federation's national coordination began to support residents, first to form a local organisation, and then searching for land to resettle the population. Since then the Federation managed to acquire a large piece of land in the outskirts of Dar es Salaam, where families from Karakata and from other sensitive areas of Dar es Salaam will build new houses.

Shortly after visiting the bank of the Msimbazi River and the damaged structures, we were surprised by heavy rain, which forced us to seek shelter and interrupt the visit for another hour. During this wait, the residents of Karakata who welcomed us anxiously checked by phone to see if their families and especially their children were safe, away from the river and the strong water flow.

When the rain eased, we returned to the organisation's base, where a delicious lunch was served, despite the rain. In the conversation after lunch, residents of Karakata talked about their experience since losing their homes and living with neighbours and relatives. They revealed a mixture of gratitude for the welcome but also discomfort, for living in crowded spaces with no privacy. The community recognized the crucial role of the Federation in the days following the loss of their homes, in helping the community envision possible alternatives, although difficult to achieve, such as the collective purchase of a plot of land in an area far from Dar es Salaam. We were also surprised that our visit, according to the community, was the first from outside actors since the January floods. No other research or development organisations came to visit them, according to the reports we heard.

The field visits in Dar es Salaam ended in Karakata. A last visit was scheduled to Kisarawe, west of Dar es Salaam in the Pwani region. The village of Mhaga is there, where the Tanzanian Association of Women Architects for Humanity (TAWAH) works together with local women on a series of urban and social projects. This visit has been postponed until June, after the rainy season ends.



The Vigunguti informal settlement borders one of DAWASA's treatment ponds. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Paula Santoro, 19 April, 2024.



PANAKUNA members take seminar participants on a neighbourhood walk. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Paula Santoro, 19 April, 2024.



Rain catching system developed by CCI and PANAKUNA. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Paula Santoro, 19 April, 2024.



One of the biogas chambers that are part of the simple sewage and biogas generation system. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Priscila Izar, 19 April, 2024.



Elements of the simple sewage and biogas generation system. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Priscila Izar, 19 April, 2024.



Elements of the simple sewage and biogas generation system. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Priscila Izar, 19 April, 2024.



PANAKUNA leaders Sakina Gumbo and Kisa Kasekwa show the cooktop stove fueled



Seminar participants celebrate women's action and solidarity. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Albert Nyiti, 19 April, 2024.

through the local biogas system. Vigunguti, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Paula Santoro, April 17, 2024.



Seminar participants are greeted by the Federation in Karakata, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Albert Nyiti, 19 April, 2024.



The Msimbazi river in Karakata, a hazardous area where in January 2024 over 60 families lost their homes due to flood-related damages. Karakata, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Albert Nyiti, 19 April, 2024.



Sarafina Sumuni coordinated the preparation of a warm and hearty meal to seminar



Seminar participants in Karakata, Dar es Salaam. Photo: Albert Nyiti, 19 April, 2024.

participants. Karakata, Dar es Salaam.. Photo: Priscila Izar, 19 April, 2024.

4 RESEARCH, PUBLICATION OUTPUTS AND FUTURE PLANS

4.1 RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION OUTPUTS

Proceedings of the international visual seminar and youtube videos of the 3-day on-line event were all made available on-line with links provided above and in the end of this report.

As we complete this seminar series, we also feel that it is quite important to write about the methods and methodologies involved in its preparation and, most of all, in the engagements with the female leaders and their communities in each host city and country. As described above, the seminar series' main organisers, Priscila Izar, Paula Santoro and Elinorata Mbuya, and members Sarah Charlton and Paula Meth, will focus on co-writing a research method paper, based on this experience, for publication in a research journal such as the Urban Studies Journal or similar.

Moreover, some of our future engagements will allow us to carry on the work and reflections of the series. We comment on some of them below:

Priscila Izar and Elinorata Mbuya are organising the session "African Urbanisms through feminist lenses: critical praxis and South-South dialogues" (see [link](#)) at the African Urbanisms - International Conference at Wits University, scheduled to take place on October 23, 2024 at the School of Architecture and Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Professor Paula Freire Santoro will be the discussant for this panel. In it, several researchers involved with these seminars will present a synthesis of the debates surrounding the relationship between urban feminist struggles and the State.

Professor Paula Freire Santoro will teach the undergraduate course "City, Gender and Intersectionalities" in the Architecture and Urbanism course at USP, in the second semester of 2024. The course will include a block of classes on African feminist urban struggles, inviting partners in this seminar series to teach classes.

