

SLURC

SIERRA LEONE URBAN RESEARCH CENTRE NEWSLETTER

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SLURC LAUNCHES ITS RESOURCE UNIT

By: IBRAHIM BUN KAMARA — PROJECT MANAGER, SLURC

In a bid to consolidate its knowledge management services to urban development stakeholders, the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC) is launching its resource unit on the 1st March, 2017. The resource unit will be at the offices of the Centre, located on the second floor of 63 Upper Brook Street in Freetown. This resource unit has physical and online repositories of urban development knowledge products and will be accessible to all on pro bono basis. The resource unit is meant to contribute to SLURC's aims, which are to address knowledge challenges related to constructing a fairer and more cohesive society, and improving sustainable economic development scenarios at the local, regional and national level.

This resource unit will host literature and other knowledge products from national and international sources, on a wide range of thematic urban development areas, including urban health, urban risk and resilience, land and housing, livelihoods and city economy, and environmental issues, to name a few. The resource unit will provide a platform for researchers, policy makers, students, informal settlement dwellers and development practitioners to have access to a wide range of products at the same location.

Moreover, the knowledge products will be complemented with a seminar and events series that will keep stakeholders actively involved in dialogue and actions on contemporary and emerging urban development issues and challenges respectively. These activities will actively engage stakeholders on a continual basis as and when issues emerge. Stakeholders will also be invited and encouraged to actively participate in the series through making presentations of their work and hosting events at the centre.

It is envisaged that this resource unit will be useful in informing stakeholders on the development of a national implementation plan for 'New Urban Agenda' and the 'Sustainable Development Goals' of the United Nations. Furthermore, the centre is expected to complement the efforts of the Pull Slum Pan People (PSPP) partners that are taking the lead in developing a city wide forum as an inclusive platform for development advocacy. This will encourage the mobilization of stakeholders at the local level in response to the necessity to homogenize visions and create consensus on medium and long-term strategies.

THE NEW URBAN AGENDA: NEED FOR COHESIVE VISION AND PLATFORM FOR TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN SIERRA LEONE

BY: BRAIMA KOROMA — CO-DIRECTOR, SLURC



HABITAT III CONFERENCE DELEGATES, 2017

'By 2050 the world urban population is expected to nearly double, making urbanisation one of the 21st century's most transformative trends'. (Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All, October 2016).

The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held in Quito in October 2016 offer the opportunity to make transformative commitments in pursuit of a sustainable and just urban future more real than the Habitat Agendas of 1976 and 1996. The New Urban Agenda (NUA) is a global 20-year vision for cities that are equal, accessible, and people centred. The NUA is a complementary framework that drills into what it will take to achieve a number of the UN Sustainable Development Goals but particularly Goal #11 that ensures that 'cities and human settlements are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable', as well as other targets across the SDGs, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. Reinforcing Habitat III's position, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also emphasizes that 'there is a critical need for a transformational change in development, so that no one is left behind'.

Nevertheless the NUA provides an impressive, comprehensive shared vision for cities and human settlements for all, a vision where 'all inhabitants without discrimination of any kinds are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements'. This vision includes equal rights and opportunities, fundamental freedoms, adequate housing, equal access for all to public goods, civic participation and engagement, gender equality, accessible urban mobility, disaster management and resilience, environmental sustainability, high productivity, competitiveness and innovation by promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all

In the NUA member states collectively welcomed the ambitious 'transformative commitments' to work on the three core interlinked principles of:

- Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and

opportunities for all (leave no one behind)

- Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and poverty eradication, and
- Environmentally sound and resilient urban development.

At the same time, in the efforts to 'get everything in', there is a lack of prioritization and so no implementation imperative nor a clear case for the interconnectedness of its major components, and the way of working makes it more like a wishlist than an innovative and transformative agenda for the future.

However, in order to achieve the desired urban transformations, the NUA pointed out three essential requirements. These include:

1. Local-national partnerships, in which national urban policies are backed by effective decentralisation to local authorities and civil society;
2. 'Strategic and integrated urban and territorial planning and management' to 'promote mixed, connected, and compact cities and human settlements.'
3. New ways of financing and implementing the desired changes in urban development.

