Muungano nguvu yetu (unity is strength)

20 years of the Kenyan federation of slum dwellers

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The Human Settlements Group works to reduce poverty and improve health and housing conditions in the urban centres of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It seeks to combine this with promoting good governance and more ecologically sustainable patterns of urban development and rural-urban linkages

Twenty years ago, the grassroots movement *Muungano wa Wanavijiji* emerged from Nairobi's many slums to resist evictions by the Kenyan government. It confronted the nexus of politicians, government administrators and the elite to acquire the lands that the slums occupied. In doing so, Muungano challenged antipathetic attitudes about informality. Joining global advocacy around slums, Muungano pushed locally for the recognition of slums as human settlements. And as the space for slums developed, Muungano graduated to designing models for upgrading living conditions. Throughout this evolution, the Kenyan state has been the single most prominent precipitant for the strategies that Muungano has employed. This paper describes the correlations between a social movement, its civil society partners, and the state. It gives an insight into how state, and indeed societal, attitudes change to achieve more inclusive cities.

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Executive summary

Slums occupy two per cent of Nairobi's land, yet they are home to half the city's population. Comparing studies in Kenya since the 1990s reveals that the city space occupied by the poorer half of its population has not increased. While informal settlements' populations may have doubled in this time, the rate and scale of improvements have failed to match unrelenting densification and consolidation.

Muungano wa Wanavijiji[1] (Swahili for 'united slum dwellers') is a movement of urban poor people in Kenya, which emerged in Nairobi around 1996 and spread throughout the country in the early 2000s, federating around 2001 to the international network of community-based organisations that is Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI). Across its 20-year history, Muungano's struggle has been one of framing the slum phenomenon as a core issue that the city and the state have a responsibility to address. In this paper, we describe what has essentially been a fight for perception – for the Kenyan state and citizens to see slums, not as representing a marginal amount of space in the city and therefore a marginal issue, but as the most important place for half its population and, in this way, affecting the whole city.

We explore the progress of Muungano's relationship with the state, set within broader changes in state-civil society relations, and seek to bring out the complexity of a link that has varied from conflict to contestation, partnership to collaboration, and separate but parallel efforts to address common issues. Over the years, Muungano has challenged the state directly and indirectly, taken advantage of opportunities and spaces that have been created by the state's actions, and, where a lacuna has been observed, has worked to create or encourage new practice and policy. Particularly in later years, Muungano's agenda has tended towards changing practice, but its influence has also transfused to policy and legislation.

We discuss the movement's internal workings, but focus more on answering the question: **how has Muungano touched the lives of slum dwellers in Kenya generally, regardless of whether they have ever heard about the federation?** In this context, the paper seeks to examine **correlations** between what Muungano has done, and how this has influenced the positions that the state has taken towards slums, and therefore the context in which all slum residents find themselves. We measure these correlations by documenting points of contact between the movement and the state. Going beyond the confrontation that characterised much of the movement's early years, these junctures have included joint projects, shared platforms, participation in state programmes, workshops and meetings, and relationships between individuals.

We have loosely grouped these correlations under three themes, each representing a dimension of change: community mobilisation and state attitudes; changing approaches to designing responses to informality; and leveraging finance and investment in informal settlement improvement.

Even where Muungano's engagement with the state was not direct, there have been times marked by significant concurrences in thinking, plans, and approaches. By looking at the evolving attitudes of the state in relation to the evolution of the movement's own strategies, it is clear to that cross-transfusion of ideas has often happened in less obvious ways. Co-production does not always entail the state and its citizens to be working under one organisational framework, or focused on the same project or geography. From 2000 to the present, the Kenyan state and Muungano have both been working to develop and refine methodology for slum upgrading. Some of the innovation has occurred in partnership, some separately, and sometimes advances have been achieved in situations where Muungano and the state were in opposition – perhaps even as a consequence of conflict.

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[1] From here on shortened to *Muungano*.

BOX 1: PHASES OF A MOVEMENT

The paper derives from a broader project documenting the first twenty years of Muungano through interviews with individuals present at different stages along that journey – Muungano's members, as well as activists, professionals, and partners.[2] Through this, we have characterised the movement's institutional history into four slightly overlapping phases:

- The first, roughly 1996 to 2002, begins with the coming together of slum dwellers to form Muungano – which represented activism and often violent resistance to forceful eviction. The early struggle was for recognition for slums and the people living in them, for which strategies were protest, solidarity, activism, and legal challenges.

- In the second phase, from 2000 to 2006, the first 'support NGO' was formed and built links with similar efforts globally, supporting the movement in adopting SDI tools that position slum dwellers at the centre of slum development. Muungano grew rapidly, spreading outwards from Nairobi throughout Kenya.

- In the third phase, 2005 to 2010, the Kenyan alliance[3] took measures to build and consolidate regional and national structures and leadership, and the community-based federation embarked on a process of redefining its relationship with its support NGO.

- In the fourth phase, from 2009 to 2016, the community base of the movement gradually reasserted its centrality to the alliance, at the same time increasingly working with a wide range of partners, including Kenyan and international academia. Muungano also began exploring new mechanisms and models for communities to engage county governments on development.

Since 2003, Muungano has regularly taken inventories of Kenya's slums, creating city-wide profiles that give a broader view and insights as to whether the right trajectory for inclusive cities had been set. The latest evidence suggests however that the disparity between the informal and formal city in Kenya is widening. Conditions for slum residents continue to deteriorate and government efforts based on decades-old practice are proving to not only be ineffective, but have accelerated the challenges. Two examples are that without the possibility of finding new lands, slums have begun to densify in new ways – upwards, as slum shacks become double-storey; and also that a result of an emerging trend for 'market-based evictions' of the urban poor, informal landlords and landowners are replacing slum housing with sub-standard tenement buildings.

Much has changed in Kenya, perhaps most significantly the attitude that slums are blighted spots in a green city and ought to be removed. Calls for slums to be upgraded are evident in state rhetoric – in Kenya's constitution, the ruling party manifesto, and national and city strategic plans – and in the existence of the Kenya National Slum Upgrading Programme and the Kenya Informal Settlements Infrastructure Project (KENSUP and KISIP). However, the underlying nature of this rhetoric is to narrow informality issues to housing and infrastructure projects. The new 'improved' attitudes are based on the premise that informality is a problem and they are therefore blind to the multitude of benefits and contributions slums lend to a city.

The slum is a part of the city and two sustain each other. In Kenya, informal settlements represent a tremendous resource, without which the city economy would grind to a halt. They are markets for industry, they provide low cost accommodation, schooling, health care, recreation for the mass of the city's workers (and childcare, cooking, and cleaning for most middle and high income homes). They are a vital link between urban and rural economies and a city safety net. The result of current state thinking has been that this logic of inclusivity has been lost, with slum communities instead reduced to beneficiaries of faulty visioning that imagines a problem by obscuring the complexity of informal communities and offers to fix it with 'decent housing'.

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[2] See www.muungano.net

[3] The 'Kenyan alliance' combines three organisations, Muungano wa Wanavijiji, the Kenyan federation of slum dwellers, Akiba Mashinani Trust, the Kenyan urban poor fund, and the CSO/NGO that provides technical/professional support to the federation. This latter has taken three different forms over the years: Pamoja Trust (2000–2009), Muungano Support Trust (MuST) (2010–2015) and SDI Kenya (2016 onwards).

Muungano remains a singular voice in Kenya, suggesting that informality is not always a problem and calling for slum-friendly cities. It drew its methodology from SDI and particularly the Indian experiences; the Kenyan state had its project and procurement frameworks. Muungano's upgrading experience shows that different slum situations will require different mixes of design variables – for instance, some projects will be in situ and some have to be done on greenfield locations. The only consistent variable, which is also the most significant difference between Muungano and state design, is the role of the community.

Muungano's offering on community participation falls outside conventional project management frameworks and is markedly different from the structure applied by the state. It is an assurance that slum upgrading is possible, but only where communities themselves are at the centre of their development. Looking back on the last 20 years, we conclude that some battles may have been won, but the war on attitudes to informality rages on.