In parallel with the seminar and using it as inspiration, Paula Freire Santoro wrote a chapter for the "Elgar Handbook on Gender and the City" (Santoro, 2024), organised by Linda J. Peake (Director of the City Institute at York University, in Toronto, Canada), Anindita Data (Professor and Head of the Department at the Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi) and

Grace Adeniyi-Ogunyankin (Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair in Youth and African Urban Futures, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada).

Paula Freire Santoro and Priscila Izar were selected to submit a full article for a Special Issue on the journal *Third World Quarterly*, on the topic Gender and Mobility in the Global South. The special issue is organised by Profs Margot Rubin and Kate Boyer (Cardiff University). Priscila Izar has also submitted two articles to scientific journals on the topic of feminist struggles since the completion of the seminar series, and based on her postdoctoral fellowship work at Wits University. Her role in the seminar series contributed significantly to the writing process.

4.2 AXES OF ANALYSIS

A lot can be said about the richness of the content, exchanges and knowledge co-production that took place at the events organised during this seminar series. We chose here to make transversal considerations, commonly agreed with the seminar participants who witnessed all the events, in three axes of analysis: 1) feminist urban research methodology, 2) feminist urban movements and struggles in their relationship with porous states, and 3) strategies of struggle against structural challenges as well as daily challenges in the territories.

1) Feminist urban research methodology

The first axis of analysis seeks to expand on the discussions on feminist methods and methodologies discussed at the four events and particularly during the three face-to-face events.

Indeed, the training in feminist research and the focusing on early career scholars was a central element of our seminar series. The virtual seminar was organized as an academic debate on feminist research to different generations of scholars. The three keynote speakers – Verónica Gago, Faranak Miraftab and Adriana Allen – spoke of how their work address their key research concerns through feminist approaches and methodologies, in addition to discussing the meanings of feminist research to the current world's issues, characterized by multiple crisis of global proportions.

To maximize participation of early career researchers, our call was sent out to diverse, gender-based and interdisciplinary research groups and professors internationally, with an explicit request to disseminate amongst graduate students and early career researchers. While curating the international seminar, organizers were intentional in selecting, for each of the nine sessions, presenters with different levels of experience and at different stages of their academic

careers. At least half of the presentations were by graduate level students pursuing master's and PhD degrees.

The face-to-face seminars in the three cities included special sessions and/ or round table debates on feminist research. Seminar series' members, Sarah Charlton and Paula Meth played a key role in these feminist methodology sessions, along with, in São Paulo, Diana Helene Ramos (Federal University of Alagoas), Gabriela Leandro Pereira (Federal University of Bahia), Glória Figueiredo (Federal University of Bahia), and Rossana Tavares (Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro). Moreover, the organization of the face-to-face seminar themselves were research training components own their own. This task was headed by Paula Santoro in São Paulo and Priscila Izar in Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam, in coordination with early career scholars, Amanda Silber Bleich (USP) in São Paulo and Mariam Genes (Ardhi University) in Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam. In addition, each of the site visits involved volunteer early career researchers and students who played multiple roles. In São Paulo, PhD students and candidates facilitated visits to sites where they conduct their own research. In Johannesburg, master's and PhD students joined the site visits and in Dar es Salaam, a team of research assistants from IHSS facilitated the field trips, in coordination with the Federation.

In São Paulo, where we proposed a workshop on feminist research methods and methodologies, participant scholars reflected on their own work and how it contributes to a critical feminist research agenda. The presentations highlighted different modes of in-depth research with marginalised groups and territories, making use of methods such as diaries (Paula Meth) or changing the relationship between researcher and subject (Sarah Charlton) to expand on lived experience methodologies. The discussions also spoke of the notion of turning concepts and methods around (Rossana Tavares and Diana Ramos) and on the use of memory and multimedia as ways to expand on urban research (Gabriela Leandro Pereira).

In South Africa we organised a session on research methodology that focused on entering research sites and engaging with communities, and with students. The presenters discussed their positionalities and how this affects their research work, trajectories and pedagogic engagements and relations. In Phomolong we also had the chance to explore a participatory research methodology that explores drama as a way to reflect on daily experiences of marginalised communities and territories - in the particular session, through walking.

In Tanzania we lived *through* feminist practices, starting to perceiving it as strategy and method. How the field visits were organised as a process of

co-production was more evident in Tanzania, where the Federation groups not only hosted us but also decided on where to take the seminar, based on the different realities of the city that they wanted seminar participants to know and experience. The dynamics of the women's association with welcoming us, singing, dancing and creating a very nurturing environment were also ways in which to cope, resist and challenge their environment while also enjoying their community.

