

# SLURC

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### GENDER AND INFORMAL LIVELIHOODS IN FREETOWN

By: Julian Walker, Co-director of the DPU's Gender Policy and Planning Programme, UCL, UK.

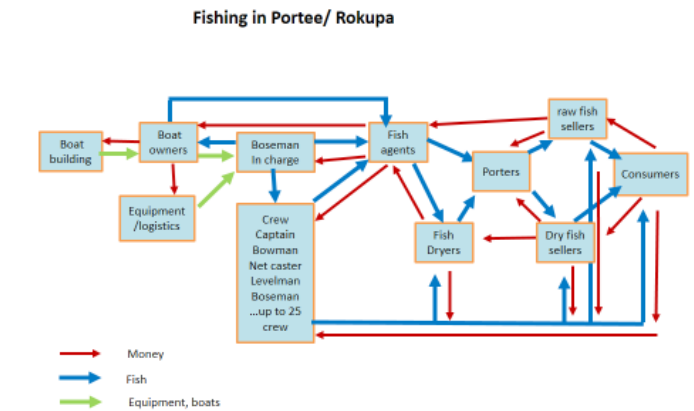
In February 2017 Braima Koroma and Sudie Sellu worked with Andrea Rigon and Julian Walker from SLURC's partners at the Development Planning Unit of University College London, to run a research capacity building workshop on 'Gender Sensitive Informal Livelihoods Systems Analysis', as part of the DPU's ongoing collaboration with SLURC, funded by Comic Relief. The workshop was attended by thirty two participants, including residents of the four informal settlement communities that SLURC is undertaking research in, members of the Federation of Urban and Rural Poor – Sierra Leone (FEDURP-SL), staff from Freetown city government, government ministries and representative from NGOs working in informal settlements in Freetown.

During the workshop, pilot research was undertaken in two of the four informal settlements that SLURC is active in, both in the east of the city, namely, Moyiba, a hillside community, and Portee/ Rokupa, a coastal community. The research focused on the key livelihood systems in which the majority of residents are involved in each community: quarrying for construction stone in Moyiba, and fishing in Portee/ Rokupa.



The Fishing Livelihood system in Portee/Rokupa

The central focus of the research was to demonstrate the importance of these livelihood systems to the wider city economy (which can provide important advocacy data, given the tendency of urban governance interventions



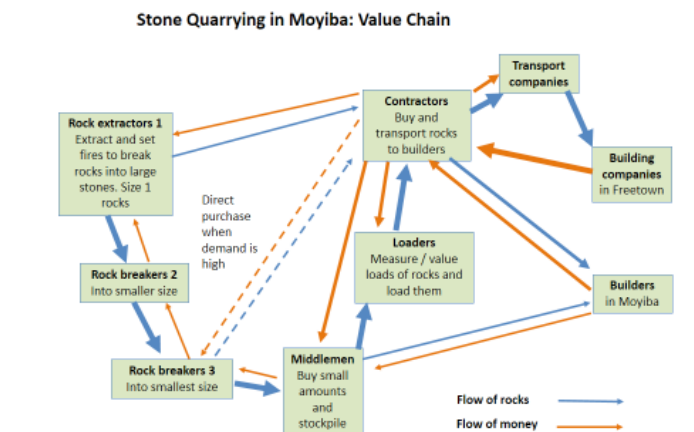
Value Chain for Fishing in Portee/Rokupa

to disable, rather than support, informal urban livelihood systems) and, on the other hand, to understand the importance of these livelihoods systems for women and men living in informal settlements.



The Stone Quarrying Livelihood system in Moyiba

The workshop participants engaged enthusiastically with the research, and were able to highlight a number of findings. This included the gendered nature of the value chains, with mixed participation overall, but very distinctively 'male' and 'female' nodes. Another highlight was the importance of stone breaking and fishing as fall-back sources of income for those with few alternatives, as they are based on the use of freely available resources



Value Chain for Stone Quarrying in Moyiba

(access to both the stone quarry and fishing rights are open to all) and can be exploited by those with very limited assets. At the same time, the lack of social protection in these livelihoods systems was all too clear. The findings of this pilot research have since been fed into an ongoing research project on gender and informal livelihoods in Freetown which we aim to complete by October this year.



# MAPPING URBAN RISK – SEEKING URBAN RESILIENCE IN FREETOWN

By Rita Lambert, Urban ARK Project, Development Planning Unit, UCL, UK.

