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A global campaign to collect and consolidate city-wide data on informal/slum settlements as the basis for inclusive development between the urban poor and local governments.

knowyourcity.info



Shack/Slum Dwellers International is a network of community-based organisations of the urban poor in 33 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

www.sdinet.org

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PATRICK

MAGEBHULA HUNSLEY
1 NOV 1958 - 4 AUG 2014

#POORMANFEELIT



Founder and President of FEDUP in South Africa, longstanding member of the SDI leadership, genuine grassroots leader, poet and raconteur extraordinaire.

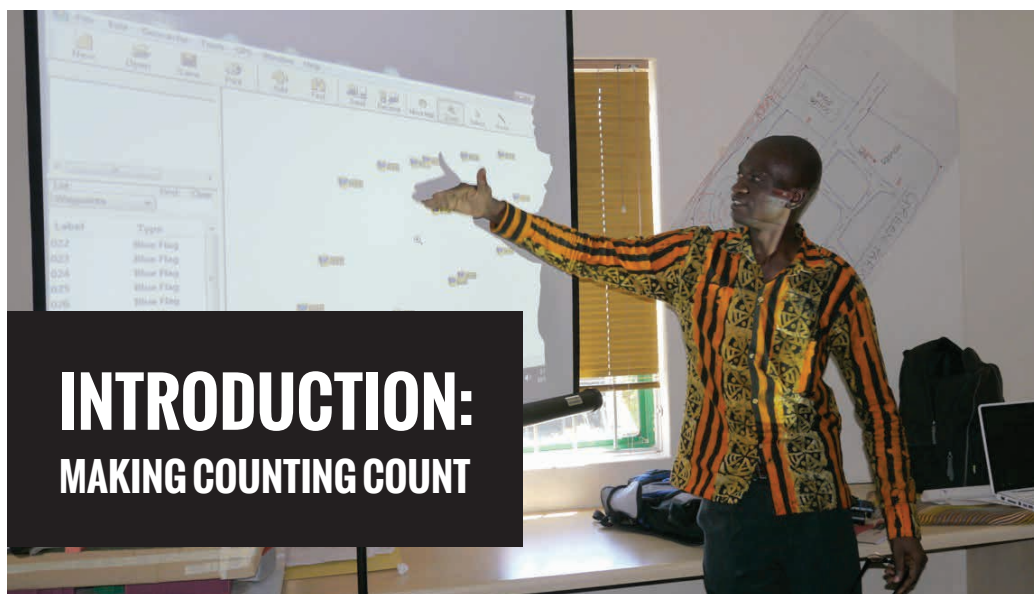
"One of the fondest memories I have of Patrick is his wicked sense of humour and sharp wit. Whenever Patrick spoke to communities about the value of information and the power of knowledge he always made the following example. When a community goes to the municipality to complain or request for support the officials would always ask them "But how many are you?" and the community's response would be "Too many!" The point he was making is that if you do not have the knowledge of your own community, of your own people on the ground or your own needs, you will never be able to negotiate effectively with government. The tool of profiling and enumerations was not seen on its own as merely an information collection exercise.

It was about getting communities organised and thinking about their problems but most of all it was a learning exercise, an attempt to spread the knowledge amongst community members to mobilise and motivate, organise and negotiate, prioritise needs, create partnerships and make sure projects get implemented.

Patrick's vision for profiling was that in South Africa and beyond each and every informal settlement would one day be profiled. He saw this being accomplished only through a decentralised process where local leaders and community members could get the know how and skills necessary to profile the settlements in their own sub-regions. Patrick may have left us but his spirit lives on and we hear him in so many of the slogans of the federation. His most famous call to arms is the slogan "Amandla! Imali Nolwazi!" which means power is money and knowledge and thanks to Patrick, for the South African SDI Alliance, our Knowledge continues to grow through a broad-based information collection exercise fuelled by the grassroots and inspired by a leader who was living proof that in slums we can find the most valuable of treasures. Even now we continue to use his ideas to drive our process and strive for mass mobilisation of communities on the ground through intelligent use of information collection as a tool for mobilising."

- Charlton Ziervogel for the SA SDI Alliance





INTRODUCTION: MAKING COUNTING COUNT

UN-HABITAT estimates that by the year 2020 the number of people living in slums would have reached approximately 1,5 billion. That is an increase of over 300 million people over the next 5 years with a large proportion of this growth linked to rapid urbanization. SDI has long been aware that governments justify budgetary allocations based on population censuses. These censuses, when undertaken, are often conducted in frequencies too sparse to accurately track the rapid growth of slum areas or informal settlements. Often by the time the data is analyzed and made available to the public and even to city officials it may already be outdated and its usefulness as a planning tool has been diminished.