The seminars promoted different forms of "critical pedagogies," whereby "theory, knowledge and practice are constantly re-made through activism and resistance" (Allen et al., 2022), based on the ideas put forward by educator Paulo Freire and feminist scholar Bell Hooks. The scholars from the different countries were startled by the energy, the strategies, and the nurturing environment of the communities visited. The female leaders who participated in all of the seminars were able to see their struggles in larger contexts, and this also surprised them. The representatives from South Africa and Tanzania mentioned their surprise to realise that in other countries "their struggle is the same", while also pointing out differences, notably, the gains of the housing movements in São Paulo that have been able to acquire housing very near the city centre. It was in this context that they voiced that "this [network of feminist research, practice and solidarity], now that it started, cannot stop." This also became a question of method to the organisers of the seminar, and how to expand and strengthen our action(s). Local communities also gained a better understanding of the relevance and meaning of what they are doing through these experiences of situated learning.

An important point raised during the seminars was about the role that the university has to play, by producing new knowledge(s) based on different forms of situated learning and pedagogical engagements, and also by denouncing injustices. This requires more extensive exchanges between academics, social movements and local communities, so that researchers and their institutions are better aware of local realities and practices. It is important that academics from the fields of planning, urban studies and urban development are able to see autoconstruction as a mode of urban production, and abandon the entrenched notion that the physical and spatial precariousness that are observed in peripheral territories have to do with bad decisions by local residents, ultimately blaming local communities for the challenging conditions that they experience in their territories. Likewise, it is very important that discussions about local systems of production, including their challenges, are separated from budgetary analysis. These more nuanced understandings can be best achieved through extended research projects, where scholars and students are immersed in the field, doing ethnographic research work and overcoming binary thinking.

For the seminar organisers, this methodological axes will inform further plans and proposals for collaborations and partnerships within the topic of feminist urban struggles.

2) Feminist urban movements and struggles in their relationship with porous states

A second axis of analysis recovers the different political contexts and relationships of urban feminist struggles with the State, admitting that the actions of public authorities can be contradictory, and can either assist or not assist the struggle of local communities and social movements. This notion of the state as contradictory and of state policy as nuanced is something that Priscila Izar is already exploring in her postdoctoral research in Tshwane and Dar es Salaam, and which was noticed by seminar participants during the seminar's field visits.

In this axis of analysis we want to review how urban feminising and racial struggles shape relations with the State through supposedly democratic institutions such as housing forums, councils, government institutions, or even outside the State, in community-based organisations.

The conversations during the seminars highlighted how community actions on the ground are also helping build resistance and shaping how decisions are made locally. Questions emerged such as: how are actions decided and implemented at the community level? What role(s) should community organisations play at the level of project implementation? What should communities do when dealing with a State that does not deliver?

During the visits we came across similarities and differences in the strategies of the social movements, in each territory and city. Contradictorily, we saw the State produce different forms of (gradual) expropriation due to forced evictions. We also saw associated struggles, insurgencies, (re)constructions and potentialities of the affected communities. We also experienced the practices of collective care and solidarity circuits as a response to different forms of social, political and spatial marginalisation and some of the ways in which these practices shape the spaces that women occupy.

3) Strategies for fighting and facing the daily challenges in the territory

A third axis involves strategies for fighting and confronting structural and daily challenges in the territory, such as poverty and unemployment, as well as lack of

water, sanitation conditions, extreme weather events, gender-based violence, lack of electricity, etc.

In these strategies we also saw a lot of power and joy. During the site visits, there were songs to open the moments of exchange, chosen thematically (for example, there was a song to keep participants from sleeping after lunch). Positive energy was passed on to women who were struggling, creating an atmosphere of nurturing. Collective care frames the moments together, despite significant challenges, as expressed in the serving of warm and delicious lunch to seminar participants after being stranded under the rain in Karakata. The choices of healthy food, the appreciation for local recipes and cultural and ancestral food traditions are similar in South-South contexts and bring another bonding dimension to the meetings and exchanges..

In this axis, it is also important to explore how feminist struggles are happening within a framework(s) of multiple crises, which will continue to increase. The profound vulnerability of women and their communities to climate events was evident in the visit to Karakata, and in the days that followed in Dar es Salaam, with heavy rains. These same rains affected Kenya, with the death of more than 40 people in April alone and the brutal action by the Nairobi government demolishing homes in areas considered vulnerable, without offering residents an alternative. Then, in the month of May, while we were writing up this report, in the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil, more than half a million people had their homes flooded and their belongings lost.

If, on the one hand, it seems clear to us that responses to calamities require state action and profound economic, political and spatial transformations if the right to the city is to be addressed, in the short term, it falls to women to care and protect the victims of environmental and urban disasters. It is against this backdrop that our research work on feminist struggles will continue to evolve.