This paper is a testament that social movements sustain not only because the issue they focus on still persists, but also because they can adapt and remain responsive to that issue as it mutates. There is much discussion in some development circles about southern organisations' approaches in the face of disruptive changes to their context. The story of Muungano is one of the need for constant readiness to respond to or take advantage of opportunities to influence change. As Kenya's political economy evolves, it exerts a pressure on Muungano to adapt. The movement is also couched within the global urban discourse and is continuously learning and contributing to this agenda – sometimes directly and sometimes as part of the wider SDI network. The push to change in Muungano is often intuitive, emanating from the grounding that its leaders have and their continuous interaction with peers across the global South. Increasingly, its leaders are active participants in global urban forums. New thinking often takes on a more deliberate form when it is exposed to communities. Within the slum context, ideas are shaped into tools and the tools are moulded into strategies, new ideas sometimes becoming the basis for new strategies. At the end of the paper, we lay out our ideas for Muungano's future.

Figure 1: Timeline of key events and context across the history of Muungano wa Wanavijiji

Global: Between 1995-2005: Developing countries' urban population grows by an average 1.2 million people per week

World population reaches 6 billion

2001: Indian SDI federation drive rehabilitation of 15,000 slum families along Mumbai railway tracks. The precedent & lessons will later facilitate Muungano's resettlement work in Kibera & Mukuru

Global forecast: by 2030, 60% of all urban dwellers will be under 18 years old

1996: Habitat II in Istanbul marks a growing international urban agenda

Nairobi population reaches 2 million

2001: Kenya government & UN Habitat announce a joint slum upgrading programme, which will in 2003 become the Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP)

2003: After a general election & regime change, the newly elected government makes the first national budgetary allocation for slum upgrading: half a billion KSH to be spent through KENSUP

1992: As Kenya adopts multi-party government, faced with strong & growing parliamentary opposition the ruling party takes to using public land as its main patronage asset

Growing Western pressure on Kenya to recognise and address human rights issues relating to forced evictions and land grabs

From 2001 to 2003, Muungano is heavily involved in discussions on the formation of KENSUP

2004: Muungano inputs to the development of a national Land Policy, one of many policies, inquiries and legislation the federation has fed into

1990: The 1990's sees a spike in forced evictions of informal settlements: in 1990, two large slums in Nairobi, Muoroto and Kibagare, are demolished, displacing 30,000 people

Both Muungano and state focus begins to shift, from slum clearance/evictions towards upgrading and designing slum interventions

2001: Mombasa is given city status: thousands of slum residents face eviction in 'clean up' operations

2002-2004: Muungano spreads outwards from Nairobi & Athi River to establish savings groups in most of Kenya's major towns & cities

1996: Growing civil society pressure on the state to legislate to protect people living in informal settlements from land grabbers

1996: First significant state response to slums: establishment of the Nairobi Informal Settlements Coordination Committee

2000: As possibilities grow that government will support land regularisation & improving slum conditions, Muungano's Urban Land Campaign with civil society partners aims to make the collective voice of the urban poor heard on issues of land housing & shelter

2003: The urban poor fund, Akiba Mashinani Trust, is established to raise & manage the bridge finance that can animate community savings towards development. It has staff, but is majority governed & owned by the federation

Direct action like the Freedom Corner hunger strike by women demanding political prisoners' release, set the stage for Muungano

1997: State moratorium on slum demolitions on public land (has limited effect)

2004: Muungano's work with Kenya Railways, supported by SDI and Pamoja Trust, tests its relationship with its civil society support network. Some see communities being co-opted by government; Muungano sees an opportunity to test out its ability to design solutions at scale

1996: Muungano wa Wanavijiji, the movement of slum dwellers, emerges in Nairobi and Athi River as a grassroots resistance to forced evictions by the residents of slums. Muungano's early struggle was for recognition for slums and the people living in them. Strategies were protest, solidarity, activism, and legal challenges

1999-2000: Pamoja Trust, Muungano's first professional support NGO, is formed by some of the civil society professionals that loosely support the movement

2001: Muungano seeks representative mandate in settlements, a change that splits the movement: half the original leaders return to their settlements to mobilise communities to form savings groups; the rest realign with other movements. The name Muungano wa Wanavijiji remains a shared identity

2003-2009: Muungano's youth federation & mentoring programme, *Mwamko wa Vijana,* is active in Nairobi, Kisumu, Nakuru & Mombasa

2001: Muungano affiliates to SDI, becoming the Kenya SDI Federation

1990   1997   1999   2001   2003
   1996   1998   2000   2002   2004

PHASE 1. ACTIVISM, EVICTIONS & PROTEST (1996-2002)

PHASE 2. ORGANISING, RITUALS, LEARNING & INNOVATION (2000-2006)

1993 & 1995: Early slum surveys by development consultants and academics show that 55 percent of Nairobi's population is living on 2 per cent of its land. Using this data for advocacy helps galvanise the emerging movement

2000-2002. First international SDI exchanges with India & South Africa help Muungano to grow & develop skills in savings, data collection, house modelling & planning

2003-2005: Muungano helps SDI build the Ugandan federation, also building a lot of leadership itself in the process

1993: The community organiser training programme that supported the emergence of Muungano begins in Nairobi slums

1999: Davinder Lamba's Operation Firimbi campaign against land grabbing and corruption is awarded the UN Habitat Scroll of Honour. In the 1990s, Lamba and Muungano worked closely together – if there is an eviction, 'blow a firimbi (whistle)' & Muungano would come to resist

2002: Growth & spread of savings groups leads to increases in lost savings. SDI affiliates help strengthen systems; Muungano begins to understand that '*you don't build a system on trust; you build a system that creates trust*'. Communities' view of savings begins to shift, from a symbolic 'glue' holding people together or supporting settlement improvement, towards uses for individuals & livelihoods

1995: First contact with Kenya by South African SDI alliance

2002: Toi market savings scheme is the first to start loaning to members

1994: Kituo Cha Sheria's early work in Nairobi slums focuses on paralegal training and addressing governance issues in Korogocho, a large slum next to the city dump

Remembering evictions & demolitions: City Cotton slum (Wilson Airport) Mitumba, Raila (Kibera), Kamae, Westlands Market...

2000: Muungano's upgrading of five slums on land in Huruma owned by Nairobi City Council begins with residents organising into savings groups

2003: Muungano & Pamoja receive the UN Habitat Scroll of Honour for slum upgrading

2001: First enumeration, in Huruma, with city council support. It's a rudimentary exercise, with Muungano & support professionals learning as they go

2003: First city-scale data collection work is an inventory of Nairobi's slums

1997: With Kituo Cha Sheria, Muungano prosecutes and loses over 24 land cases in court; the settlements they fight to protect remain

The process is equally if not more important than the outcome of the activities. During planning the Huruma upgrading, SDI encourages Muungano to begin upgrading only after first building social capital through savings, enumeration, & house modelling etc. This is a key difference between Muungano and state approaches to designing solutions to slums

2003-2009: Kambi Moto community builds approx 100 homes. Muungano learns from upgrading models/methodologies from South Africa & India. Working with civil society orgs & architects, the community lead on house design, planning & construction. Financing is through savings groups & AMT

KEY

| Context: global/Kenyan state |
| Context: SDI |
| Muungano wa Wanavijiji: key activities/campaigns |
| Muungano wa Wanavijiji: institutional/broader |

2001-2005: In Huruma, Korogocho and Kibera, Muungano begins to grapple with the complexity of slum dynamics, especially entitlement of structure owners versus their tenants (in Nairobi, up to 95 per cent of slum residents are tenants)

Figure: Timeline of key events and context across the history of Muungano wa Wanavijiji and the Kenyan SDI Alliance (Muungano, the various federation support NGOs, and Akiba Mashinani Trust), with a focus on policy influencing

 # savings groups   37   167   252   300

Half the world's urban population lives in cities smaller than 500,000 people, yet policy and development is mostly focused on megacities

Globally, 1 billion people live in slums. In sub-Saharan Africa, 72% of the urban population lives in slums

Nairobi pop. reaches 3 million

World population reaches 7 billion

2015: Kenya's National Youth Service programme engages many thousands of youths, mainly from the slums, to make improvements to slums – clearing garbage, building roads, toilets, health centres and schools. After a strong start, it becomes bogged down in corruption scandals

2010: New Kenyan Constitution seeks to strengthen accountability & public service delivery at local levels

2007-2008: Contested general election outcomes lead to widespread ethnically charged violence, worst in poor urban areas, and especially slums

2011: Kenyan gov's Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP) launches: a 7 year US$165 million project to address slum infrastructure & tenure security

2013: Muungano's data suggests that conditions for Kenyan slum residents continue to deteriorate. Disparity between the formal and informal city is widening. Over half Nairobi's population live in 158 settlements on 2.1 per cent of the city's land

Muungano holds 'peace forums', targeting the worst affected areas where it has a presence: Kibera, Korogocho, Mathare, & Mukuru