Of greater concern is the total exclusion of many informal settlements from the planning agenda of most cities. When they are recognized by City Governments and given budgetary allocations they are rarely incorporated into overall city planning processes but treated in isolation. When their tenuous relationship to local authorities makes them virtually invisible they are completely excluded from overall city investment. When they are actually recognized their budgets and their upgrading are ring-fenced from their formal neighbours and from the city as a whole. Housing and basic services are at the very heart of the lives of the urban poor. Their everyday life is dominated by ever-present forms of risk. Their temporary shacks may be demolished. Their shacklords (government or private) may push them out through force or through extortion.

Torrential rains and runaway fires may destroy their fragile shelters and their few personal possessions. Their lack of sanitary facilities increases their needs for doctors and hospitals to which they have poor access. And their inability to document their claims to land regularly snowball into a general “invisibility” in urban life, making it impossible for them to claim any rights to such things as essential services (including water and sanitation), municipal health and education facilities, police protection, access to credit and financial services, and other benefits of urban life.

Invisibility, exclusion, voicelessness and general neglect - these remain the dominant experiences for most slum dwellers in the world. Little wonder that frustration leads to violence and lawlessness. While the tide sometimes turns, in most cases these actions of last resort (or political manipulation), rarely produce meaningful change for the urban poor at settlement or at city level.

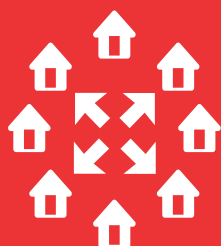


The SDI protocols of settlement profiling, mapping and community led enumeration have long been utilized by slum dweller communities in the SDI network. But why should the inhabitants of informal settlements map, enumerate and document themselves? For what purpose? Since all informal settlements show some aspects of illegality, might not this documentation be used against them? And surely such documentation is the responsibility of government bodies? Shouldn't household surveys be designed and implemented by professionals in order to be accurate, objective and implemented across the whole city? SDI's three particular forms of information gathering about informal settlements have not only provided an up to date and more accurate on the ground account of conditions in the slum areas in which poor people live. They have been also used as a method to ensure that these communities are included on the development agenda of their cities.



These actions of self-surveying and mapping are often useful for the residents as they produce the information about current situations that allow the residents to assess the problems they face, understand their own resources and consider their priorities. These initiatives often provide the first opportunity for residents to engage in a settlement-wide discussion about their needs and priorities. As the case studies show, the process of undertaking and completing an enumeration helps build organizational networks, skills and confidence, which are necessary if the residents are to undertake larger improvement projects in the future. As such, the enumeration process is also useful for strengthening community organizations in each informal settlement (especially in expanding the number of savers and women's daily savings schemes) and in community discussions about their needs and priorities.

These information-gathering processes must also be understood as part of the federations' larger processes, which include support for community savings groups (that are at the foundation of all the federations), Detailed documentation is also



useful for those local governments wishing to work with the federations. And the information is useful for the federations, as local governments with antagonistic views towards informal settlements can be shown these settlements in a new light; they can show the scale of their contribution to the city's economy and employed workforce.

The very fact that there is documentation available about a settlement that is considered illegitimate by government agencies can help increase the legitimacy of the settlement itself. Some enumerations also produce surprises for local governments – for instance, in showing the amount of publicly provided goods and services present (for example, electricity, telephone land lines, publicly provided water taps or points and toilets), which also increases a settlement's legitimacy.

The inhabitants of informal settlements are rarely seen by governments, professionals or by international agencies as providers of solutions. But their capacity to produce relevant, up-to-date, detailed data through surveys, mapping and enumerations remains one of the powerful ways in which they do contribute to solutions – and get their voice heard and respected. Much progress has been made through community-driven profiling, mapping and enumerations; but success in this area in any nation or city increases the pressure to increase the scale, to make sure that this profiling, enumerating and mapping covers all informal settlements and brings their inhabitants into the discussions. The experiences of the shack/slum dwellers federations in community-driven information gathering is constantly evolving, changing, adapting and improving.



A TWIST

WITH THE CAPACITY TO INSPIRE



One of these important information gathering exercises, the Federations' settlement profiling exercise, has undergone a major makeover and upgrade in recent years. In order to scale their reach, impact and power to collaborate with various development partners, the federations agreed to design a single informal settlement profile tool. And in order to increase the contemporary legitimacy of this data they also chose to adopt and co-design support technologies that would enhance the verifiability of the data, making it useful to broader external audiences.