As indicated above, these axes of analysis are, presently, a way in which to organise our reflections based on the events and to think of future actions and projects, amongst the seminar organisers and with larger networks. Section 3 of this report listed the outputs of this seminar series, based on the original project. However, as a seminar series that facilitates meetings, exchanges and partnerships, project outcomes also relate to the potential for articulations, networks and future prospects. We will comment on them in the conclusion, after a short reflection about the challenges that we faced during the seminar and how these were addressed.

5 FINAL REMARKS

This seminar series was conceptualised as a way to strengthen the debate about the multiple and diverse relationships between gender and urbanisation in peripheral territories, engaging with feminist scholarship that draw from transdisciplinary, intersectional and decolonial approaches, fostering situated debates and learning. The close collaboration between scholars already working at the intersection of gender and urbanisation through situated experiences, who are already part of different networks of critical feminist and urban scholarship allowed the network of individuals from within and outside academia interested in engaging with the series to expand significantly. Ultimately, this enabled us to, sometimes forge new, and other times strengthen existing bonds with local feminist groups, and to live through some of their daily challenges and routines and also their local solutions, in such a way that future engagements must happen, so that these processes of co-learning, co-creation and solidarity can also continue to expand.

As described in this report, new, situated and intensive exchange and learning went on through the different stages of this seminar series. Participants, overall, expressed appreciation for the transdisciplinarity and the deep knowledge brought by presenters at the virtual seminar and the face-to-face events.

The planning and organisation of these events played a key role in these positive outcomes. However a significant challenge in this process was adjusting the original plans and expectations of the organisers to the procurement system of our academic institutions. We opted for directing the USF grant to one of our institutions, Wits University, to simplify the procedures. However, budget items such as payment of transportation allowances to local community members attending the local seminars, and direct payments to local providers of catering and transportation services, outside of the country, was not something familiar to the University's procurement system (neither to the other partner institutions). These expenses however, such as with local catering during the face-to-face events, were very important for the event's dynamics. Local communities expected to serve their traditional foods to the seminar participants, sharing their culture and knowledge in such a way.

Our solution was to have large sums of money transferred by the University to our own bank accounts and then pay for local expenses directly. However this turned out to be a time consuming and cumbersome process, particularly in the procedures to be followed in reconciling the finances. For future similar international seminars involving many local participants and activities, our

suggestion is for USF to have flexibility on how funds are transferred, considering the transferring of a portion of the funds directly to the grantees for direct payments. With that said, we are incredibly appreciative of how USF Executive Director Joe Shaw addressed our requests for extra funding for translation services for the virtual seminar, as well as the advancement of the grant's last instalment. Without this type of understanding and support from USF and from Joe Shaw in particular, we would not have been able to organise the seminars in the way that we did.

Given the breath of activities in the face-to-face events, there was a small recalibration of the original goals and outcomes. For example, to compensate for the larger than budgeted expenses with workshop meals and catering, a specified photographer was not hired in each of the cities. We opted instead for participants to share with the organizers their own images. Some of these images are in this final report. In addition, two opinion pieces about the seminars were published on the LabCidade ([here](#) and [here](#)) website, and one piece on the website of CUBES.

After the series, some of the papers presented in the virtual seminar were published as scholarly papers (see, for example, Silva & Gonzalez, 2024; Teodoro & Pereira, 2023). These publications, while not part of a special edition by the series' organizers, already represent a contribution to the theoretical debate that the series engaged with. Some of the publications cite the international seminar's proceedings in their work. Moreover, series' participants who were working on their graduate degrees reported to us that their research and writing has benefited significantly from their participation in the series (documented in the virtual seminar's proceedings).

To conclude, we would like to emphasize our strong belief on how this series set the foundation to stronger projects and collaborations, some of which are described in this report. We are thankful to the Urban Studies Foundation for the financial support that made this project possible, the institutional partners in all host countries, the research partners and, most of all, the social movements and local communities that joined these engagements.

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APPENDIX ITEMS

I MARJORIE MBILINYI KEYNOTES, 17 APRIL 2024

On the struggles of marginalised and working women in urban and semi-urban areas against patriarchy and neoliberal globalisation in Tanzania:

Issues, Dilemmas, Alternatives

Marjorie Mbilinyi

[Keynote Paper in Feminising urban struggle Workshop, Ardhi University, 17 April 2024]

I propose to discuss the issues raised by the struggles of marginalised and working women in urban and semi-urban areas and their communities in Tanzania in the context of patriarchy and neoliberal globalisation; the dilemmas that emerge; and possible alternatives. This includes an awareness of the fluid nature of migration and urbanisation in Tanzania, given ongoing processes of primitive accumulation in the countryside. My framework is transformative feminism, combining intersectionality of gender, race, class, imperialism. I have reflected on the findings of research and advocacy activities by myself and others, as well as the experiences during the Intensive Movement Building Cycle organised by TGNP in four districts of Tanzania with grassroots gender activists and investigative journalists over several consecutive years, and the report by Equality for Growth [EFG] of their organising work with market women in urban Tanzania for fifteen years. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of comments and discussion of the paper during the Feminising Urban Struggle Workshop on 17th April 2024.