The NUA was viewed as a platform for cities to build capacity to take on global challenges accompanying urbanisation, but also as a chance for participating countries to create a cohesive vision and platform for implementation. In this vein, Sierra Leone should make significant progress towards translating the NUA 'from paper to actions and concrete steps', create and maintain a sense of 'collective vision' and to streamline efforts in different sectors. However, in ensuring the collective vision and political commitment towards transformative change for sustainable urban development, there is a need to take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development, and respect unique and emerging challenges specific to each context. Special attention should be paid to slum and informal settlement dwellers.

In exploring the possibilities of creating a cohesive vision and platform for transformative change in the implementation of the NUA, city authorities and their stakeholders in Sierra Leone need to:

- encourage the participation by and recognition of all actors – local governments in urban development and civil society, as well as the urban poor and their communities;
- address power imbalances and make every effort to reach equitable outcomes that leave no-one behind;
- include, and build capacity of, residents of informal settlements to lead data collection and monitoring processes in ways that improve the visibility of the living conditions and actual needs of the urban poor, while at the same time empowering groups in negotiating for their rights to secure adequate housing;
- build citizen-led processes, and to ensure that the 'new urban agenda' leaves no-one behind'; and
- encourage inclusive leadership, monitoring and implementation of the NUA.

Turning the NUA into tangible changes in our cities in Sierra Leone will require a paradigm shift in how we approach in achieving sustainable cities. Too often, cities – and their individual agencies and departments – operate in their own siloes, developing sector-specific solutions, rather than integrated solutions which incorporate business, people and each other. Therefore creating the kind of transformative change requires more integrated strategic approaches as a foundation of sectoral solutions, coordination and collaboration

than ever before, it is clear that the private sector will need to play a critical role. The private sector will help not only finance, construct and operate infrastructure, but also research and develop new technologies and innovation and unlock opportunities for private-public collaboration and partnership. If we as a nation want to implement 'transformative actions for sustainable urban development that will, at a minimum, change social relations in cities, and at best challenge urban inequality, then a more effective agenda focused on collective priorities through multi-stakeholder partnerships and participatory governance' with the strongest leverage on local and national is required. Such transformational actions should 'leave no person and no space behind, achieve social cohesion, engage with informality, support healthy environment and lifestyles, and promote equitable economic growth'. Also, transformative urban governance requires evidenced-based policies. The capacities of local government to collect, analyse and evaluate and use local data therefore need to be strengthened and embedded in open data and open government policies. Such evidence-based policy making should build on collaboration between local authorities and urban practitioners and researchers. We need to move beyond participation to co-production.

But without a strong political commitment, leadership and buy-in at the national level, built through participative consultations with policy makers, practitioners and activists, and the adaptation of the NUA to incorporate national realities and debates culminating to national urban policy and plans, the implementation of the new urban agenda may face significant challenge in the development of urban Sierra Leone.



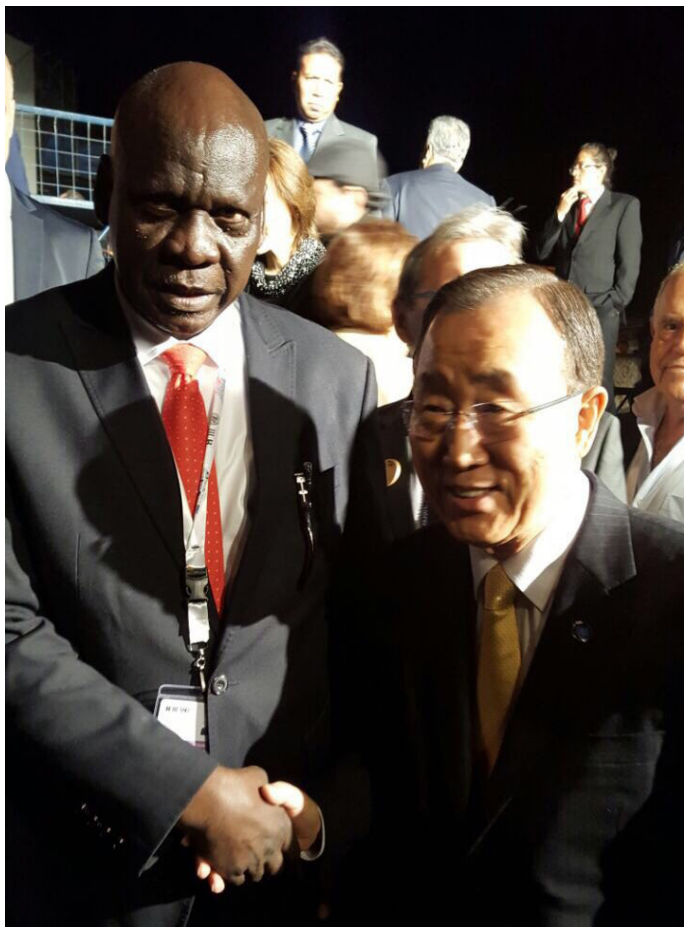
MAYOR GIBSON, BRAIMA KOROMA, SULAIMAN PARKER (SEATING LEFT TO RIGHT) AND DR. MACARTHY (STANDING) AT HABITAT III CONFERENCE.