This most certainly does not mean that the grassroots basis of this work and its preferred instruments of the hand drawn map and the manual face-to-face collection of data has been supplanted by the lifelessness of the cybernetic curse. A huge effort has been made to make sure that hand-held GPS devices, smart phones and computers have been superimposed on the dynamic, non-representational practices that continue to be at the heart of the SDI data collection and management process.

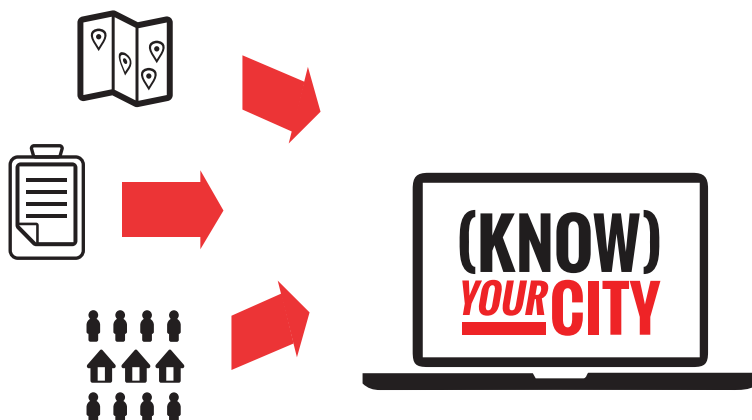




Hundreds of slum dwellers in 18 countries and many thousands of inhabitants in their communities have been participating in the improvement, updating and standardising over 6000 informal settlement profiles that have been collected by SDI federations since 2009.

This process has involved community-led data collection on the ground. Supported by the federation processes of advocacy and mobilisation of communities, strengthening of existing savings groups and building new ones.

It further involves the active participation of informal settlement in raw data collection and ensures their maximum contribution to the development of the support technologies including the online data platform and collection tools that digitise and visualise their data.





PURPOSE/ OBJECTIVES

The approach of this community-based informal settlement profiling has been geared to garnering information about these settlements with the intent of utilising it as a resource and advocacy tool to support the poor, homeless communities in their quest to secure tenure and improve socio-economic conditions, be it by way of in situ upgrading or appropriate relocation.

The process focuses on the following specific objectives:

- To collect information of the informal settlements in terms of their locality, size, tenure status, basic amenities, educational, health and social facilities as well as transport and other public services.
- To create a lobby tool to address the inequitable distribution of resources and services in cities.
- To mobilise and build community capacity and organisational unity through the establishment of federations of the Urban Poor.



The primary actors and data collectors in this project have been the communities themselves. Federations in the SDI network have been doing this since the early 1980's when the National Slum Dwellers Federation and Sparc pioneered grassroots profiling, mapping and enumerating in the pavement slums of Mumbai India. Over the years, as more and more countries joined the coalition of national Federations that is Slum Dwellers International, the profiles in terms of process and content have morphed to respond to local needs.

In 2013 the mature federations in the SDI network began to meet at leadership level to create a standardized and customized profile form (with over 150 questions!) that also allowed for country specific modules to be added if and when required. This was followed by extensive dialogue and consultation at the country and actual settlement levels in 11 of SDI's 34 affiliates. These standardized forms have now been adopted by all mature federations in the network. All historical profile data (6000 plus forms) has been recaptured by federation members in accordance with these standardized questionnaires.

Sierra Leone, Ghana, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and India have started to provide digitized information that is now displayed on the Know Your City website, while Brazil, Angola, Nigeria, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Nepal, have developed slightly different iterations that still need to be integrated on the site.

In the course of the profiling exercises the following steps are generally followed.

1. Mass meetings are called in the settlement to be profiled.
2. At the same time that the meeting is held, teams are made up of local volunteers who work with experienced trainers from other settlements to create a boundary map of the settlement.
3. At the mass meetings community members are taken through the questionnaire by grassroots facilitators with the experience to facilitate dialogue and debate.
4. The information is captured and a second meeting is called where this information is presented to the community for verification.
5. The verified information is captured on the "Know Your City" database and fed back to national, regional and community based leadership.
6. The new computerized system allows federations, with access to the "Know Your City" website to print relevant data, including summary information, visualisation in the form of maps, icons and charts and graphs for presentation in meetings with formal stakeholders.
7. Where they do not exist and where federations have the necessary capacity new savings schemes are formed. They remain accountable to their members and their settlement but can form part of the local city federation.



THIS IS HOW WE DO IT

As we have already made clear the uniquely information gathered by slum dweller federations and forming the heart and soul of "Know Your City" are powerful tools for slum communities in their pursuit of citizenship. The information fosters an accurate understanding of the local, settlement level and city level environment. It facilitates more effective and targeted community negotiation for land, services and housing. It empowers communities to engage other urban development stakeholders as equals with valuable information at their fingertips.