As part of the wider Urban ARK research project, the mapping of everyday risks is well underway in 15 informal settlements of Freetown, to monitor and document the processes that drive risk accumulation over time, and to appraise the practices employed by various stakeholders to mitigate, reduce and prevent risk. The objective of this component is to provide fresh insights into how the governance of risk reduction currently works and to enhance the capacity to act of those most vulnerable to be trapped in risk accumulation cycles.



Mapping risk in Cockle Bay

The mapping kicked off with a 3 day training workshop in March 2017, led by The Bartlett Development Planning Unit-UCL together with SLURC, and included a number of participants living in the informal settlements of Freetown, and belonging to various civil society organisations such as the Federation of Urban and Rural Poor (FEDURP) and Federation of Eastern Slum Dwellers Association (FESDA). Other organizations that participated included NGOs like BRAC, YMCA, YDM and CODOHSAPA and government agencies like the Freetown City Council, Disaster Management

Department and Environment Protection Agency. A total of 39 participants attended the workshop.

The mapping workshop sought to equip those who took part with the skills to map both manually and through the use of mobile phone applications. A pilot with two (2) settlements, Cockle bay and Dwarzak, was completed and included georeferenced surveys, focus group discussions and transect walks to profile each settlement and record the various hazards and the capacity to act of different actors.

This served to refine the methodology of what to map and how to map, which is currently being applied, throughout this data collection phase of the project, in the remaining settlements selected. The knowledge acquired relating to the hazards and vulnerabilities affecting the informal settlements of Freetown will be monitored systematically through 'ReMap Risk', a virtual analytical tool that will be openly accessible by the end of 2017.



Marking community initiatives in Cockle bay

## CO-PRODUCING A FREETOWN - SPECIFIC SLUM DEFINITION

By: Sulaiman Kamara – Research and Community Officer, SLURC.

In the 2014 Millennium Development Goals Indicator report of the United Nations Statistics Division (2015), it was estimated that 75.6% of the total urban population in Sierra Leone is in areas classified as slums. Similarly, Sierra Leone is in the category of countries ranked high in the prevalence of slums with over 80% of urban Population living in slums. This inference is based on the UN-Habitat definition of a slum which is a global perspective. However, while this may be the case, such a definition cannot truly reflect the city's local realities because the socio-economic, environmental and cultural context of Sierra Leone are in many ways

different from other countries used to coin such a definition. Therefore, it should be a prudent concern for Ministries, Departments, Agencies (MDAs) and other urban development stakeholders to be able to put forward a Sierra Leonean version or a context-specific definition that would truly reflect the idiosyncrasies of Freetown.

In the current situation, there is no clear and widely accepted definition and characteristics of a slum/ informal settlement. Thus, MDAs, Local Government, NGOs and other development stakeholders are

1 United Nations Statistics Division (2015) Millennium Development Goals Indicators report 2014. Retrieved from <https://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/SeriesDe tail.aspx?srld=711> accessed on the 29 May 2017  
2 Arimah, B.C. (2010) The Face of Urban Poverty: Explaining the Prevalence of Slums in Developing Countries. WIDER Working Paper 2010/030. Helsinki: UNU-WIDER.

continually challenged with development planning and decisions related to the provision of essential services to certain settlements. This status quo creates uncertainty that makes it difficult for residents of these areas to invest in upgrading their houses and for NGOs to provide development assistance in settlement upgrading due to the constant fear of eviction.

In the light of the above, the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC) has initiated a process to engage urban stakeholders including MDAs, NGOs, the Municipality, community based organizations and community residents to jointly work on a Sierra Leone specific definition of a slum/informal settlement. SLURC would therefore like to encourage the participation of all urban development stakeholders needed in this process as we consider all to be very important actors for a successful and generally accepted outcome (Sierra Leone slum definition).

On the 30th May, SLURC hosted the first workshop of stakeholders to commence the deliberations. Joining the discussion were representatives from the Freetown City Council, BRAC, Concern worldwide, Centre for Dialogue on Human Settlement and Poverty Alleviation (CODOHSAPA), Office of National Security (ONS),

Restless Development, Youth Development Movement (YDM), Young Men Christian Association (YMCA), Federation of Urban Poor (FEDURP) and other private professionals in urban issues. Some general criteria were put forward on what we should consider when defining a slum for Freetown. Interested individuals and organizations that would like to be part of this process are invited to get in touch with SLURC.



Cross section of participants at stakeholder workshop on Co-Defining a Slum in Freetown.

## YMCA EMPOWERS FREETOWN YOUTHS FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

By Francis Reffell, Slums Project Manager, YMCA.