From 2009 to 2011, Muungano is involved in discussions on the formation of KISIP

2012: Then newly elected government promises 'all Kenyans [will have] a decent home by 2020'

2014: SDI & Jockin Arputham are nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize

2010: SDI forms the East Africa Hub, building a closer relationship between the Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanzanian federations

2012: SDI's partners with the Association of African Planning Schools to foster links between Federations & universities in Kenya & six other African countries

2015-2016: Increasingly working with partners, looking for new ways to approach land & housing issues, Muungano focus expands into new areas: public health, food security, air pollution, disaster management, renewable energy, & urban resilience & climate change

Between 2007 and 2009, Muungano holds elections to establishes a national leadership, and develops a constitution

Muungano now has nine regional networks across the country, through which 80 per cent of the support NGO's budget is channelled

2009: Muungano decides to part ways with Pamoja Trust and embark on a process of redefining its relationship with its support professionals

2013: SDI's Know Your City campaign: federations across Africa, Asia and Latin America have now carried out 6,000 settlement profiles

Remembering evictions & demolitions: Mukuru Kwa Ruben Kaiyaba

2010: Muungano's second support NGO, Muungano Support Trust is established & operates until 2014

2013: In memoriam: Benson Osumba, Kenya federation president, passes away. He dedicated his life to working for the community, and leading grassroots initiatives to prevent forced evictions

2016: Muungano's third support NGO, SDI Kenya, established – a small, responsive technical support team

2009: SDI challenges Muungano to strengthen women's leadership, and the federation resolves that women should make up half of its national leadership

2011: Jane Weru, co-founder of Pamoja Trust and exec director of AMT, is honoured by Rockefeller Foundation. She receives a USD 100,000 grant which she donates to AMT

2014: Muungano leadership begins succession planning by building a second tier of national leadership; almost all of these are women

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016

PHASE 3. STRUCTURES, CONSOLIDATION & LEADERSHIP (2005 -2010)

PHASE 4. THE FEDERATION TAKES CONTROL (2009 -2016)

2005-2006: For the Cities Without Slums initiative, Muungano enumerates all the 44,000 households living in all slums in Kisumu, honing skills and confidence in data collection and GIS technology

2008: In Mathare, Muungano works with residents affected by a mass disconnection to organise & negotiate for formal water – one of the first major engagements with utilities to upgrading services & plan service infrastructure

2010 -2012: Muungano's partnership with the Universities of Berkeley and Nairobi grows, lending Muungano different and powerful access and advocacy. Increasingly ambitious urban studios first focus on Mathare slum, then in 2013 shift to Mukuru (Nairobi), and Kiandutu (Kiambu County)

2013: Muungano profiles all slums in 5 Kenyan counties – revealing that over half of Nairobi slums are on privately-owned land

2016: 'Leave no one behind' campaign: through its work in Mukuru and Kiandutu, Muungano has begun exploring new models and ways of mobilising communities to engage county governments on development

2005: Toi market savings scheme buys 80 acres of land on the outskirts of Nairobi for 600 households, a first step for Muungano's much-debated greenfields strategy

2007: Second city-wide inventory of slums covers Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa, and counts 183 informal settlements in Nairobi

2009-2011: Zonal planning project in Mathare by resident planning teams, with students from Universities of Nairobi & California Berkeley

2011-2013: Muungano begins its focus on Mukuru, mobilising communities for protest & advocacy after many residents across the slum are faced with evictions in 2011. They protest, march, and demonstrate and conduct advocacy centred around land grabs, land rights, and women & sanitation

2013: Muungano sets up quarterly County Forums to discuss slum issues with county governments
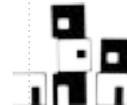
2016: Detailed profiling of Mukuru reveals that without the possibility of finding new lands, Nairobi's slums have begun to densify in new ways – upwards, as slum shacks become double-storied, and through 'market-based evictions' where landlords replace slum housing with dangerously sub-standard tenement buildings

2005-2008: The rise and fall of Muungano Development Funds, five regional microfinance funds drawing on community savings for livelihood loans. With little legal form or protection for loss of member savings; many were co-opted by outsiders

2008: Toi market is completely burnt to the ground in post-election violence. A rebuilding grant is instead used to leverage market finance, & New Toi market establishes it's loan graduation scheme

2013: Muungano begins a research engagement with several universities, funded by IDRC, to research and propose solutions for regularising Mukuru

2005-2016: Railway resettlement planning: The Kenyan SDI Alliance designs a resettlement plan & facilitates relocation & upgrading for thousands of families living along 11km of railway sidings in Kibera & Mukuru slums., in a US$30 million program funded by the World Bank. This plan influences changes in national policy on resettling people without legal tenure

2011 - 2016: Muungano's ongoing work in Mukuru represents a shift towards looking for solutions for slums on private land. And on building mechanisms for change, rather than models, that will create sufficient policy precedent to change and the state's current default position on upgrading on private land

2015: SDI holds its first youth exchange in South Africa, bringing together youth from Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and India

2008-2009: Presence and activities in Kenya's coastal region ramp up, implementing programmes funded by the World Bank & EU, and attracting 600 new savings schemes in Mombasa, Kwale & Malindi

2012-2013: With data & mapping support from the Kenya SDI alliance, Mombasa County creates a 'high density low cost residential area' zonal category & applies this to all slum land in the city, regardless of ownership

2015: In Kibera , the first resettled families move into the new railway housing

420   430   450   1000   539   547   896   956

1

Introduction

We are not speaking only today for us. We are speaking for the generation and the generation who are supposed to come. Whatever perhaps we are saying today it might be written in the book of history – Evans 'Papa' Omondi, Muungano member, Mukuru slum.

Those people who started Muungano, the struggle they went through, the endurance, the self-sacrifice. They did a lot to make Muungano what it is. They did a lot to empower the communities. I think they should always be remembered for what they did to empower the communities and remove them from the dark ages – Nancy Njoki, Muungano member, Mathare slum.

Slums[4] occupy just over two per cent of land in Nairobi (MuST, 2014). With densities of up to 300 rooms per acre (CURI, 2012), they are home to half the city's population. Comparison with the first major slum studies in Kenya in the mid-1990s (Ngau, 1995; Alder 1995) reveals that over the last 20 years, the city space occupied by the poorer half of its population has not increased. While estimates of slum populations in the 1990s and today suggest that Nairobi's slum population may have doubled, the rate and scale of improvements to living conditions in slums fail to match their unrelenting densification and consolidation.

That Kenya is only 26 per cent urbanised contributes to the relative obscurity of the slum issue in the country. There is little recognition that well-managed urbanisation and better access to urban areas can reduce rural as well as urban poverty in the long term (World Bank, 2016a). Even where growth of Kenyan cities is planned, there is usually little contest between promoting formal development and addressing informality. Key planning instruments such as the national Vision 2030 or Nairobi's 2014 Master Plan recognise the challenge of informality in a general way, but fail to offer targeted solutions adequate to the scale of Kenya's problems.

Muungano wa Wanavijiji is a movement of urban poor people in Kenya, which emerged in Nairobi around 1996 and spread throughout the country in the early 2000s, federating around 2001 to the international network of community-based organisations that is Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI). Across its 20-year history, Muungano's struggle has been one of framing the slum phenomenon as a core issue that the city and the state have a responsibility to address. In this paper, we describe what has essentially been a fight for perception: for the Kenyan state and citizens to see slums not as representing a marginal amount of space in the city and therefore a marginal issue, but as the most important place for half its population, and in this way affecting the whole city.

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[4] The term 'slum' usually has derogatory connotations and can suggest that a settlement needs replacement or can legitimate the eviction of its residents. However, it is a difficult term to avoid for at least three reasons. First, some networks of neighbourhood organisations choose to identify themselves with a positive use of the term, partly to neutralise these negative connotations; one of the most successful is the National Slum Dwellers Federation in India. Second, the only global estimates for housing deficiencies, collected by the United Nations, are for what they term 'slums'. And third, in some nations, there are advantages for residents of informal settlements if their settlement is recognised officially as a 'slum'; indeed, the residents may lobby to get their settlement classified as a 'notified slum'. Where the term is used in this paper, it refers to settlements characterised by at least some of the following features: a lack of formal recognition on the part of local government of the settlement and its residents; the absence of secure tenure for residents; inadequacies in provision for infrastructure and services; overcrowded and sub-standard dwellings; and location on land less than suitable for occupation. For a discussion of more precise ways to classify the range of housing sub-markets through which those with limited incomes buy, rent or build accommodation, see *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 1, No 2 (1989), available at http://eau.sagepub.com/content/1/2.toc.