The stories that follow are told by Slum Dweller profilers and mappers in the SDI network. They are inspirational and informative. Together they recreate a rich tapestry of experience – the experience of learning about one's settlement, one's city and oneself.

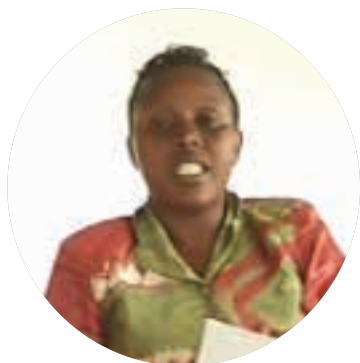


Idris Lubega,
*National Slum Dwellers Federation of
Uganda from Kawempe.*

"At the national level I am a coordinator for profiling, enumeration and mapping. The federation in Uganda participated in the standardized profile exercise because we wanted to collect data that is acceptable to different agencies and partners who we interact with in our work.

This data is powerful and can be used to lobby and advocate for better service delivery within our slums and informal settlements. The profile tool that we used was able to collect information in its raw form, capturing realities on the ground and when we gave it to Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) and our divisional leaders in the urban councils in September 2014, they appreciated what we as slum dwellers had been able to do.

Many said their eyes were opened by this data. Many did not know how many slums existed in Kampala city and how these settlements were deprived of services in so many ways. Soon we hope the standardized data from across the SDI network will be available to us so that we compare the situation in different cities in East Africa and around the world."



Sharon Mudondo,
*National Slum Dwellers Federation of
Uganda from Nakawa*

"In selecting the settlements to profile, my team and I looked for those areas that we considered slums. For areas to qualify as slums, we would look at unplanned settlements, areas with open and poorly maintained drainage systems, over-populated and congested areas. We identified all slum areas in each division because we wanted to do a city-wide profile.

Profile activities included meeting leaders in the slum settlements to sensitize them on the need for the profile exercise. These leaders, if convinced would then call other

representation in their communities to answer the profile tool. In our profiling team, we had to include a mobilization person who would answer questions about the federation and how one can join our movement whenever asked.

I believe the report generated from this exercise is very comprehensive and can be used to change how things are in the informal settlements in terms of service delivery. I participated in the verification exercise too and people were eager at that time to be given the full report. Now that it is out, I know it will change things to the better. The priority areas identified in the profile questionnaire show which areas to be tackled; it is now easy for Nakawa to lobby for what they want and it is easy to see which development suits where in a certain settlement.





My most interesting experience during the profiles was how I learnt many things happening in my division. During the Butabika profiles for instance, it rained so heavily that most areas in the slum were flooded. We could not get where to sit and yet during the profile, we realized that the place was home to very many households residing in the area. I also learn a lot, I am empowered in the area of collecting data and I can speak about the importance of community profiles with confidence."





Allan Mawejeje,
*National Slum Dwellers Federation of
 Uganda from Makindye*

"Data collection in my area was smooth except for one area called Bukasa and another called Kibuli where the local council leaders were difficult to deal with. In Bukasa, we were able to convince the leaders over time and we went ahead to profile the area but we failed to profile Kibuli. The chairmen of this place asked for money so as to allow us to profile the area despite our effort to convince him that we wanted to get the information so that we can improve his area. We failed and had to let it go.



I think the profile report is very useful. I have a copy which I keep referring to especially when I am in any settlement forum in Makindye. The leadership at Makindye municipality has appreciated this report and there is not a time they have challenged what is in the report. Many of them say that the report has made them more aware of their municipality.

What I found most interesting while conducting the profiles is the historical backgrounds of the settlements.

For instance, Bukasa came to be known as Bukasa because there lived a ghost by the name of 'Bukasa' who used to torment people and would not allow them to plant any crops in the area. It is after chasing the ghost that people settled in the area.

Another aspect I found shocking was the congestion in some areas. In my opinion, Kanyogoga is the worse slum I have ever come across. People sleep next to open drainage and because the toilets are few, these drainages also act as toilets for these people. There are houseflies all over and bad smell. It is like they are waiting for death!"





Gerald Ssali,
*National Slum Dwellers Federation of
Uganda from Kawempe*

"Profile activities in Kawempe included having a transect walk in a settlement to see which areas were really slums and which were not. My team and I would then go to the Local Council leader in the area and share with him or her the reason behind wanting to conduct the profiles in the areas. We would share experiences of other areas where profile data has helped improve on service delivery so as to sound more convincing. We did not face much resistance in Kawempe except for one area called Kazo Angola where the leader took a lot of convincing to allow us carry out the exercise. We had to use other leaders in Kawempe who had accepted to

have their places profiled, to convince him to allow us to do the same in Kazo Angola. After a series of meetings, he agreed.