In an effort to contribute to this process, SLURC took part in the UN Habitat III conference which launched the NUA. The delegation included Sam Gibson, Mayor of Freetown, Sulaiman Parker, the Environment and Social Officer of Freetown City Council and the two co-directors of the SLURC, Dr Joseph Macarthy and Braima Koroma. The delegation participated to the World Mayors Assembly. Mayors of the world strongly asked to be recognised as the central actors in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and asked for more powers, particularly in terms of direct access to finance

mechanisms. The delegation had the opportunity to meet with India Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), an indian-based research institution which had similar purposes and learn from their history.

The Mayor of Freetown met with UN-Habitat to discuss the challenges of the city in terms of appropriate legal frameworks to implement city planning. These reflections were later presented at the special session on urban rules and

regulations. The discussion also highlighted the need to clarify responsibilities between the city and central government and the need for the city to improve their own revenues. The delegation was also approached by the UN programme Capital Development Fund, which helps cities getting access to capital markets and bridging relationships with donors, in order to discuss municipal finance.



MAYOR GIBSON AND UN SECRETARY GENERAL AT HABITAT III CONFERENCE IN QUITO

The following day the delegation met with the secretary for territory and housing of the quito municipality and their civil society partners to learn from the experience of quito. The delegation also met with cities alliance to discuss the possibility to expand their programme to Sierra Leone and focus on upgrading through an alliances of government, civil society and research institutions. Later, we met with the government of Kenya to discuss slum upgrading approaches.

SLURC was launched internationally through a press conference to explain how it operates as an urban learning alliance introducing a new mode of urban knowledge production through partnerships with central and local government, universities, civil society organizations, and local communities.

Following this international launch, a networking event brought together six urban alliances between universities and city actors, from four continents to share their insights and recommendations for SLURC and how urban learning alliances can play a key role in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.



EXPERIENCES FROM PSPP PARTNERS' CROSS CITY EXCHANGE TO KAMPALA , UGANDA

BY: IBRAHIM BUN KAMARA- PROJECT MANAGER, SLURC

As part of the Comic Relief sponsored 4 Cities Initiative, the Pull Slum Pan People (PSPP) partners embarked on a knowledge exchange to the Kampala Slum Transformation Initiative (KASTI) partners in Uganda. The exchange was hosted by ACTogether of Uganda from the 12th to the 16th December 2016. The PSPP partners team included the project manager of the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC), Dr. Ibrahim Bun Kamara who led the team, Abdul Karim Marah, Development Planning Officer of the Freetown City Council (FCC), Samuel Sesay, Programme Coordinator for the Center Of Dialogue On Human Settlement And Poverty Alleviation (CODOHSAPA), Augustine Tommy Smart, M&E Officer of the Youth Development Movement (YDM) and Abubakar Bakley Sesay, Advocacy and Small Grants Manager of the Slums Project of the Young Men Christian Association (YMCA).

The purpose of the mission was to learn from the experiences of the KASTI partners in the areas of:

- Knowledge management and information sharing in order to enhance the development of a physical and an online resource centre for urban development stakeholders in Sierra Leone.
- Establishment and operation of municipal and city wide forums to inform the development of the "Freetown Development Forum Initiative" aimed at joint advocacy

and participatory development planning with impact on policy and practice on Freetown slums.