Who are urban working women?

Shall we think broadly? Challenging the mainstream concept of male-headed households with dependent wives and children.

Young, middle aged, elderly?

‘able’ and with disability

Wide range of occupations:

food processors/traders mama nitilie; some own their stall, others rent
Beer brewers
Hospitality, beauty and sex workers
Domestic servants and security workers
‘creatives’: dancers, fashion designers, models, singers, song/poetry writers, painters
Petty traders: used clothing
Casual workers, Unpaid family workers, self-employed?
Married, single, divorced, widowed?

Conceptual Issues

It is important to explore the meaning of ‘feminist struggle’ of marginalised and working women in urban areas; and of ‘the periphery’. Our own studies of transformative feminist movement building at the local level has found that women do not label their activities and struggles as feminist; yet they are challenging patriarchy, and capitalist exploitation and seeking space for alternative dignified livelihoods. In the words of Mikki Kendall’s *Hood Feminism Notes from the Women that a Movement Forgot* (2020):

“We rarely talk about basic needs as a feminist issue. Food insecurity and access to quality education, safe neighborhoods, a living wage, and medical care are all feminist issues. Instead of a framework that focuses on helping women get basic needs met, all too often the focus is not on survival but on increasing privilege. For a movement that is meant to represent all women, it often centers on those who already have most of their needs met” xv

Kendall’s list of basic needs in our African context would also highlight access to water and sanitation, land and other natural resources and sustainable livelihoods.

Patriarchy, Class, Neoliberal globalisation

The history of development/underdevelopment of Tanzania has centred over struggles over land and labour, beginning in the precolonial era marked by slave trade and slave plantations along the coast of Tanzania, heightening during the German and British colonial period where Tanganyikan political economy was based largely on production of agriculture commodities by peasant smallholder producers, women and men alike, and by largescale commercial

farms and plantations owned by Europeans, Asians and Arabs, exploiting casual labour and migrant labour. Racial policies sought to exclude women from urban areas, and keep them in their supposed 'home' areas in order to sustain peasant patriarchal farming systems and reproduce migrant labour. Merchant capital appropriated the proceeds of peasant crop production, through control of market, prices and farm inputs. Many women migrated to large towns and cities in spite of colonial barriers in order to escape feudal and patriarchal systems of oppression and unpaid labour in the household ['runaway wives and daughters'] and exploitation as peasant and cheap farm labour on commercial farms and plantations. This process continued after independence. Tanzania has one of the highest rates of rural urban migration, composed of many girls and women.

It is important to recognise the positive changes that occurred after independence in 1961 and later with the adoption of the Arusha Declaration of Socialism and Self Reliance in 1967, along with Ujamaa Villages policy and Education for Self Reliance. The state nationalised nearly all the major industries and many plantations, as well as real estate. For the first time smallholder peasant producers received public support in the form of farm input subsidies and farm price supports, and assured markets for their crops. This contrasted with the colonial policy of diverting all resources and infrastructure to support white settler farms and corporate plantations owned by Europeans, Asians and Arabs. Major public support for education, health and safe, clean water led to Tanzania achieving among the highest levels of adult literacy, school enrolment, and lowest levels of infant, child and maternal mortality in low income countries in Africa.

These achievements occurred with major contradictions, in particular forced mass villagisation, and were highly dependent on external donor support. When Tanzania experienced a debt crisis along with nearly all other African countries in the 1980s, it was forced to accept the conditions of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund [IMF], to adopt structural adjustment [SAP], namely to roll back decolonisation efforts in the economy, remove state support for peasant agriculture, impose user fees for schooling and health facilities and liberalise land ownership. This led to a major decline in school enrolment and usage of public health facilities. Unemployment increased because of freezing of public employment in nearly all sectors. One result was the growing importance of female incomes

in the household from work in the informal sector in both urban and rural areas (see Further Reading below for references).

The Meaning of Empowerment

Women's empowerment has become a dominant theme in mainstream discourse, as well as in feminist discussions, but what does this mean? For many, it connotes individual upward mobility, access to more financial and other resources, increasing power at individual level. This fits within the neoliberal ideological framework and contributes to reproduction of the capitalist system and neoliberal globalisation. Transformative feminist movement building calls instead for collective empowerment through participatory democracy at every level.