Over the last 20 years, efforts by the state and by Muungano to address the slum issue have accounted for a sizeable proportion of investment made in turning around conditions in Kenya's slums. In Nairobi, for example, 11,000 houses, representing 2.5 per cent of existing slum housing (MuST, 2014), have been upgraded in the last two decades; 7,000 of these involved Muungano significantly, even when financed by the state.

Muungano sets out to support community-based groups to design and implement slum upgrades. Since it joined SDI in 2001, Muungano has employed a standard and relatively unchanged set of tools to achieve its goals. These are: women-centred community organisation through networked savings groups; slum enumerations and profiles; learning between communities through peer exchanges; co-production of slum improvement plans with universities and local governments; and developing finance models for slum upgrading.

Muungano fashions its strategy for putting these tools into practice to match changes in its operational environment, and this policy and planning context is determined to a great extent by the country's prevailing political economy. Five-year election cycles and major events like a new national constitution in 2010 effect changes in the environment to which Muungano responds. How these changes are managed has been shaped by first-hand intuition of federation members and the experience of the wider international SDI network.

As Muungano marks 20 years by documenting its history, the community-based federation and its 'support professionals' – collectively, 'the Kenyan alliance' – seek to reflect on how a constantly changing political economy has transformed the strategies Muungano employs. This paper forms one basis for that reflection.

1.1 What we mean by 'the state'

Our scope is the last 20 years of urban development in Kenya and slum dwellers' efforts to acquire a proportional share of recognition and investment in it. That is, to have slums accepted as human settlements that the state ought to improve and for which it should provide services.

The emergence of *Muungano wa Wanavijiji* as a movement in 1996 was a direct response to slum evictions by the Kenyan government, arising from irregular post-independence land allocations, also by the state. Ever since, the state has been the most significant factor shaping the movement's focus and (re)actions.

This paper explores the progress of Muungano's relationship with the state, set within broader changes in state-civil society relations. Here, we use 'the state' in the singular, but in reality it connotes a wide set of different government institutions, levels and processes in the country. These are specifically mentioned in the paper.

We also seek to bring out the complexity of a link that has varied from conflict and contestation, partnership and collaboration, through to separate but parallel efforts to address common issues. Over the years, Muungano has challenged the state directly and indirectly, taken advantage of opportunities and spaces that have been created by the state's actions; and, where a lacuna has been observed, worked to create or encourage new practice and policy. Particularly in later years, Muungano's agenda has tended towards changing practice, but its influence has also transfused to policy and legislation.

In Chapter Two, we outline the conditions out of which Muungano emerged and its broad step changes over 20 years – from contestation to building alternative practice and leveraging from the state. Muungano's evolving relationship with the state cannot however be similarly plotted on a continuum. There is a layered nature to this relationship, each layer representing a strategy, experience, or connection that remains alive in the movement's toolbox. At any particular point in its history, Muungano has had multiple concurrent engagements with state bodies – sometimes even different kinds of engagement with the same government organ (in 2004, for instance, while Muungano was actively developing a slum upgrading project in Huruma with Nairobi City Council, it was also staging demonstrations to challenge plans that would displace a large number of residents in another slum, Soweto Kahawa).

1.2 What we mean by 'correlations'

As a measure of scale or presence, community savings groups, which are Muungano's vehicle in slums, are found in over 400 informal settlements in Kenya's cities and towns. In each slum where they are rooted, they represent a call to collective action. Every day savings groups amplify women and men's voices as they seek communal responses to whatever issues they face. In 2010, Muungano adopted the motto 'cities where the poor live in dignity, meeting basic needs at scale' – the idea that the movement lends dignity to the ordinary co-existence of slum residents, whether or not their settlement is on a path towards upgrading.

This paper examines the movement's internal workings, but focuses more on answering the question, **how has Muungano touched the lives of slum dwellers in Kenya generally, regardless of whether they have ever heard about the federation?** As measures of physical change in Kenyan slums over the last 20 years, Muungano has played a part in delivering 7,000 homes, improved access to water and sanitation for 40,000 slum families, and secured land rights for communities occupying 140 hectares – and in doing so has leveraged slum improvements of US$ 200 million (ibid.).

Set against operational costs of under US$10 million and capital inputs of US$ 5 million over its 20 years, Muungano has clearly been a highly efficient vehicle for delivering change. Yet these improvements have touched less than ten per cent of Kenya's urban slum population. Seeking a more fitting lens to measure the movement's impacts, this paper therefore examines **correlations between what Muungano has done and how this has influenced the positions that the state has taken towards slums.** In this way, the affected state position becomes the context in which all slum residents find themselves. Muungano's early experiences with forced evictions are a good example of this kind of impact. From 1996 to 1997, it prosecuted (and lost) 24 land cases in court, resisted demolition attempts in many settlements, rebuilt demolished slums, and held numerous street demonstrations. Then at the end of 1997, the state gazetted a moratorium on forced evictions – while this was ineffective in many cases, a reduction in forced evictions was felt in slums throughout Kenya.

1.3 Points of contact

In part, we measure these correlations in this paper by documenting points of contact between the movement and the state. These junctures go beyond the activism and confrontation that particularly characterised much of the early years of the movement. They include joint projects, shared platforms, participation in state programmes, workshops and other types of meetings, and the relationships between individuals that unfolded along the way. However, even where engagement with the state was not direct, there have been times marked by significant concurrences in thinking, plans, and approaches of Muungano and the state. As we narrate

the evolving attitudes of the state in relation to the evolution of the movement's own strategies, it is clear to us that cross-transfusion of ideas has often happened in less obvious places or ways.

One such case relates to thinking on slum upgrading entitlement – and **who ought to be targeted by and benefit from these interventions.** In the mid-2000s, Muungano grappled with the practicalities of ensuring that owners of structures in slums allowed tenants – who in many cases represent up to 95 per cent of slum residents – to be included in upgrading projects in Nairobi slums in Huruma, Korogocho, and Kibera. A few years later, the Kenyan state also arrived at a policy position that residents of slums, and not absent investors in slum housing, should be recognised as beneficiaries of slum upgrading opportunities (see railways resettlement plan (RAP), section 3.2).

1.4 Co-production

Seen as a single phase, the 20 years of Muungano has been one of co-production with the state on methodology for slum upgrading. The widely understood definition of co-production in this context is when the state and citizens come together to find a solution to a challenge, where both parties go beyond their normal processes and end up building an altogether new solution based on their synergy (in the context of SDI federations, co-production has been discussed by Mitilin (2008) and by Watson (2014)). Drawing on this body of work and others such as Appadurai (2002), this paper seeks to extend these definitions through applying them to Muungano's experience. Our examination of Muungano's history reveals that, for co-production to occur, it is not always necessary for the state and its citizens to be working under one organisational framework, or to be focused on the same specific project or even geography. From around 2000 to the present, both the Kenyan state and the social movement that is Muungano have been working constantly towards developing and refining methodology for slum upgrading. Some of the innovation and thinking have occurred in partnership, some separately, and sometimes advances have been achieved in situations where Muungano and the state were in opposition – perhaps even as a consequence of conflict.

An example of this is advances in Kenyan national policy on slum resettlement. The Kibera/Mukuru railway resettlement, which eventually became Muungano's biggest housing project, started out in 2004 as an eviction notice to all residents living on railway way leaves in two large slums, Kibera and Mukuru. The eviction threat elicited much civil society protest, but the policy adjustment that finally paved the way towards successful resettlement for these communities, and set the precedent for others, was only achieved when the state required World Bank financing to effect concession of the national railways to private operators. This finance was conditional on the state compensating, rather than forcefully evicting, encroaching slum residents – the result was a Kenyan policy position whereby people without legal title to land could still be compensated if the state needed to use the land for other public purposes. Muungano's contribution was to translate that 'compensation' position into resettlement, through its role in designing a way for the state to 'value' entitlement (through enumeration) and implement a resettlement plan in a scenario it had not previously encountered – ie a slum.

In a sense, this paper is a testament to the fact that social movements sustain, not only because the issue they focus on still persists, but also because they can adapt and remain responsive to that issue as it mutates. There is much discussion in some development circles about southern organisations' approaches in the face of disruptive changes to their context. The story of Muungano is one of the need for constant readiness to respond to, or take advantage of, opportunities to influence change.