- Participation by urban slum dwellers in urban planning by local government as a tool to strengthen the PSPP partnership's collective advocacy for inclusive urban planning in the upgrade of Freetown.
- Establishment, operation and management of the Housing Cooperative model in order to strengthen the PSPP partners approaches towards improvement of housing, water and sanitation in Freetown slums.
- Operations and lessons on micro-loan funds and their transformative effects on living conditions of slums dwellers, and
- Approaches and experiences at influencing Government policies on urban slums land rights in order to enhance PSPP partners' advocacy and related activities for improvement of slum dwellers land rights.

The exchange commenced with a presentation by the PSPP team lead on the partnership and learning objectives of the mission. Individual team members made additional presentations on their respective organisations and their expectations from the exchange. The host and partners also made formal presentations on the partnership including the National Federation of Slum Dwellers Association of Uganda

(NFSDAU). Other presentations were also made on the types and operational modalities of funds available to slum dwellers associations and the operations of the Home of Open Development Data in Uganda which is geared towards data and information management.

Field visits were an important component of the exchange. In this regard, the team made a visit to the offices of the Shelter and Settlement Alternatives (SSA) and Uganda Housing and Settlement Network (UHSNET) also known as Uganda Housing Cooperative Union for a joint presentation. It was noted that these organizations are mainly focused on conducting research and sharing of information related to advocacy of rights related to human shelter and settlement including community mobilization and empowerment etc. Additional field engagements were made with organizations such as; Uganda Federation of Slum Dwellers, Our Lady of Charity

Housing Cooperative, an improved housing cooperative project etc. These field interactions provided the opportunity to directly engage with members of grass root slum dwellers' organizations during which their operational successes and challenges were shared.

In conclusion, the exchange provided the team with some lessons that can be categorised under four headings:

Cooperative movements

- Promotion of savings groups in informal settlements is key to improving livelihood and living conditions of informal settlement dwellers.
- Savings groups could be transformed into housing cooperatives that also undertake income generation activities.



PSPP TEAM WITH HOST: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND TEAM OF ACTOGETHER

- As cooperatives, they could become useful multipurpose engines of transformation of both members and their communities through mobilization for projects in water and sanitation, for example.
- Cooperatives can be mobilized into a cooperative union that sensitizes members on housing issues and provides advocacy to successfully influence policy.
- The cooperative movement has also seen success stories of improvement in community low income housing for informal settlement dwellers.

Sierra Leone has some memories of cooperatives, but these were limited to agriculture. They had developed to the extent of establishing their financial institution in the form of a cooperative bank. However, this institution, and the agricultural cooperatives are now defunct and no efforts are being made to revive them.

From a housing perspective, Sierra Leone has not had an experience with cooperatives. An in depth investigation on this to discern the challenges and potential for housing

cooperatives could be a starting point to initiate a national agenda towards addressing housing challenges for low income groups in urban areas.

Forums as engines for development

- Based on the principle that sustainable development is a collective responsibility of stakeholders, development forums at various administrative levels have been successfully used for discussions on policy and practices that upholds rights of citizens and promotes inclusiveness for collective responsibility in advocacy and initiation of development programmes.
- Formation and operationalization critically requires identification of champions that will secure political will for the forum.
- Regional pilots in smaller municipalities could provide useful lessons for a gradual scale up to other areas.



PSPP TEAM WITH A HOUSING COOPERATIVE GROUP AFTER ATTENDING THEIR MEETING

PSPP partners have established informal settlements dwellers' forums that operate in the west and east of Freetown. On one hand, the Federation of Urban and Rural Poor (FedURP) operates mostly in the western part of Freetown with ongoing efforts towards including other parts of the city and country as a whole. On the other hand, the Federation of Eastern Slum Dwellers Association (FESDA) operates in the eastern part of Freetown.

However, unlike the Ugandan forums, both FedURP and FESDA have a membership that is exclusive to informal settlement

dwellers. Although other urban stakeholders are usually invited to meetings and activities of these forums, they are not actively involved in mapping and executing plans and activities. The Ugandan forums are a model that included all stakeholders and at various levels starting from settlements to cities and ultimately national.

FedURP and FESDA could therefore be a starting point to develop a system of hierarchical forums that will act as engines for inclusive development planning.



PSPP TEAM AT KALIMALI SETTLEMENT FORUM MEETING

Knowledge management

- The production, dissemination and storage of urban knowledge involves multiple stakeholders. In practice, some stakeholders have limited dissemination of knowledge regarding their own activities, while others utilize the products of other stakeholders to produce refined knowledge which is stored and made accessible to all.
- The 'Home of Open Development Data in Uganda' provides useful lessons in the production, storage and dissemination of knowledge and also provides examples of capacity development for community participation in resource assessments for the production of knowledge.