The work of Naila Kabeer and others provides an alternative perspective. The core of empowerment lies in the ability of a woman to control her own destiny (Kabeer 2001). This implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment), they must also have the agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources, and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as are provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions and civil society organisations). And to exercise agency, women must live without the fear of coercion and violence (Grown MDG Task force on Gender Equality ... 2005).

Kabeer sees women's empowerment as a process through which women gain the ability to take ownership and control of their lives. Key elements here are the expansion of choices and the ability to make strategic life choices (Kabeer, 2001). Although the process of empowerment depends on women themselves involving consciousness raising, participation, and organizing themselves, it can also be facilitated through education, capacity building, training and other measures. Change has to happen in the structures and legal frameworks (family laws, property rights, etc) in order to make the self-transformation process of empowerment sustainable (Kabeer, 2001). Because gender inequality is deeply rooted in entrenched attitudes, societal institutions, and market forces, political commitment at the

highest international and national levels is essential to institute the policies that can trigger social change and to allocate the resources necessary to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment (Grown et al 2005).

What kind of empowerment are we aiming for?

Working women in urban and peri-urban spaces

The majority of urban women work in the so-called informal sector; very few have access to regular employment in the formal sector, partly due to male bias and the deformed postcolonial economic structure. A large portion of the informal sector consists of working women: food processing, preparation, trade yaani *mama nitilie*; domestic service/labour; overall petty trade of nonfood items; hospitality and sex work including bar girls. Many women own their own 'enterprises', but many others, especially young girls, are employed as casual labour, and sometimes are unpaid workers dependent on and living in the households of their 'employers' ie mama.

Working women are also hired as casual labour in the so-called formal sector, Casualisation of labour is a strategy adopted by capitalist employers [public and private] not just of female workers but also male youth: capital's strategy to extract cheap labour.

Women's Urban Struggle, Poverty And Urbanization At The Periphery,

What is the meaning of the periphery?

Urban women's work as mama nitilie/processed food manufacturers and traders, beer brewers, sex workers, petty traders and so on is at the *centre* of reproduction of the labour force in the urban areas-- not the periphery. The products and services they provide cheapen the value of labour power, making it unnecessary for capital ie employers [MSE and corporations and government] to provide a living wage. Most workers are not fed at the workplace by employers; they rely on mama nitilie and petty traders for fast food. Food 'shacks'/vibanda and benches can be seen next to all major construction sites, factories, and at major road intersections.

At the same time, working women are struggling against patriarchy and capitalist exploitation in their homes, communities and work place [which is often home]. Meeting or resisting demands for unpaid labour from dominant males and females at home; at the market where they resist sextortion to rent a trader stall or access raw materials; in the factory where they confront sexual abuse from bosses, and dominant male workers. Women traders and food processors/sellers organise themselves in informal and sometimes formal groups to protect themselves as provided in vibrant examples presented in the earlier session.

There have been many initiatives by government, and more so civil society organisations, to support urban working women. Equality for Growth [EFG] provides an excellent case study of NGO strategies to empower market women in the informal sector in Tanzania.

Equality for Growth (EFG): A CASE STUDY

As discussed in their recent report, “Bridging Gaps, Building Dreams 15 Years of EfG’s Impact to Women in the Informal Sector”,

“Women are provided training on running businesses and access to financing opportunities. At the same time, they are given education on their rights and a means to seek redress for violations, through the paralegals. Organizing the women into associations, encouraging and supporting them to raise their voices and claim their rights together alongside engaging relevant local officials is the last strand of work. This three-pronged approach tackles the main obstacles to market women’s agency and empowerment identified by Equality for Growth; we work to empower and liberate market women economically, politically and socially.”

When they began working with market women in Ilala, Dar es Salaam, in 2008, they carried out a study which found the following facts:

97.2% of women traders experienced verbal abuse in the marketplace.

Many women traders work as much as 15 hours a day, and yet the overwhelming majority earn less than 7,000 TSH (\$3US) daily

Only 2.3% of women market traders were aware of their right to leadership positions

Less than 1% had ever been involved in policy development.

Merely 2% of NGOs in Tanzania were addressing the socioeconomic rights related to informal work, even though over 85% of Tanzanian women work in the informal sector.

A combination of different strategies was adopted to address these conditions.

Formation of National Women Association with a total of 10,676 members market traders who received voter education training provided by EfG in 9 regions of Tanzania Mainland

59000+ market traders identified and recruited as change agents in their markets women champions in all 9 regions.