The paper derives in part from a broader oral history project which documented the first twenty years of Muungano through interviews with individuals who were present at different stages along that journey. Throughout, we draw heavily on the memories of the 50 slum dwellers, activists, professionals, and partners that we spoke to between March and October 2016.

2

Background

2.1 Urban Kenya 1963–1996

*This area was the first [informal] settlement.
We came here early 1950s. During the
time of colonial, when they were fighting for
freedom, people fought from here, the women
taking them food. It was a field of fighting*
– Emily Wangare (Muungano leader, Mathare slum).

Urban spatial segregation is not a recent phenomenon in Kenya. In Nairobi, development was inequitable from the start; the most visible manifestation being racially-segregated colonial residential patterns (Olima, 2001). Exclusive European residential areas were separated from those for the Asian population living and working near the railway station. The few Africans permitted in early Nairobi lived in the east in basic housing or shanty villages (ibid.). Future city growth was set in this mould: after Kenyan independence in 1963 much of the spatial inequality was maintained, only shifting basis from race to wealth and class (Pamoja Trust, 2009). Autocratic leadership, together with poor governance and planning structures adopted by the Kenyan elite, helped further entrench class segregation and exclude the poor (Huchzermeyer, 2011a).

As with other African cities, Nairobi saw rapid growth in physical size and population after independence, when rules restricting Africans from working and living in towns were lifted (K'Akumu and Olima, 2007). From a population of 350,000 in 1963, Nairobi grew to 1.35 million in 1989 to 3.9 million in 2015 (World Bank, 2016c). Initially, population expansion was largely through rural migration, with natural increase becoming the most important factor in the 1990s (Alder, 1995). Brisk postcolonial growth in peri-urban areas outside the city boundary also had an impact, such that in the mid-1960s, Nairobi's metropolitan area was extended from 83 to 690 square kilometres (Olima, 2001).

Some informal settlements existed during colonial times, but most emerged after independence in 1963 (Alder, 1995). Between then and the 90s, spontaneous, unplanned settlement occurred on any unoccupied land in Kenyan cities. As the urban population grew rapidly, housing and the provision of services started to lag behind, not just in Nairobi, but also in other cities (Tacoli, *et al.*, 2015). Supply of affordable housing, built even to basic standards, could not match population growth. Low-income urban migrants and existing households increasingly resorted to finding or constructing makeshift housing in informal settlements (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). Much of the pre-independence housing in the east of Nairobi was overwhelmed by this postcolonial surge, also descending into slum-like conditions.

In the 1990s, Kenya urban centres still grew with only intermittent urban policy: an act establishing city and municipal councils and a colonial set of building standards were the key instruments guiding urban development. Ordinarily, city authorities left settlements to police and provincial administrations to maintain law and order, except when cholera broke out (and a water point was installed). Settlements were not officially recognised as human habitations – in 1990, Kibera slum in Nairobi, accommodating 270,000 people on 600 acres, was represented as a forest on city maps.

By 1993, half of Nairobi's 1.8 million people lived in slums (Alder, 1995), in structures constructed using temporary materials and with basic, if any, services like roads, drainage, water or sanitation (ibid.). Public and private land was occupied. Owners of slum structures often had quasi-legal status permitting them to build and collect rent – perhaps a letter from the local chief or permission from the landowner. An emerging trend in newer settlements was owner occupation combined with subletting, departing from the dominant pattern of absentee landlordism by middle class entrepreneurs living outside the slum (ibid.).

Map 1. Racial segregation of housing in colonial Nairobi, 1948
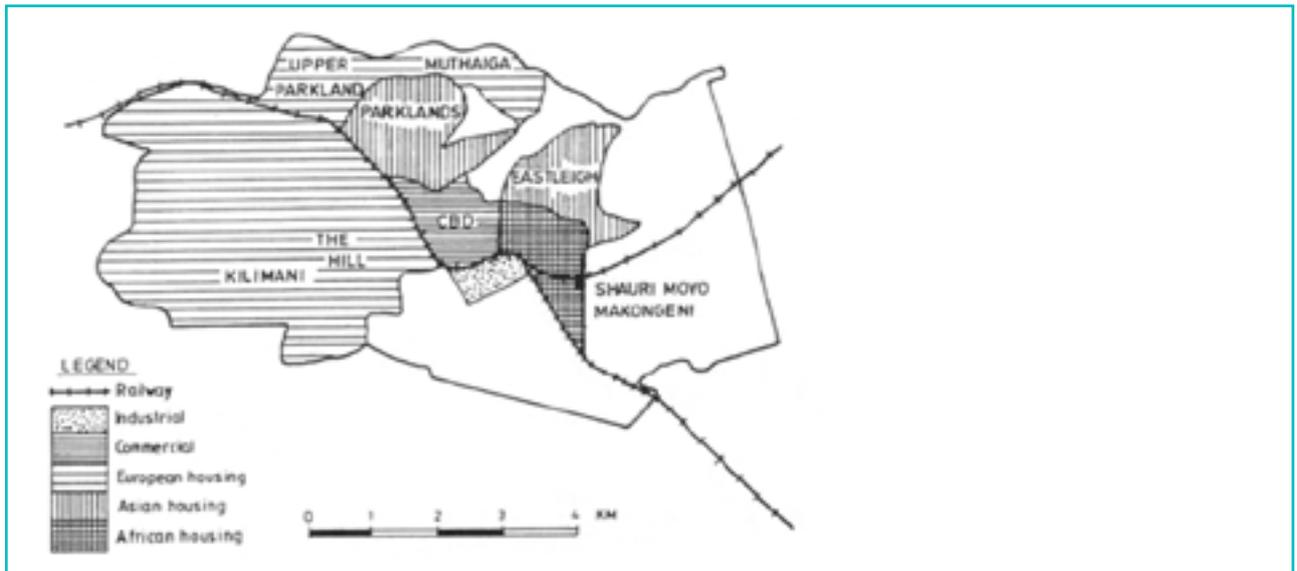
Map 2. Nairobi's informal settlements in the early 1990s
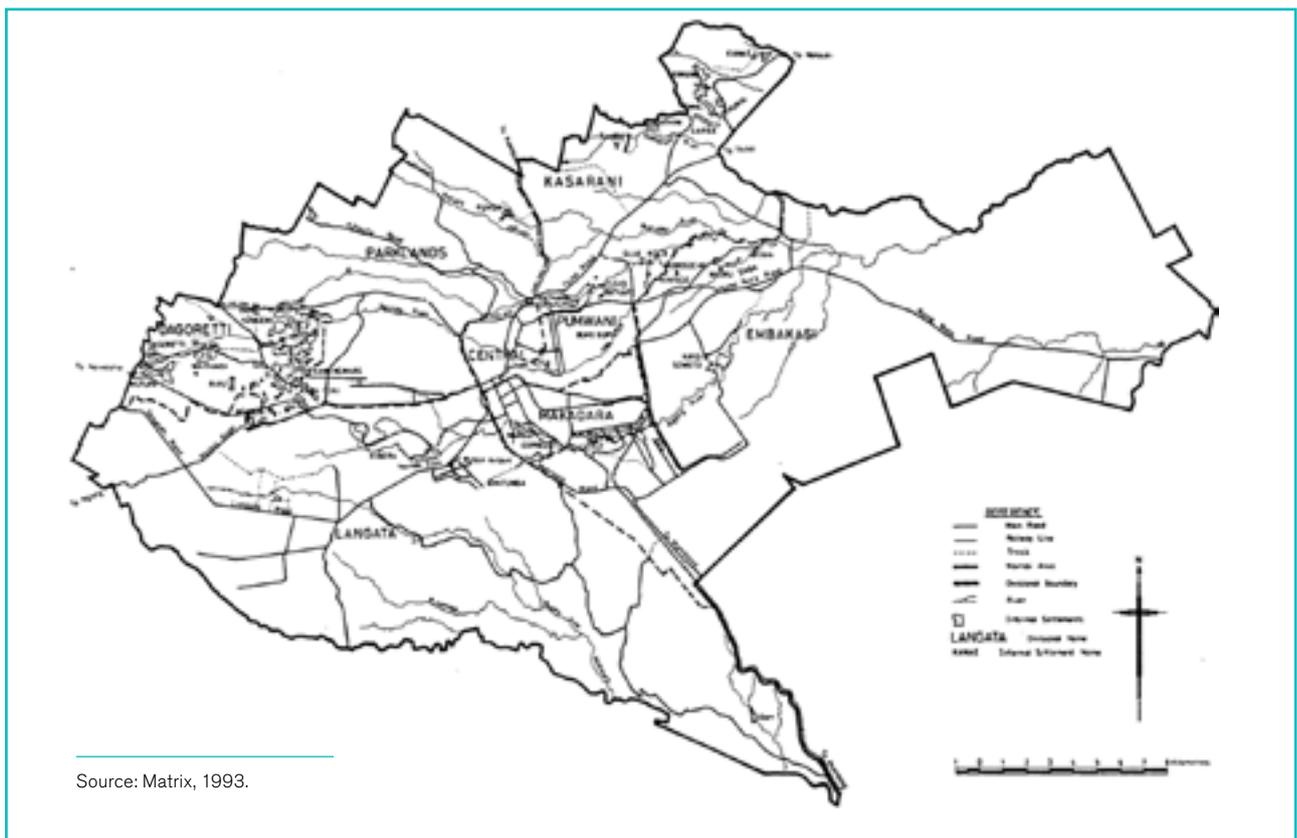
Source: Matrix, 1993.