With the establishment of the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC) in Freetown, the knowledge management component is making strides in establishing a repository with online and physical features. However, unlike the 'Home of Open Development Data in Uganda', the resource unit of SLURC focuses specifically on urban development issues instead of general developmental issues.

As a new centre, SLURC could adapt the model of producing knowledge products with the involvement of communities and thereby develop their capacity in the process. The inclusiveness of this approach has the potential to improve

REFLECTIONS ON EMPOWERMENT OUTCOMES OF URBAN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES IN FREETOWN

BY: JOSEPH MACARTHY — CO-DIRECTOR, SLURC

The period 28th November to 1st December 2016 was a moment of deep reflection and learning about the process and practice of urban humanitarian response in Sierra Leone. This took place during a meeting, which brought together researchers and academics from the Bartlett's Development Planning Unit (DPU) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) - both based in the

community participation in advocacy and participation in urban development policy making and practice.

Role of NGOs and CBOs

- There is a close relationship between support NGOs like ACTogether and the national CBO of slum dwellers association in the form of the Federation of Slum Dwellers Association in Uganda (FSDAU).
- These two institutions operate like partners and provides coordination of other KASTI partners in their collaboration efforts.
- With a common target group (slum dwellers), all NGOs working in slums coordinate and collaborate with the Federation of Slum Dwellers and ACTogether.

On a similar note, the PSPP partners collaborate with each other and with other development partners working in informal settlements. This collaboration could be enhanced with an urban development forum that will include all development partners and stakeholders for urban development. This development forum formation is one of the PSPP partners' collaboration plan activities. It could form the starting point of city and nationwide forums with the involvement of all development stakeholders.



FIRST DAY OF DISCUSSION — AGREEING ON THE RESEARCH AGENDA AND METHODOLOGY

Undoubtedly, Sierra Leone has witnessed different sorts of crises that have had implications for humanitarian response – the civil war between 1991 and 2002; the cholera crisis in 2012; the Ebola crisis in 2014 to 2015; and, the 2015 flooding event in Freetown among others. Each of these disaster events has tended to be very intense. Whenever they occur, disasters affect the marginalised, those who already have hardship and deprivation, the most. Occurrence of disasters seems to plunge marginalised people into further levels of vulnerability. Given the scale of humanitarian challenge, there is need for the different actors at different levels to be prepared to respond by putting in place the necessary mechanisms (e.g. the legal mechanisms, the institutional structures etc.). In the meeting, which was held as part of the methodology of an ongoing research on urban humanitarian response in Freetown, it was established from the series of discussions that every time there is an emergency, the need for humanitarian assistance becomes urgent. Expectedly, several national and international humanitarian actors have been involved in a series of initiatives to address some of the different

humanitarian needs that arise. In each case, there has been a variety of response approaches, ranging from community led actions (such as the community-led Ebola response), to the provision of humanitarian relief, to top down relocation and resettlement (such as the temporary hosting at the National Stadium and transfer to Mile 6).

While many organisations (state and non-state) consider that humanitarian response has a role to play in the empowerment of community organisations, exactly how this is done still remains a puzzle. Nevertheless, and as the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone showed, community engagement can be critical in making humanitarian response efficacious. Community engagement did not only allow intervening organisations to tap from the tacit knowledge of community people, including their rich cultural values, but it also enabled the building of strong community leadership. It additionally allowed for the active role of communities in social mobilisation, at the same time as drawing from western ideas to deal with the crisis.



WORKSHOP SESSION WITH PARTICIPANTS DRAWN FROM DIFFERENT HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATIONS

During the meetings however, a few NGOs admitted that while they normally intervene through existing community structures, much of their humanitarian responses have really not been empowering since the focus has been more to provide them with a few relief items that will enable them cope for

that intermediate period. Various reasons were proffered for this. But while there has been a documentation of the various urban humanitarian practises by different organisations, there has been little work attempting to bring studies and perspectives together to generate a reflection to the wider

humanitarian community of practice. It is this knowledge gap that SLURC has set itself to address in the current research. The research is based on SLURC's conviction that having a clear understanding of the existing humanitarian procedures in place; mapping the variety of community structures, spaces and experiences for urban humanitarian response; and, building capacity at different levels, is necessary to facilitate

response by the different actors (across scale) in future and avoid delays and costs.