The biggest challenge however was interacting with leaders who were not well versed with their areas. They did not have the correct information.

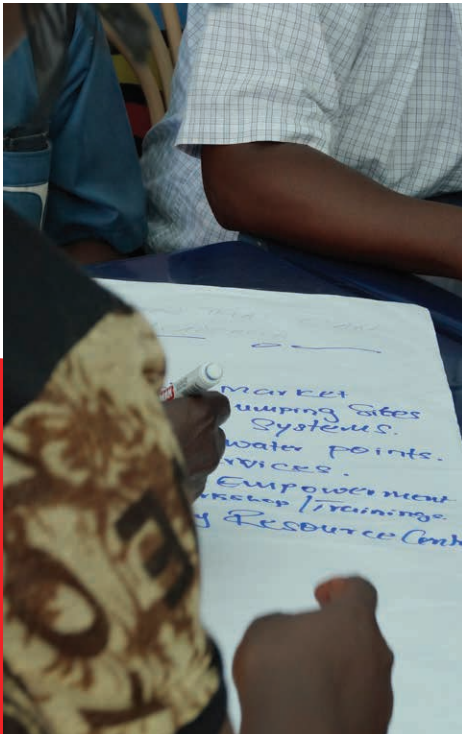


Some figures they would quote such as on population of the area and the number of structures would be in a way hard to believe especially to me, a resident of Kawempe.

Youth were often very vibrant in answering many of the questions though other questions such as on historical background were better answered by the those who have lived in the settlement for a long time or the opinion leaders. Women were very active when it came to the question on water and sanitation and on health issues.



I think the profile data will be very useful in stopping the evictions that are happening day in- day out in Kampala nowadays because KCCA knows there are people in these places now. Now they cannot say the areas are not occupied. The information collected will also help in the provision of services in these slums."





Nalubulwa Sumaiya,
*National Slum Dwellers Federation of
 Uganda from Nakawa*

"I come from Mulimira Zone but there are some areas I had not been to, where people use the open springs and streams as toilets because there are no toilets or because the toilets are so full where they reside and where houses are very congested. In some places you close one door and find another door facing you. There is no space at all. No fire brigade vehicle can ever get there. I am worried that in case of fire, some areas would totally burn to the ground.

We selected areas to profile based on our knowledge of what a slum is. Profiling activity involved meeting with the local council leaders of a settlement and letting them know that we were going to carry out the exercise in their settlement .

We would also tell them the reason behind the profiling activity.

On the actual day of profiling, the local leaders would ensure we have audience to interview using our profile questionnaires .We had groups of about 35 to 45 people. In mapping, we would pick all the service points in each settlement and map the settlement's boundaries.

While conducting profiles, I noted that many people would hesitate to answer the questions on land. Before answering, they would ask why we needed to know issues concerning their land.



Others would ask why we needed to know whether their settlement was declared or not and whether we were collecting information to give Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) which was carrying out many evictions especially for those who resided near railway lines at that time.

The profile and mapping report is of great use to us the federation and to Uganda in general because it has shown how the situation is on ground, how people are suffering, how people struggle to live in areas that keep flooding whenever there are heavy rains.

The report gives us bargaining power too. Nobody can threaten us now and tell us they want to evict us especially KCCA because we have shown them in this report that these areas called slums have people living in them. I was there in September at City Hall when KCCA was given the report by ACTogether and NSDFU.

I was very green on how people live in some areas of Kampala. The profiling and mapping exercise was so good and interesting because it empowered me in many ways. Now I am a profiler and a mapper in my municipality and I have the knowledge."





"For several years I have never known that there would come a time where by in my knowledge I would turn Kibera inside out and understand it like the back of my hand, thanks to Muungano wa Wanavijiji. This was when the Federation profiling data team came to our settlement to share with us on the concept of settlement profiling. They went ahead to train us to acquire knowledge of data collection using a standardized questionnaire form and the mapping tools.



Hyda Muthoni ,
*is a youth profiler from Kibera,
Nairobi Southern federation cluster.
Idah recalls her experience of the
standardized citywide profile.*

Our team came across interesting characters who did not consider the outcome of the exercise to be of benefit to them. Some village elders would ask for handouts, in Swahili, they would ask for, "wapi ya macho" -this means we need some money to allow you to go ahead with the profile business.

Luckily we were in the company of Muungano advocacy team, whose main role was to solve any hurdle we faced. Personally I have read a copy of my settlement's report and I consider it a magnificent tool that would propel our engagement with government and partners on the delivery of services to Kibera."