The politics of the 1990s upset this hesitant co-existence of the city's formal and informal sections. Faced with strong parliamentary opposition after the multi-party government was adopted in 1992, the ruling party, KANU, took to using land as its prime currency in procuring support.

So the politician [being bribed] would say, 'I want land in Nairobi', because Nairobi is where land is nice and prime. They would go to the lands office and look for empty land. They would see empty land in Mathare, Kibera and be given titles over that land. But when they went on the ground they would find that the land is occupied by people. So they would just get police [to] carry out evictions – Jane Weru, Akiba Mashinani Trust (AMT) Executive Director.

You could find that entire village sold to one person in the government. There used to be plans in City Hall proclaiming that villages have not been occupied but the reality is that people were living there with their families. In those days, one could collude with the officers from City Hall to evict villagers. They used means like burning houses, demolition or paying rogue young men to force them out – Peter Chege, Muungano member, Kambi Moto slum.

Up to the late 1970s, official policy was to demolish slums, despite much of the urban population having no other means of obtaining housing (Weru, 2004). The 1980s saw a more permissive approach with forceful eviction of slums only where settlements conflicted with plans for the formal city – such as the installation of a road or utility. The 1990s had a spike in evictions, although official policy alternated between tacit acceptance and demolition (Weru, 2004). In a particularly brutal instance in 1990, two large settlements called Muoroto and Kibagare were razed to the ground, displacing 30,000 people (Alder, 1995).

Where residents resisted, sinister tactics were used:

They used to evict us with fire. They'd just start fire somewhere, and when we put it out somebody would come and says 'this is my land, don't rebuild'. They used to light fires at night, because in daytime we see them. The people claiming the land to be theirs, even they could take a cat, pour paraffin on it and light its tail. Because our structures were build temporary, where the cat would jump, it will start the fire – Emily Wangare, Mathare.

On top of the challenge of evictions, the oppressive regime stretched through layers of urban governance, including informal settlements, where land and community life were controlled by area chiefs and youth winger movements connected to the ruling party.

You could not repair your house without paying. You could not even construct a toilet without informing the committee of the village, even a kiosk. We had a hard time. If your house happened to fall you could not repair without paying the committee – Anastasia Wairimu, Muungano member, Soweto Kahawa, and chairperson, AMT.

If you were very poor and not able to pay, your house would eventually fall because you are not able to repair it. And then you'd have to abandon your house and that land would be taken again by the chief and they would sell it to other people – Jane Weru, AMT.

Figure 2. Nairobi population over time (millions)

Source: UN World Urbanisation Prospects.
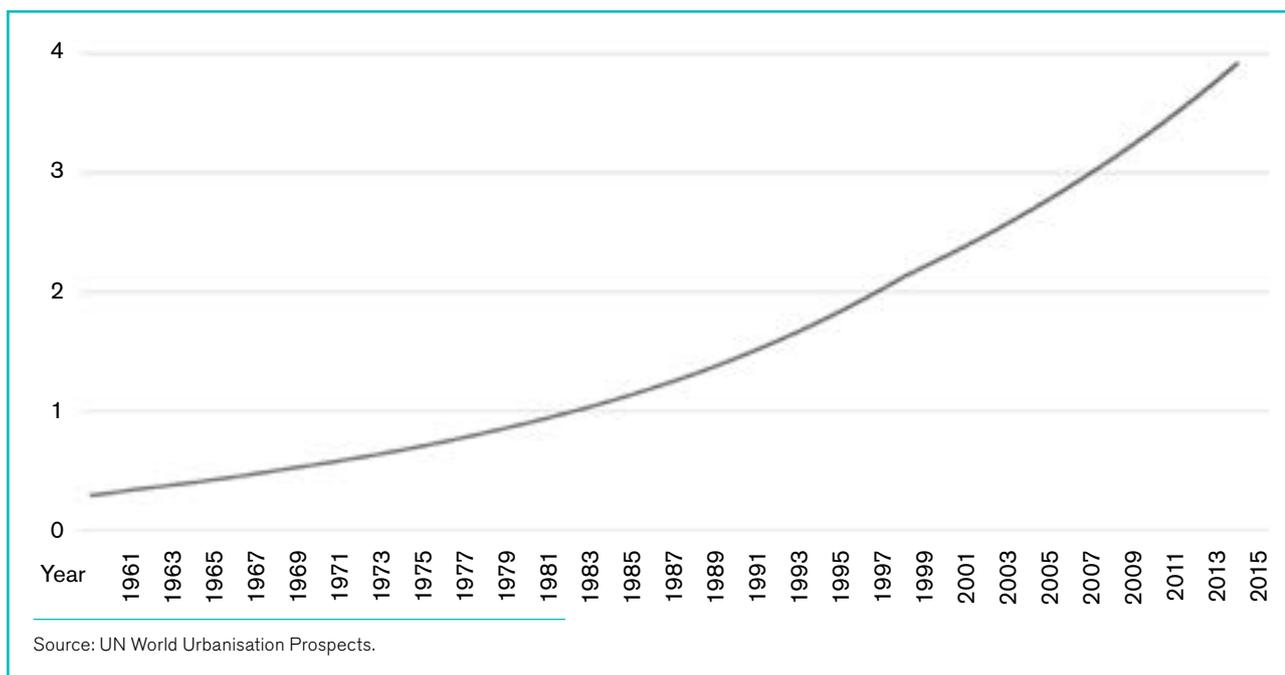
2.2 A brief history of Muungano: the federation and institution

We have described Muungano's 20-year institutional history in four slightly overlapping phases. The first, roughly 1996 to 2002, begins with the coming together of slum dwellers to form Muungano, with activism and often violent resistance to forceful eviction. The second, 2000 to 2006, sees the first 'support NGO' emerge, building links with similar efforts globally, adopting SDI tools that position slum dwellers at the centre of slum development, and rapid growth as Muungano spread throughout Kenya, ramping up internal exchange and learning. In the third phase, roughly 2005 to 2010, the Kenyan alliance took increasingly technical approaches to designing and financing slum solutions. And in the fourth, roughly 2009 to 2016, the community base of the movement gradually reasserted its centrality.

Phase 1. 1996–2002: Activism, evictions and protest

Muungano wa Wanavijiji emerged in 1996 organically, as grassroots resistance to forced eviction by the residents of slums in Nairobi.

There were evictions all over the city, demolishing informal areas, informal markets. We had many slums where people were going for legal support to Kituo cha Sheria. During that time, we met at Kituo. We got to know each other while we were waiting for advice from the lawyers. 'Where do you come from? I come from Mathare. Where do you come from? I come from Westlands, [from] Mukuru industrial area. What's the problem? The chief has evicted us. Why? Because he wants the grabbers to take the land.'*… So, from there we started asking ourselves, what can we do so that we can protect our rights of doing business and our homes in the slums? We said we must come together* – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera slum, one of the founders and former chair of Muungano wa Wanavijiji.

Driven out of their homes and brought together by fear of the roar of bulldozers in the night, the slum dwellers took a collective oath to fight back to secure their homes and businesses.

Father Alex read from the bible, Ezekiel 37, 'You are dry bones, scattered everywhere in Kenya. Dry bones are not alive, dry bones without any flesh. Dry bones, I urge you, come together. And if you come together there will come a force that will put flesh in you. After, another force will come and put breath in you. And you'll be alive. You have equal rights with the richest – you dry bones, come together'. *He did a big mass at Ufungamano [a hall in Nairobi associated with the struggle for multiparty democracy in the 1990s] and he said,* 'From every settlement, an old mama or an old man come with soil'. *And they brought soil – from Athi River, Soweto, everywhere. It was put in a basin and mixed. And then he prayed:* 'We want to own this soil.' *He stretched his hands for almost an hour – he had stamina. And then he wanted to give us a sacrament. We went and received, holding our hands we received each a spoon of soil. He said,* 'you have owned that soil' – Anastasia Wairimu, one of the founders of Muungano, chairperson of AMT.