EfG works closely with local government and other officials in order to ensure that policies are changed and the reforms are implemented. They include Local Government Authorities, Law enforcement officers, Members of Parliament, Cities and Municipalities.

At least 8,125 market traders throughout 4 districts received free legal aid advice Paralegal centers have been established in 4 districts 75 Paralegals were trained and are active throughout 3 regions of Tanzania, Mobile legal aid clinics operate in the markets, reaching over 4,500 market traders. More than 20,700 books on marriage law, land law, contract law and guidelines for market traders have been distributed to market traders .

In informal marketplaces, Gender-based Violence (GBV) is a major issue. GBV is widespread, ingrained, and often regarded as the norm in these market places. Recognizing the gravity of the situation, EfG conducted Baseline Surveys in 2015 and 2019 across three significant regions: Dar es Salaam, Shinyanga, and Dodoma, focusing on the prevalence of GBV. The findings from Dar es Salaam were particularly alarming, with 96.77% of women reporting experiencing violence at their places of work. Different forms of GBV are more prevalent in different areas, including physical violence, with sexual abuse included; verbal violence; economic violence

EfG developed model Anti-GBV Guidelines in Markets which were introduced to market traders and District/Municipal authorities as instrumental tools to counteract GBV in market environments. These guidelines, tailored to the specific needs of market traders, deliver comprehensive information on how to manage, monitor, and address GBV occurrences. They highlight both preventive and responsive actions, with the ambition of cultivating a unified approach to address GBV in these settings. Currently, 22 markets have integrated these guidelines, and through this initiative, over 1,500 GBV survivors receive assistance annually. EfG's approach emphasises collaboration among market traders, market committees, law

enforcers, and Municipal officials to address GBV in market places. The aim is not only mitigation but also prevention. It has carried out campaigns with slogans like ‘Mpe riziki, si matusi’ which have helped to spread the message.

To address the challenge of financial resources, women traders were encouraged to form Self-Help and Credit Schemes such as VICOBA. EfG’s efforts have led to:

- The establishment of 58 VICOBA (Village Community Bank) groups, uniting over 1,500 women from 9 regions in Tanzania Mainland.

- A significant milestone where 45% of VICOBA groups opened bank accounts to secure their assets.

- The growth in collective savings, with groups having saved more than 604 Million TSH collectively.

- A marked increase in land ownership; since joining VICOBA, 42% of the members have acquired land. As a result, now 71% of VICOBA women own land.

- Two groups, comprising a total of 60 women, used VICOBA funds to jointly purchase land plots.

- The creation of an advocacy platform.

Individual Case Study: vegetable vendor to employer of three:

To Christina Mtimba, a vegetable vendor mostly selling habanero peppers, capsicum and white eggplant, her stall at the market was something she did to make ends meet. Her daily profits helped her put food on the table for her three kids she supported as a single mother, but she admits that it was a struggle. When EfG introduced VICOBA groups at the Temeke Market in 2015, she gladly joined, hoping for some economic relief.Since she joined the group, she has been saving a portion of her daily profit and using it to buy shares worth TZS 15,000. After some time, she borrowed TZS 600,000 and TZS 1 million as capital to finance the growth of her business. It was then that her diligence, matched with her access to credit started to bear fruit. She says: “I had received enough training from EfG which grew my confidence in business. In 2018, I took a TZS 10 million loan, 10 times bigger than the last one, and I bought two motorbikes and a tricycle for commercial purposes. There are challenges

in that business, but overall I can say I am earning a bigger income, and I have provided employment to three young men.”

Question: is this our aim---transforming individual petty traders into capitalist business women?

Solidarity

Neema Charles Maega, the Chairperson at Kigilagila market says: “The women’s movement in this market was in total disarray. We did not have a uniform agenda, nor did we support each other as much as we should have. That affected us in every aspect of our lives here in the market.” When she got the position of chair, she says, one of her first goals was to unite the women and help them rally around issues that affect them. She says: “Since these women had confidence in me, convinced me to vie for this position and voted for me, it was time for me to return the favor. I led them to believe that, together, we can bring a stop to all forms of abuse; but also all the bickering and badmouthing that kept us disunited. We have achieved so much in both the interest of the women and the market in general since I took office.” Miraji Mkandawire, a male rice trader at the market speaks about the difference having Neema has made. He says her leadership style is preferred as she is more responsive compared to what they were used to.