Henry Onyango Otunge ,

popularly called, 'Happy Man', after the music store he owns. Henry has been an enumerator within Muungano wa Wanavijiji, federation of Kenyan slum dwellers for the last 16 years. He lives in Korogocho, one of large slums in Nairobi. Henry participated in city wide profiling exercises in Nairobi, Mobasa and Kisumu.

Henry explains, "The federation committed to conduct citywide profiling in 6 cities because it wanted to expand its membership. We also wanted to have accurate data that allows the federation to engage with more stakeholders.

The government normally has settlement estimates at best, but with the data in our possession we now are in a better position to negotiate on issues of secure tenure, housing and sanitation.

The Nairobi City County Government initially was not aware of the number of informal settlements in Nairobi and what basic services were available in these settlements, the profile revealed Nairobi has 158 settlements and all of them lack adequate services."





Emily Wangari,

federation member gives an insight into how profiling was organised by Muungano.

"The first step to city wide profile was to conduct a field reconnaissance that enabled the regional profiling teams to identify informal settlements to be profiled.

For instance profiling in the City of Kisumu, Nyalenda settlement, the team would first determine if Nyalenda was indeed an informal settlement by considering the level of service provision, the population and housing densities and the type of land ownership. The teams would then engage with the local administration in the area by introducing the concept of knowing your city. The teams would share experiences of other areas where profile and enumeration data has helped improve on service delivery.

One of the major challenges we faced as a federation in implementing this process was that the opinion leaders thought they knew their settlements but actually had wrong information. From the population, to the number of public facilities, existing infrastructure, settlement boundaries to community priorities in terms of services and needs, their knowledge was often lacking. In some cities such as Makueni, Nakuru and Machakos, the leaders had a clear and accurate background of their settlements which was a great help for the process.

Youth participation in the profiling exercise in all the six cities of Nairobi, Nakuru, Machakos, Makueni, Kiambu and Kisumu was above par and most importantly their contribution in supporting the profiling teams to develop accurate maps was very good".



Wilberforce Onyango (OCS),
a member of the federation's Advocacy team describes the criteria used by the federation to select cities that would be profiled.

"The federation's National Council, met and made proposals of the places to be profiled. Members built their proposals around cities where they felt that there are opportunities to engage with the local authorities to improve settlements.

Our members in the six cities then identified and confirmed the settlements within their county and sub-counties. The next phase of the process was to build rapport with the communities in the targeted settlements, and to achieve this effectively, our entry point was through the sub-county and settlement leaders. This involved holding meetings with opinion and village leaders; giving them a clear background of why the settlement profiles are significant to the communities they represent.

When the leaders understood, they agreed to mobilise a larger community audience, and our profiling teams would once again introduce the logic of the profiles to the communities. Once this was done then a meeting was scheduled to respond to the standardized questionnaire.

At the same time, a team was selected to walk along the boundary of the settlement and take GPS points using smart phones and GPS receivers. Another team was trained to count all the structures and the services in the settlement.





The process was not easy as it may sound, some communities were hesitant to take part in the data collection process, for there were allegations that the process was a scheme to evict communities from their land which was not the case and in most scenarios, and opinion leaders played intermediaries to enable our teams to collect data.

After data collection, four out of the six cities have had the chance to relate with and verify their data and approved the final reports. These reports have enabled the communities to prioritize their issues and start to develop strategies to address them.

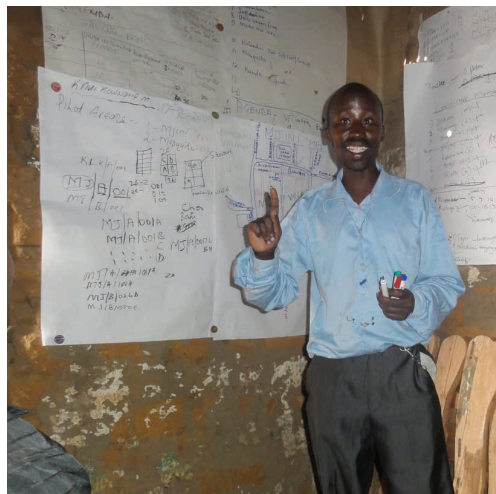
In Kabete area a certain community called NITD outrightly denied our team access into the settlement. However, once they were threatened with eviction, they opened up requesting the federation to profile their settlement."





Faiza Mukai,
*federation member from Mjini settlement
 in Machakos County.*

"The selection of the settlements profiled was informed by our definition of the word slum. Our first task was to engage the local county administration and explain the significance of profiling in these settlements. We also interacted with new communities and informed them how the profile would benefit them. In the background, our mobilisation teams were also busy mobilizing new savings groups into the federation and strengthening dormant ones.