The “Pull Slum Pan Pipul” Project is part of Comic Relief’s 4-Cities Initiative which is implemented by six (6) agencies including SL YMCA. The SL YMCA component is geared to bring about demonstrable socio economic transformation in the lives of young people living in 10 slum communities in Freetown. This is being done through technical and vocational skills training, disaster

risk reduction, advocacy and small grants, health and hygiene promotion, and entrepreneurship support.

The following is a selection of case studies/testimonies of beneficiaries whose lives have been transformed through the YMCA Slum project.



“My name is Ramatu Mansaray and I am 21 years old living in Funkia community. I got married in the village at the age of 13 years and later relocated to Freetown with my husband, with the hope of going to school or learn a trade. My parents couldn’t afford to pay school fees and so didn’t have the privilege to attend school. I thought my husband could have helped me learn a trade or go to school as he promised my parents during our wedding.

Being disappointed by my husband, I engaged in petty trading, selling bread and ginger beer and later ended up with cookery selling. It was a difficult trade as it required me to get up from bed at around 3am to start cooking for customers. I was not happy doing it because I wanted to acquire some basic employable skills that will earn me the respect and dignity to continue my business activities.

In the course of time, I was informed about YMCA’s support programme and later signed up for it. I was trained as a caterer which has helped me secure a job at Montana Restaurant at the Lumley Beach. My husband is very happy and supportive for this wonderful opportunity and achievement as he sees it as a means for sustainable livelihood for our family. Given such transformational journey of my life, I would like YMCA to continue its work by supporting more young girls that are vulnerable and need help. In that light, I thank God for the YMCA for changing my story, as my dream to learn a trade and secure job has been fulfilled.”





"My name is Mbalu Bangura, and I am twenty four (24) years old. I was born in the northern part of Sierra Leone and later migrated to the city. I grew up in Oloshoro and I have spent my entire life here. I lost my father since I was a child at the age of eleven years (11) and was only taken care of by my mother with two of my younger sisters. I dropped out of school at the secondary level because my mum couldn't continue to afford fees for me and so prioritised for my younger ones since she was a petty trader and things were really difficult for us. In spite of these difficult circumstances we faced coupled with a lot of social temptations, we however did not end up in the streets like some of our peers.

Nevertheless, there was a time when I gave up and was about to be involved in anti-social activities when I heard the mega phone announcement on the YMCA training opportunity. I quickly grabbed the opportunity, wherein I was selected for catering training.

Today, YMCA has changed my life and my family, as I have now gained recognition in my community. After graduation, I proceeded to pursue diploma which was self-funded from the income accrued from the sale of food stuff I was preparing and selling in the community. I have now finished my course and working as an intern at the Family Kingdom Resort. I am paid an incentive which is helping to sustain me and my family. I really appreciate YMCA

SL for empowering me and building my capacity to succeed in life. I am also a peer educator which has helped me gain knowledge in health and hygiene and serve my community by participating in health and hygiene sensitization."



"My name is Isatu Kamara and I am thirty years old, living in Moa Wharf community. I use to sell fish before I received the start-up capital from YMCA. Over time, there was scarcity of fish supply which I found extremely difficult to sustain my business. At that time, the YMCA support just came in handy, which I have used to switch my business to the sale of slippers in my community and other communities especially, Magazine and Marbella. I see this as huge relief for me and my family.

The slippers business is not as competitive as fish mongering which has huge potential for growth. Because of this, I am able to repay the loan according to the repayment plan; it also enables me to contribute Le10,000 to our Osusu scheme and also contribute to my daily FEDURP savings. This has empowered me to take care of my family, pay school fees for my three children and also provide food for my family daily."

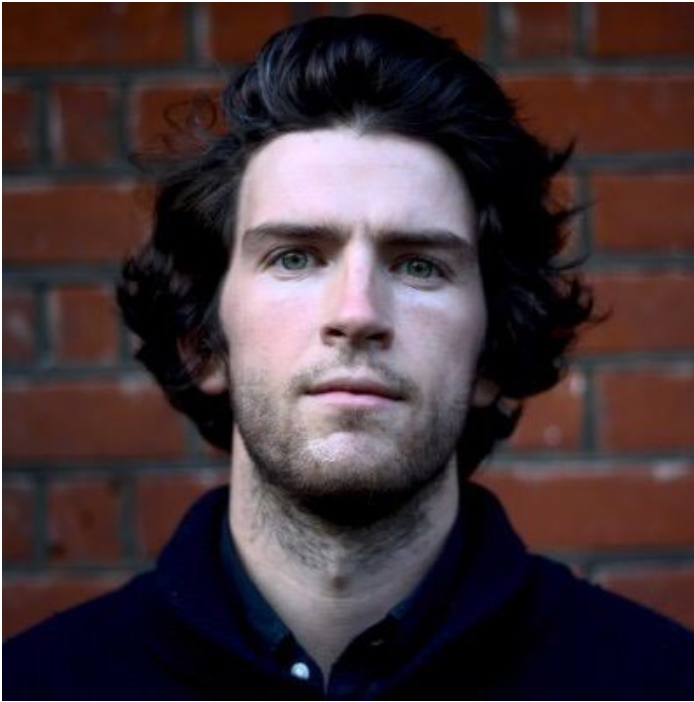
## SLURC TO STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