During the 1990s, many actors who were focused on multiparty democracy and urban poverty were fighting the constant threat of slum demolitions and eviction faced by low-income dwellers in Nairobi. The nascent movement drew the support of some of these civil society protagonists – many of whom became an inseparable part of Muungano.

Father Alex used to give us a church to meet, because the police could not come and arrest us when we are in the church. Sometimes Davinder Lamba of Mazingira Institute would facilitate for us. We could not see anything better, but when we were educated by those people we knew that it is not our life to stay in slums, and we started fighting for our rights. Those partners have been our helps and we cannot ever forget what they gave us – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

The law was against the people. The people who had these (land) titles were very strong, had a lot of influence. We knew that even if we went to court we wouldn't get very far. So we realised we had to mobilise the people on the ground, so they can be able to start fighting this battle. Because it was more a political than a legal battle. So we started working to bring people who were affected by these evictions together – Jane Weru, AMT.

We would use liberation songs that helped animate the activities and protests. Before the meeting we would do a play, just remind people what happened – stories about eviction. It was easy to connect with people in informal settlements because landless as they were and threatened with evictions, they had reasons to come out and feel connected. After the meeting people would ask, how do we participate? And community organisers would encourage them to join the settlement networks and they would be informed of the forums – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya, one of Muungano's first community organiser professionals, who grew up in Korogocho slum.

And they fought

One of the first evictions we were faced was Kingstone village in Mukuru. And the people of Kingstone really struggled. They refused completely to move despite the fact that the police came with guns many times. They would be removed, then they would come back, they would be removed, they would come back. Eventually the police just got tired and let the people stay. From Kingstone, we started having more people and linking them together, and slowly a movement, Muungano, started forming. And one of the things this movement really began to push for was the right to remain on the lands that informal settlements were in. If you're a squatter you're not allowed to stay anywhere in your own country. Muungano said 'We don't want to be refugees in our own country, we want to be citizens of this country' – Jane Weru, AMT.

We realised that we might get into trouble, with people fighting back, fighting the police, the goons… We thought about active non-violence, so that we don't have damages, have people dying. Some of us were trained on active non-violence, and we trained communities also, because the resistance was becoming more violent each time – Peter Nganga, community organising trainer.

The government of the day was Kenya's most oppressive and brutal. And it fought back, hard. Yet the spirit of the women and men from the slums, and the activists who marched alongside them, was not about to be broken.

[Kituo cha Sheria] started being threatened with bombings in our office. The first time somebody just came and threw a petrol bomb in the reception. We thought it would go away so we forgot about it. And then after a week, another petrol bomb. And then another came. And the third one just burnt our whole office – Jane Weru, AMT.

Most of suffered a lot, some lost hope, some were imprisoned. At times we were beaten up. Some of us like, Wachera [an early Muungano member] lost their lives. I remember we carried her body to Nyayo House to show the government and Nairobi our unity and that we were not bad people. She is one of our heroines on the road towards building Muungano – Peter Chege, Kambi Moto.

By the end of 1997, the government issued a moratorium on forced eviction:

We had a lot of pressure, we did a lot of demonstrations. And the government was still evicting. We would go for demonstrations, we would fight with the police, they would use tear gas, we would resist, if they demolished, we rebuilt

overnight. It was chaos all the time. Today we are in Kibera, tomorrow Mathare, the other day in Korogocho. Rapid evictions taking place was helping us to mobilise more people. Until 1998 when the President said, if one wants to evict you, he must show you where to go before you are evicted – it was on the gazette. Evictions started reducing – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

Perhaps its greatest achievement is that, in spite of the immense challenges, Muungano managed to retain a lot of the lands informal settlements occupied. In time some settlements have been lost and others created.

I've gone to court 24 times in (slum) eviction cases and I've never won a single case! You cannot quash a title despite the fact that it may have been given irregularly. But in all those 24 lost court cases, we never lost a single piece of ground – Jane Weru (in Klopp, 2000).

Now, I'm in Soweto without being evicted, without sleeping, listening for a tractor coming to demolish our village. I sleep very well; I wake up knowing nobody's coming to evict me – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

Figure 3. Front page of Muungano's 1997 manifesto

Source: Joseph Kimani.

Phase 2. 2000–2006 Organising, rituals, learning and innovations

While the moratorium went some way to reducing evictions, many land conflicts continued. Still, Muungano's understanding of its role was shifting, from resisting demolitions towards finding solutions to transform slums into decent settlements of low cost housing (Pamoja Trust, 2002a; 2002b).

In 2000, some of the civil society professionals that loosely supported Muungano consolidated into a support NGO for the movement. Many different civil society organisations supported it, but none focused solely on slums. Pamoja Trust initially worked as an extension programme, supporting the groups supporting Muungano and coordinating its work with civil society.

One of the support NGO's first actions was to develop links to slum dwellers' movements in other countries through Slum Dwellers International (SDI). SDI ideology was different from the movement's predominantly protest ideology. They proposed to Muungano the idea to evolve from a grouping of activists drawn from the slums into a federation of settlement-based community savings schemes (see Box 2).

If it's a movement then it has to be built from below. That's what inspired a lot of community organisation, our role in the whole programme. For us, then, [as community organisers] we are going down meeting some of these leaders in their settlements, assisting them now to mobilise the residents in their areas so that they can consolidate and become that Muungano movement – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya.

I was first mobilised and told about Muungano just here in the village, it was a very new thing to me and the way they elaborated especially about the need for daily savings. It was not easy for me in the early days because I was wondering, I don't have a steady income so if I get 100 or 500 shillings and take it to savings how will I survive the next day when maybe I fail to get job? But after a while I got to understand its importance – Peter Chege, Kambi Moto.

Throughout Muungano's history, local and international peer-to-peer exchanges created opportunities for slum communities to exchange ideas and share experiences (see Box 4). From 2000 to 2002, exchanges between Muungano and SDI federations in South Africa and India were key in helping develop skills in savings, enumerations, house modelling and planning tools. Between 2003 and 2005, the Kenyans in turn helped build a Ugandan SDI federation, which was an opportunity to try out different types of organising, different techniques, learn, and build leadership in Muungano.

SDI came into our headlights and that's when the exchanges started. A few people were taken to India to see what people in other slums were doing and fighting for. We started feeling there are people who we are with, together under SDI. We were much more informed than before – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

Data was always important for Muungano (see Box 5). In the 1990s, studies estimated that half of Nairobi's population were slum dwellers (Ngau, 1995, Matrix, 1993); they made visible the scale and conditions in slums, and helped catalyse the movement. When in 2000, SDI affiliates from South Africa and India introduced Muungano to community data collection, they took it up immediately and carried out the first enumeration by Kenyan slum communities in five settlements in Huruma. At this time, the Kenyan alliance was exploring a possible upgrade in Huruma, and there was a need, if the opportunity came to pass, to establish who in the settlements would benefit.

We went straight ahead, even as the Indians were still here telling us about enumerations, we started to do them. It was a very rudimentary type of enumeration. We photocopied the forms at night, we learned in the field. But we counted – Jack Makau, SDI Kenya.

The Huruma upgrading was agreed, and in time became one of Muungano's most enduring achievements (see Section 3.2). Muungano began to learn how self-enumeration could change the city's perception. More confident in the methodology, community data collection was taken up by the federation on a wider scale.

New Muungano savings groups surged, from 37 in 2001, to 167 in 2002, to 252 in 2003, moving out from Nairobi to all Kenya's major cities. Amounts grew and since assembly was now much less risky so did groups' membership.

We mobilised Nakuru. I was part of the team that started savings in Nyeri, in Timau, in Kisumu – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Kibera, and Muungano national leader.

In 2003, the Kenyan urban poor fund, Akiba Mashinani Trust (AMT) was established 'to raise and manage bridging finance that enables communities to animate their savings towards development'.

We said how are we going to name this urban poor fund? I remember I was asking: 'what is grassroots in the Kenyan language?' They said 'mashinani'. Then I said 'what's the meaning of fund?' 'Akiba'. Then we said let's call it Akiba Mashinani Trust – Rose Molokoane, National Chairperson of the South African Homeless People's Federation, and SDI Board Member.