Major highlights of the meeting were a day workshop which was held at the SLURC office and visits to the Portee-Rokupa community which is the selected settlements for the study.

STREET VENDING IN FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

BY: AKOPON J. BERTIN — RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER, SLURC

Street vendors are an integral part of urban economies around the world, offering easy access to a wide range of goods and services in public spaces. Freetown has an estimated population of 1,050,301 (<https://www.citypopulation.de/SierraLeone-Cities.html>). In Freetown, street trading has grown rapidly over the years. This city has attracted a lot of people from the provinces searching to acquire quality education, livelihoods, well-paid jobs and business opportunities etc.

Street vending has become uncontrolled in Freetown and involves all age brackets ranging from children, adolescents, adults and the aged. Street vendors are mostly disadvantaged and middle socio-economic groups that strive very hard to provide income for their households, pay school/college tuition for their children and bringing food to their families/big homes. From discussions held with street vendors in Sani Abacha Street, Ecowas street, Free Street, Short Street and Lumley, it was disclosed that the major reasons for the increase in street vending in Freetown are due to rapid urbanization, high unemployment rate, lack of market space and the search for greener pastures. However, street vending also has its own positive impact on the economy such as the revenues generated through payments for licenses and permits, fees and fines and provision of cheap and easily accessed daily shopping goods. But the manner in which it is done within the central business district (CBD) has caused a lot of disorder, congestion, obstruction to other businesses and movements in traffic. On the other hand, it has also damaged the appearance of Freetown, in terms of disorder and visual attractiveness of

the city. So as a nation, what can we do to mitigate the rapid upsurge of street vending in Freetown, do we really want the government to remove them without providing a space?

Actually, most street vendors do pay market dues but still lack structured marketplaces where they could trade their products. They truly identify themselves as frequently paying fees and taxes but get no reward other than disturbance. From an interview with a senior official from the Freetown City Council, he explained that the problem of street vending in Freetown has been of great concern to the Council but the major difficulty is that they are overwhelmed with the increase in the population of the city. In other words, the number of street vendors has exceeded the council's expectations to adequately cater for them. However, he stated that the council has thought of building markets to address this problem. Even though there are no statistics showing the percentage of street vendors in Freetown, the council intends to redevelop the King Jimmy market into a modern state-of-the-art mixed-use shopping complex and business park while at the same time preserving its historical features.

In order to address this rapid upsurge in street vending in Freetown, the Freetown city council, ministries and other parties involved should try to build markets and create a database of vendors and also develop better ways of supporting and engaging vendors to understand their constraints and struggles. This can only be made achievable if we work collectively.



STREET VENDING IN SANI ABACHA STREET

INTRODUCING ADDITIONS TO THE SLURC TEAM



Mr. Rashid Smart

Mr. Rashid Smart is the Senior Finance Administrator of the centre and holds a Bachelor Degree in Finance and Investment Analysis and part qualified chartered Accountant - ACCA Level II. He brings 12 years of work experience in finance and administration from Internal NGOs. He has worked for IBIS West Africa, Plan international, ACDI/VOCA-SNAP etc in finance and administration role. He is very happy to join the team and move the vision of SLURC forward



Ms. Sudie Austina Sellu

Ms. Sudie Austina Sellu is the Livelihoods Research Officer and prospective graduate in Applied Accounting with Diploma and certificate in Business & Financial Management from the Association of Business Executives (Abe-UK) and the Institute of Public Administration and Management (IPAM-USL) respectively. She brings a four-year work experience as Data and Field Officer from Centre of Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation (CODOHSAPA) and Restless Development Sierra Leone. She has built a career in working with people living in deprived communities within and outside Freetown, including work on data collection and management, Sexual Reproductive Health, Gender Based Violence, livelihoods and women's empowerment. Her aspirations are for equal and improved welfare, opportunities and chances for the deprived and less privileged people, especially women and girls, in society.