By Andrea Rigon, Co-investigator, SLURC

In order to meet internationally acceptable standards in financial and accounting systems, SLURC has hired globally excellent consultants from MANGO consultancy firm from the UK to assist the centre to transition to a more complex finance system able to manage multiple research projects and grants from different funders. SLURC is still a relatively young research centre and the increased demand for SLURC research and training services revealed the need to build stronger finance

and accounting systems able to support SLURC growth and long-term financial sustainability. Over the next few months, the consultants will work side-by-side with SLURC management to build internal systems able to maintain the highest accountability standards, while providing timely financial information to SLURC leadership. This process will allow SLURC to prepare stronger and more competitive bids for research projects.

## INTRODUCING SLURC's INFORMATION MANAGEMENT INTERN



Alexander Thomas Stone, Information Management Intern, SLURC

Mr. Alexander Stone joined the SLURC family in April of this year, in the role of Information Management Intern. He was born and raised in London, and has a background working for educational NGOs in the city, as well as experience in Colombia, Peru and Nepal. He holds a degree in Engineering from the University of Manchester, and recently completed an MSc in Environment and Sustainable Development at the Development Planning Unit of University College London.

Since starting work at SLURC, he has been focusing mainly on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL), working to ensure that procedures are in place both to gather sufficient data from our activities this year, and develop frameworks to make the process as efficient as possible in the future. He has also been assisting in re-organising and updating the physical resource centre, and planning with colleagues on how to ensure more people access the information and resources SLURC has on offer.

As a critical addition and part of SLURC's growth, he will be contributing to the research outputs of the centre,

producing media on behalf of SLURC and encouraging diverse groups to use our services and resources, including local and international institutions and individuals. He is part of the management's continuing efforts to build SLURC into a resource centre that establishes itself as an important part of the community here in Freetown, in Sierra Leone, and internationally.

## REFLECTION ON THE GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING SYSTEM IN FREETOWN AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO RISK

By Emmanuel Osuteye, Urban ARK Project, Development Planning Unit, UCL, UK.

The DPU's Emmanuel Osuteye and SLURC's Co-Director Braima Koroma conducted 12 in-depth interviews and one focus group discussion with 12 participants (mainly from the Federation and the Local DRM structure within 7 informal settlements) from the 15th to 20th May 2017 on the governance and planning system in Freetown and its relationships to risk. In addition we visited two informal settlements - Susan's Bay and Colbot Community respectively.

The main risks focused on have been flooding, fires and the hazard of poor waste management and have looked into the city's growth, planning structures and some peculiarities has led to the persistence of these risks. From our discussions, these three risks appear to be what I would call 'city wide'/'most common'. Other smaller risks of landslides, building collapse, marine and road accidents were also identified and discussed as product of the failure of the planning system and the effects of weak governance structures etc. These smaller risks are concentrated/typical to certain settlements within

the city. Again the answers to the question 'why'? (the occurrence, persistence, underlying factors, effects etc) have produced interesting results. The discussions on disease epidemics have been embedded into that of waste management and flooding almost as a 'cross-cutting' interconnected issue. So it does come up.

The DRM practices are within a circuit of key NGOs. These have been properly identified and clarified as being recognised by the Office of National Security (where the Disaster Management Department is housed) and form a loose information network that is called upon in the events of disasters (for assessments and recovery efforts).

The clear message from the external support agencies interviewed is that DRM is not a core programme activity for any of them and have largely focused on disaster recovery. And in terms of investments, financial figures provided by YMCA, CODOHSAPA confirm this and budgets for this purpose are minimal or as a result



of re-allocation of normal programme budgets – but capped at a threshold per annum.

The discussion with the community DRM structures and representatives have produced interesting insights into the smaller processes of mitigation and prevention (including financial investments) beyond what the external agencies are doing.

Freetown City Council appears to be an outlier in the DRM circuit as their perceived role has not been devolved by the ONS, and not properly involved in the coordination of activities. However, some investments in DRM are made by the FCC in disaster recovery and now have a dedicated budget for that (figures for last five years collected).