Some of the behavioral/attitude changes

- Women traders at Kigogo Fresh wrote a letter on June 13th, 2013 to complain to the Ilala Municipal Director about the unhygienic market environment, which affecting trade and health of traders and customers. Ilala Municipality responded by cleaning the market environment, building toilets and renovating the road
- During the market opening at Kigogo Fresh, the Market Officer went to approve the allocation of slots. He promised and allocated slots to all women traders.
- At Ilala market, women traders confronted Ilala Ward Councilor regarding high levies charged on vegetable vendors. However the issue was not resolved by the councilor. They then forwarded the matter to Ilala Municipal Director and the matter

was referred to the same councilor. The result was that levies were reduced from Tshs. 2000/- and 5000/- to Tshs 800/-.

- Increase of empowerment of women traders resulted in increased participation of women in decision making bodies. For instance a woman trader from Kigogo Sambusa won the position to be a member in a District Constitutional Committee. Kigogo Sambusa woman trader was elected to be involved in reviewing United Republic of Tanzania constitutional draft at the district level.
- Women market traders at Mchikichini market wrote a letter to DED of Ilala Municipality to ask about the renovation of their market. The DED responded and sent the consultancy to estimate the cost of renovation so as to re-build the market.
- Chanika market leaders supported women traders to join in the market leadership. Out of sixteen market leaders, eight are women.

This case study reveals contradictory outcomes: both individualisation of empowerment for some women, but also collective empowerment by means of joint action for change.

What is the ultimate outcome and aim of such processes?

Is it individual empowerment of market women? Upward mobility? Whereby a few women, with NGO support, become larger 'entrepreneurs', able to employ other women [and men]? and become capitalist producers/traders? Or is the aim a form of collective empowerment whereby a group of women workers challenge capitalist exploitation, create cooperatives which provide the tools and other resources they need for livelihoods and reproduction, organise themselves in ever wider networks to become a pressure group, able to demand changes in structures, policy and laws, and their implementation?

What are urban working women struggling for?

Higher incomes

Better terms in market places

Security of space be it land, a market stall, safety for means of production such as stoves, pots, utensils

Their own and Children's access to quality social services: good schools; health facilities, water and sanitation

Relief from unfair taxes

Equal access to resources as men and elite women

Freedom from state violence, no more militia rounding them up, beating them, putting them in prison ..

Right to exist, to be

Respect and dignity

Transformative outcomes

Urban working women are redefining gender relations, not only between partners/spouses, but between parents and children; young girls seeking independence from patriarchy/matriarchy. In the process, they may be forced to cohabit with someone or have transactional sex, but on their own terms, unless controlled by a pimp. They are challenging patriarchal structures consciously or not, as well as the mainstream concept of male-headed female dependent households.

Building bonds among women themselves, contrary to the assumption of competition [or both]. when challenged by landlords, male clients, government officers, social welfare workers

Building solidarity in action, becoming pressure groups within their workspace, changing systems and practices.

Challenges

Domestication of genuine initiatives, becoming absorbed within systems and structures of the state or mainstream [including state/liberal feminism]

Almost all 'economic empowerment' type initiatives lead to incorporation into commercial production and markets, thereby further subjugation to capital

Research and NGO organising/networking activities tend to depend on external financial support .. public funds for women, or NGO support. What kind of alternatives can be

created/supported/sustained, which are decolonising, and support working women's own self-organising/networking?

The Way Forward?

Working women work together to create powerful pressure groups consisting of women organizations and networks at local, national and regional level in order to advance the goals of working women, ensure that their objectives are achieved through engagement in policy and legal reform, as well as politics; and hold the government and other actors (development partners, political parties, big business, civil society activists, the community) accountable.

Working women united with working men to build a movement which seeks to challenge the existing capitalist macro economic structure and neoliberalism, and build together participatory democracy in every aspect of society. A key principle of participatory democracy is that every member of society participates equally in decision-making on allocation of resources, and benefits equally from resources at every level.

One implication is that the organisations created by working women and their supporters are themselves organised in a democratic way, as group centred leadership, rather than celebrity leader groups. The same goes for political parties, labour unions and other formations seeking to be part of transforming society.

References and Further Reading

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II WEB LINKS AND EVENT PHOTOS

WEB LINKS

[Youtube channel of LabCidade](#) (with the complete playlist of the seminar series)

[CUBES website](#) with seminar materials (English) and [link to the international seminar's proceedings](#)

LabCidade website with posts (in Portuguese):

- [Seminário Lutas Urbanas Feministas ocorre em São Paulo com a presença de professoras e lideranças da África do Sul e Tanzânia](#)
- [Porque habitação é central nas Lutas Urbanas Feministas](#)

CUBES website posts (in English)

- [A feminist takes on the experiences and struggles of those living at the margin of sanitation grids](#)

Blog post on Urban Studies Foundation:

- [Expanding Feminist Urban Struggles](#)

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