In most situations mobilisation of the communities was left to the local leaders. These communities were to take part in the interview sessions as delivered by the profile questionnaires.

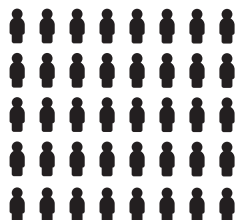
On matters of settlement mapping, guided by our support officers Killion Nyambuga and Edwin Simiyu, we would pick all the service points in each settlement and map the settlement's boundaries.





The federation was quick to notice that the issue of land was an emotive issue and most communities were cautious when answering questions on land. Most of the interviewees feared that this particular question was a set up to expose the communities to a possible eviction.

The profiling and mapping exercise has empowered my community and myself in numerous ways. We know our land and our development needs and we can replicate this with other settlements in my county."





SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town



Ncediswa Notywala,
*is a FEDUP member from Gugulethu in
Cape Town*

"I joined the federation way back in 2002. Back then, I used to go there with the savings book and 20 cent sent by my aunt. I did not know what was what. I then started saving myself at Vusi Nsuntsha.

I was at North West with the federation on the exchange of facilitators when Mama D our savings mama told me that the data capturing will take place in Stellenbosch but didn't tell us the date. So I came to Stellenbosch and

was introduced to the old ona (data platform). I captured more than 300 profiles in 4 or 5 days. Then I was eager to know where is this data going? They told us that we will come again to do more. That was in July 2014. Since then, I've learned the other ways of capturing like with the new ona which is beta.ona, also Excel and verification of data

I am the leader of the data capturing team with 6 ladies in our saving group called Ladies with Brains meaning we have brains to save.

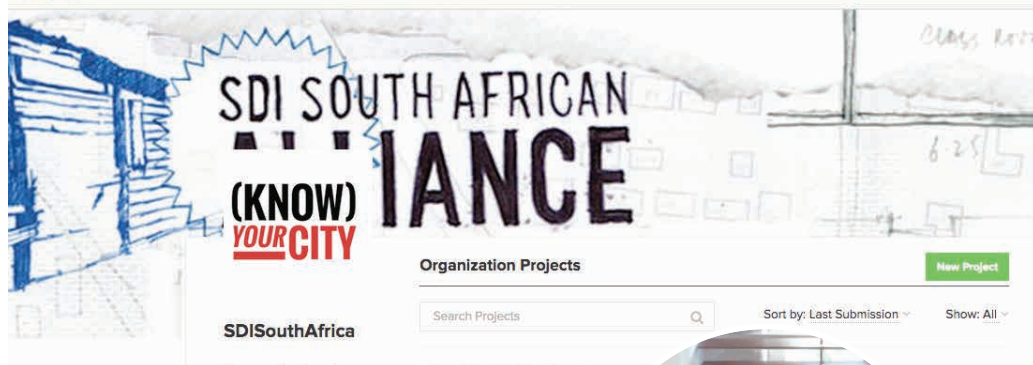
Stellenbosch is far from Gugulethu but I love doing my work. I sleep, eat and live data.



I like data because it's people's lives and it made me see and know that living in a shack does not mean you are useless and lifeless, you can live the normal life as well. The transport fare that I get to come here is R65.00 but to come here from my home is R74.00 and I do not mind as long as I do the community data and capture it.

I used to see the people writing profiles in the community not knowing where it goes and what are they doing about it, now I know that it goes from profiling to capturing then mapping. We now have almost 7000 profiles, old and new captured by this team and that is not counting all the duplicates and verifications we did! "





Chwayita Mbola,

lives in Europe, an informal settlement in Cape Town. She is a member FEDUP.

"In November 2014 I joined the savings group called Ladies with Brains. I started working as a data capturer October 2014 at CORC. As a data lady I learned a lot to do with the data, for example how to work with Google Chrome and create Google documents, how to use old ona and the better ona (<https://beta.ona.io>).

On the first day I did Kenya with lots of boundaries to old ona, each settlement had more than 200 coordinates and it took me the whole day.

About longitude and latitude I was so blind I did not even know what it is and where is negative or positive, what must I put and I put the coordinates wrong and the centre point was in the sea. That is where I started learning more and more, now I know how to do my work with patience. I even know how to verify and edit. The data comes from profiling to capturing then mapping, that is where life starts to bring the better life to the people who live in the informal settlement. Working together we can do more."



Nyameka Sephula,
is from Kayamandi, Stellenbosch.