## COMMUNITY LED MAPPING IN 15 INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN FREETOWN

Alexander Thomas Stone, Information Management Intern, SLURC

Following the 'Mapping for Change' capacity building workshop hosted by SLURC and Urban ARK of the Development Planning Unit, UCL, we have been undertaking community-led mapping in 15 of Freetown's informal settlements. The aim of this process is to collect localised data on the various risks faced by residents of these informal settlements – what the problems are, where they are located, who is vulnerable to them, and what is being done to mitigate them.

The up-to-date information produced in this project, specific to the selected informal settlements, will be used by and for residents in a number of ways. It is a tool for groups of residents to demand effective responses

that are designed for each communities' specific requirements. These can be planned and supported by different actors, including local governments and NGOs. Information, including the maps produced, can also be used to change negative attitudes towards the informal settlements and their residents.

The photo below shows a house destroyed by a landslide in the Dwazark settlement – an example of a risk specific to hillside communities. It is important to have a varied selection of settlements because they face different risks, and so have different coping mechanisms and varying priorities due to their differing physical geography.





## NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### SEMINAR ON EMPOWERMENT OUTCOMES OF URBAN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSES IN FREETOWN

With completion of the study on Humanitarian Responses in Freetown, the Sierra Leone Urban Research Centre (SLURC) is poised to hold a seminar to disseminate the final report with findings and recommendation. This seminar will target the humanitarian community of practice in Freetown that includes international and national stakeholders. By focusing on the empowerment implication of humanitarian responses, this research explores the extent to which approaches have been able to build capacities of informal dwellers' groups, foster collaboration among different stakeholders, enable critical learning, and opened up opportunities for the recognition of the diverse needs and aspirations of vulnerable groups within the wider policy and planning environment. Furthermore, the research also explored the conditions in the humanitarian sector that have enabled or compromised the achievement of empowerment outcomes. The conference will provide an opportunity for practitioners to discuss specific set of recommendations to the humanitarian sector on how empowerment can be supported through urban humanitarian responses. This is expected to take place before the end of July.

insights into how the governance of risk reduction currently works to enhance the capacity to act of those most vulnerable to be trapped in risk accumulation cycles, as well as of state and external agencies to disrupt these traps strategically, inclusively and collectively. The two interrelated components are; "Understanding risk production and reduction through current urban planning and development practices" and "Building collective capacity to disrupt urban risk traps."

### CONFERENCE ON LIVELIHOODS OF RESIDENTS OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN FREETOWN

Following a qualitative and quantitative data collection exercise from the study areas of Cockle bay, Dwarzack Farm, Moyiba and Portee/Rokupa, the research team has started the analysis with preliminary findings. These initial findings are to be presented at a conference of stakeholders for validation and further refinement before a final report could be produced for publication. The conference will therefore target urban stakeholders working in informal settlements in Freetown with a focus on the value chain of livelihood activities of the dwellers. This conference is scheduled to take place in within August 2017.

### POLICY IMPACT AND STRATEGIC ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP ON GOVERNANCE, PLANNING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN FREETOWN

As part of an ongoing research being jointly undertaken by the SLURC and the Urban African Risk Knowledge (Urban ARK) project of the Development planning Unit of University College London, a policy impact and strategic action planning workshop will be held in early August, 2017. The workshop is meant to further engage stakeholders on the initial findings of the two tier research aimed at examining the governance and planning practices in urbanized African towns and cities and how they promote or reduce urban risk. Within the context Freetown (Sierra Leone), the research investigates the contemporary interaction between the structures of urban planning, including organizational forms and bureaucratic mandate, dominant development practices, plan-making procedures and the collective and individual agency of poor women and men and how they shape the (re)production of cycles of risk accumulation and reduction. It also provides fresh

### TRAINING PROGRAMME ON PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND DESIGN

As part of its urban development planning stakeholder capacity development programme, SLURC will be delivering an innovative research methods training workshop on Participatory Planning and Design by the end of August this year. The week long workshop aims to expose government officials, built environment practitioners, NGOs workers and community representatives to the basic principles and methods of participatory planning and design. The workshop will draw on the Architecture Sans Frontières-UK Change by Design methodology, which approaches participatory planning and design processes in ways that interrogates issues around power relations, social diversity, scale and spatial production. ASF-UK methodology has been particularly focused on informal settlement upgrading, drawing on experiences from Brazil, Kenya and Ecuador. The activity is currently scheduled for 25 – 28 September 2017 and interested stakeholders could contact SLURC to reserve a space for them.



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