UPCOMING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1. RESEARCH ON LIVELIHOODS AND GENDER

This is the first flagship research activity of the three years Comic Relief funded project that established the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC). This research study will be done in four informal settlements (Cockle bay, Dwarzack Farm, Moyiba and Portee/Rokupa) across Freetown to address critical knowledge gaps. This research is an attempt to develop a more detailed and comprehensive study of the existing livelihood strategies of women and men living in informal settlement. This will be done with the overall aim to inform policy formulation process that builds on the capabilities, needs and priorities of informal settlement dwellers and assist urban actors and stakeholders to develop appropriate, effective and practical intervention, that strengthen the livelihoods of the informal settlements residents.

This research aims to identify, explore, understand and analyse the multiple and dynamic dimensions of urban livelihoods of informal settlements dwellers in the four selected communities in Freetown. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- Provide an overview of the political economy and trends of urban livelihoods in informal settlements.
- Gain an increased understanding of livelihood systems in informal settlements, their outcomes, and residents' aspirations. This will involve exploring, understanding, interpreting and constructing a description of people's lived experiences within the local context of the selected study locations.
- Gain an increased understanding of the relationship between place and the livelihoods of women and men living in informal settlements.
- Understand how household livelihood strategies allocate labour and resources between women and men
- Examine individuals and household adaptive strategies

in response to risk, shocks (e.g demolitions, relocations, flooding) that affects household livelihoods and the implications on different members of the households)

- Recommend strategies aimed at sustaining urban livelihood systems in informal settlements. (Target for recommendations: PSPP members and their livelihoods programs, Local and national government (to highlight spatial dimension of economy activities of residents of informal settlements).

This activity will build upon the Gender Sensitive Livelihoods Systems Analysis training that took place from the 21-25 February, 2017.

Participants were drawn from different backgrounds and disciplines and comprised academics, researchers, government officials, NGOs and development practitioners, and Community residents from Cockle Bay, Dwarzack, Portee/Rokupa, Moyiba, communities

2. SCOPING OF URBAN HEALTH SYSTEMS IN FREETOWN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

This research project is a consortium of six institutional partners (originally) that are currently carrying out Future Health Systems (FHS) research in their respective countries. The FHS research is led by John Hopkins University (JHU) in the USA, and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex. SLURC is a new addition to the consortium which has existed for nearly ten (10) years. This two (2) year research project is funded by DFID. In Sierra Leone, the research will focus on exploring some health systems in Freetown. In line with on-going FHS research in other countries, research priorities in Sierra Leone will be organised in three thematic areas as follows:

- Unlocking Community Capabilities;
- Stimulating Innovation;
- Learning by Doing

In this research project, SLURC will begin with a scoping study on the existing information on urban health in Freetown to allow the framing of a research agenda for health systems in Sierra Leone. While the FHS research project was never framed within a specific context, many of the lessons that emerged from the Ebola outbreak will not only reinforce the research findings but will clearly bring to light many of the concern about the need to adapt health systems including the role and ability of different actors to respond to shocks.

3. RESEARCH ON BUILDING CAPACITY TO DISRUPT URBAN RISK TRAPS IN FREETOWN

This research project will focus on the assessment of urban risk traps or risk accumulation cycles affecting the most disadvantages women and men, girls and boys in informal settlements in Freetown. The research study will connect this experience with the action planning component of the ESRC funded research project Urban Africa Risk Knowledge (Urban ARK – visit www.urbanark.org). The project aims to reduce risk in urban sub-Saharan Africa by breaking cycles of risk accumulation. Linking the SLURC research and capacity-

building programme with Urban ARK, will allow the articulation of resources to deepen this experience over 2016 and 2017, connecting SLURC with a wider community of researchers and practitioners across Africa and in particular with the Urban ARK team in Malawi, who will also undertake a similar path to enable the establishment of centralised, decentralised and virtual learning platforms able to tackle risk accumulation cycles.

This research will seek to improve spatial knowledge, evaluate the present investments and actions made to mitigate risks and produce robust evidence to help guiding those actions towards new strategies for climatic resilience. The empirical, conceptual and methodological knowledge generated throughout this project will contribute towards just resilience planning and the co-design of innovative mechanisms aiming to set viable precedents for environmentally and socially just urban development in Freetown, and a platform to upscale these at the national and regional level.

To meet this objective, an innovative trans-disciplinary methodology is adopted, with a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, structured into the following components:

- Mapping risk
- Assessing risk mitigation investment flows
- Strategic action planning



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Innovations for equity

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