"I am in the savings group called Ladies with Brains under FEDUP and I am the chairperson of our group. I heard about the data capturing from Stellenbosch municipality and I joined in June 2014. I did not know anything about SDI/ CORC. In that week I learned about SDI and how important is the data that we were capturing.

In 3 or 4 days we captured over 2000 profiles from all the African Federations and we were using the old ona platform. I wanted to know what happens to the data after we captured.

In October we came back and work on the new ona platform. We learned about the difference between historical and master profiles. We did mapping from Kenya, 1 settlement took me the whole day. We had to put in point by point.

We suffered with the maps then we were introduced to KML that made our lives easier. Martjin at enketo made our form better and we captured 9 cities (93 settlements) in Uganda in one morning!"

"I am a member of federation and I save in Ladies with Brains group. I started working with SDI in October 2014. The first time I came to join the team I knew nothing about capturing the data. With the help of the team as they were already started capturing, they showed some basics to use computer as I was not used using it and my fingers were not flexible. I took long time to type in.



Nosicelo Mtosele,
is from Old Crossroads, in Cape Town.

They introduced me to ona which I knew nothing about and we were capturing Kenya boundaries.

It is a learning experience to work here as a data capturer and to me it's not about getting paid, because the team has become a family, friends and they are supportive. I learned a lot. We are learning about Google docs. At first we were capturing on the old Ona and at some point Ona gave us some problems. Then whenever Ona gave us problems we report that to Ona and in this way we helped build the beta ona which we are using now."





SANTA FE INSTITUTE

“When we started working on this project I had never been to a slum or even the Global South. I thought it would be quick and easy to collect all the SDI data on cell phones until I visited Cape Town and really understood the process and the importance of community.

By meeting people around the world and working with SDI we have started a process where the technology can grow through the community process, similar to how communities work to upgrade their own neighbourhoods.

This progress has been amazing to witness and I have learned a great deal and I’ve been part of a project that empowers communities to lead the development of tools anyone can use to make their neighbourhoods a better place to live.”

- Joe Hand, Santa Fe Institute



"I worked in a few remote, rural and less developed countries and experienced first-hand the very unsuitable, inefficient, old tools that are used to collect data.

Enketo was built around the idea that offline-capable webforms could bridge the technology gap in data collection caused by poor internet connections. Enketo is allowing the use of an efficient, state-of-the-art data entry tool despite poor Internet. It's incredibly rewarding to see it being used in SDI's valuable work."

- Martijn van de Rijdt, Enketo





Project Isizwe believes and works for the right to access good quality, affordable internet and that the access should not be determined by socio-economic conditions of the individual, but based on the principles of social solidarity, equity and fairness.

Project Isizwe is a South African based technology outfit and provider of free WIFI which supported the federations in the development of the knowyourcity.info webportal.



Ona is a social enterprise based in Nairobi and New York. Ona is dedicated to helping build tools that allow organizations drive change through data. Ona is thrilled to be partnered with SDI and is committed to making tools that can be used to help further SDI's mission of empowering people around the world who live in urban settlements.



CONCLUSION

Take a look at the official map of any city in Africa. It can be Dakar or Cairo, Nairobi or Harare – even Johannesburg. You won't notice it, but these maps do not give you the whole picture. They leave out the neighbourhoods that house at least 35% of the city's population – in some cases as much as 70%. Official maps eradicate informal settlements with an efficiency that (for totally different reasons) slum clearance boards and the architects of the Millenium Development Goals can only envy.

The map-makers of Nairobi, for example, had been able to make Mathare disappear. One of the largest slums in Africa and the streets and houses that cater for over 750,000 people continues to appear as a black hole on the edges of adequately detailed layouts of Nairobi's formal suburbs. The same applies to Kisenyi in Kampala, Mbayani in Blantyre, Old Fadama in Accra, Cambamba in Luanda ... The list of urban black holes in Africa and Asia is impressive.

This Know Your City data platform and the work that has gone into its compilation represent an attempt to fill the gaps that pothole the formal maps of the cities of the global South – to make visible that which society has tried to hide. This applies as much to the physical space of the 6000 plus settlements currently profiles on the Know Your City data platform, as it does to the people who live in them and whose families' long histories of dispossession and exclusion have brought them to inhabit these invisible spaces.

The efforts of shack dwellers themselves to make sure that every shack dweller is counted and that every informal settlement is mapped continues. The data SDI federations have been collecting for the past three decades has become the basis of a unique social and political argument that is at the heart of SDI's mission to develop and support an informed and united voice of the urban poor. With informal settlement populations worldwide increasing at close to 15,000 people a day the task to know our settlements, our federations of the urban poor and our cities has never been more urgent



NOTES

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dashed lines, typical of primary-ruled notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



(KNOW)
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