Figure 4. House modelling in Huruma circa 2002

Phase 3. 2005–2010: Structures, consolidation, leadership

Muungano's third phase saw consolidation of learning and structures, growing confidence in savings systems, mobilisation, city-wide enumerations and planning, and upgrading of infrastructure and housing.

However, it was overshadowed by the ethnically charged violence that swept through Kenya in late 2007 and early 2008, stemming from a disputed presidential election. Urban areas bore the brunt with the worst violence in poorer neighbourhoods, especially slums, displacing and dividing communities, destroying homes and businesses. Muungano communities in Kisumu, Mombasa, Nakuru, and Nairobi were affected. In a few settlements, social cohesion built by saving schemes effectively shielded communities from violence. For example, peace held in the three Huruma settlements where house upgrading was ongoing, but Toi informal market, where Muungano's saving groups were strong, was burnt down.

It was such a short time but a lot happened in this country. And of course we felt challenged to do something, 'Can we find ways of bringing together communities?' Pamoja brought together youths from Kibera, Mathare, Korogocho, basically Muungano trying to mobilise their members, groups that would potentially be in violence, and those who had actually participated. For me there is something with us

Kenyans of truly loving peace. Even when we are pushed to violence, there is always this other side of us that says we are not doing the right thing – you really want to reach out to the other person. In one incident in Mathare Kosovo, after peace meetings trying to bring residents together, at night youth were going from settlement to settlement. They reached this old man, got his things out and were almost burning them when Muungano in the settlement intervened. They said this is not the way to go, we will not allow anyone to be evicted here by force, or be harassed, we must live as one community – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya.

[Toi market] was something, a place people from different ethnic communities can sit, have a common agenda, common problems and common solutions. Something that I was part of creating. And the saving scheme was so powerful, even the chiefs used to address issues through the saving scheme. Come 2007, you couldn't sense that [ethnic tensions] were there. I have never figured out, was that an illusion? How can people just turn, overnight, and something you have taken so long to work on you destroy it within two or three days? It's not even the businesses, the money, it's the social capital. It was the social fabric that we had woven, for me that was the big thing. I had a list of 800 people who were displaced, all these Kikuyus evicted from the market and even from their houses in Kibera – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Otherwise, this period was characterised by a consolidation of Muungano structures and leadership. Village-level savings groups were networked together, regional networks established, and a national constitution developed. National leadership elections shone a light on tensions within the federation, and between Muungano and its support professionals, and brought a challenge from SDI to strengthen women's participation.

They were electing the national executive. When we were sitting there around the table, we wanted them to introduce themselves, say who's the chairperson, who's the secretary, and so on. But to our surprise out of 12 members of the committee only one woman was there. And that made Jokin [Arputham, SDI president] angry and myself too. I said 'No, I can't tolerate to work with a men-led process. We are saying SDI should be 85 per cent women, and as long as women are not put at the forefront, we won't come to Kenya anymore.' So we gave a challenge to the leaders, to go and address this issue – Rose Mokoloane, South African Homeless People's Federation.

The movement [began] feeling that the community organisers were not letting go. 'You've built us, mobilised us, but what time are you going to let us go?' It inspired the federation to start reflecting around consolidating leadership, so that leadership can take charge of the activities [the community organisers] were doing. Muungano came up with a draft constitution, which put a national structure. Once they consolidated, the leadership was challenged to always go back to the settlements to recreate the movement. I think that now informs the life of the federation; the cycle of it – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya.

Phase 4. 2009–2016: The federation takes control

Around 2009, *Muungano wa Wanavijiji,* the Kenyan SDI federation, made the decision to part ways with Pamoja Trust and embark on a process of redefining the relationship to its support professionals (see Box 4).

We had gone through a process under Pamoja Trust for a long period and we tried to disengage the partnership because we were seeing that we have part of the knowledge that can sustain ourselves, so that we do not need a lot of staff. We thought it wise that we should work on our own, but have a few people that we work with, as a technical team, so that we continue the way we wanted – Henry Otunge, Muungano member, Korogocho slum.

Muungano was asking that question: what is our role? Whose fight is this? We want the space to make

those decisions, a space that all of us had become comfortable in. We were not making that distinction and Muungano was saying no, you need to make that distinction – we as the federation must be the voice – Jack Makau, SDI Kenya.

When I joined Muungano, the professionals were doing everything. Now it has changed to federation themselves taking the lead. Federation has changed for the better. If you are sent somewhere you have to go, the federation members themselves will ask 'why did you not do what you were supposed to do?' Everything is more actual than before. Now, you plan, 'we are going to do mobilisation on this and this'. You own the process, that is the change. The support NGO has more technical issues. They guide, because the way I understand it federation members should lead the process. And leading means you are left to do it but the technical support will say, 'here you need to do this, here you are not supposed to do this' – like that – Dorice Mseti, Muungano, Mukuru slum.

Over time, even without the support of the professional staff, Muungano can go to county offices, national offices, sit with ministers, governors, county and national officials. That has been positive. But on the other hand there has also been a struggle within Muungano. Muungano feels it has grown, has come of age and can set its own agenda. And there are things that they can do very well – we can go to a settlement, mobilise, organise, collect information, negotiate with structure owners, with city and national officials. But other things, we know we have limitations in terms of professional capacity, that's when the professionals come. So part of the power struggle that has existed the last 5–6 years is the professionals still wanting to be in control and Muungano saying, 'No, now we have grown. There are things we can do together' – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Muungano's pioneering something that they haven't got right yet, that all of SDI has to get right. And that is developing a new relationship between professionals and communities. But at least they're exploring alternatives. Kenya struggles with it but they try to tackle it: getting the balance right between the role of professionals in a community movement and the level of vertical accountability that professionals bring, versus the danger of creating vertical power relations that de-link the leaders from their communities – Joel Bolnick, SDI secretariat.

Map 3. Muungano's growth throughout Kenya

1996-2001

Nairobi
Athi River

2002-2005

Kitale
Kisumu
Nakuru
Nairobi
Athi River

Timau
& Mt Kenya
Meru
Naivasha
Kiambu
& Thika

Mombasa

2006-2009

Kitale
Kisumu
Nakuru
Nairobi
Athi River

Timau
& Mt Kenya
Meru
Naivasha
Kiambu & Thika

Malindi
Mombasa
Kwale

9 regional networks

2010-2015

Great Rift Valley region
Uasin Gishu, Laikipia & Nakuru counties

Lake Victoria region
Kisumu & Homabay counties

Mt Kenya region
Kiambu & Meru counties

Mt Kilimanjaro region
Machakos , Makueni & Kitui counties

Nairobi county

Coast region
Kilifi, Mombasa and Kwale counties

**About 30 regional net-
works in 14 counties**

Source: Pamoja Trust and AMT annual reports

BOX 2: WHO IS MUUNGANO? EARLY LEADERSHIP AND LAYERS OF IDENTITY

The history of Muungano is as much about individual efforts as it is organisational strategies. In its different phases, Muungano has attracted different kinds of people, and leadership has been formed by what was demanded at the time. In 1996, Muungano's core was five representatives drawn from slums in each of Nairobi's eight divisions and Athi River. These 45 were eloquent, charismatic and brave leaders; mostly men and a few women. Those early days didn't adopt a gentle model of protest – things were a bit hard-core. Muungano was operating under an oppressive regime, and its people were themselves often ruthless in meeting violence with violence.

> Most of the women were part of another land struggle to save one of Nairobi's forest cover areas, Karura forest. They would walk from their settlements to go there and fight for that public space not to be grabbed, with Wangari Maathai… And they would tell us about another struggle they were part of, where they stripped themselves naked just to make a statement to government about evictions. People were activists and they were only too glad to be part of being able to bring it home, to be defenders of the spaces they live in now – Irene Karanja, Pamoja Trust/MuST.

This phase is one of the layers of identity Muungano still relates to, but it does not represent a capacity that still exists. In Kenya's settlements you will still find these kinds of activists, but fewer in Muungano. Their contribution was significant, bringing to the fore the injustices caused by the slum demolitions, but as the federation's focus shifted, a new kind of leader and structure was required. If negotiated solutions were to work in favour of all slum residents, a movement structure was needed where leaders would be accountable to that same slum population. And so Muungano's years after 2000 were about rebuilding a slum dweller movement and leadership that had not only political sway, but was also representative and accountable, with the capacity to apply SDI tools and design solutions that could bring change to the slums. Now, with its emphasis on community organising through savings groups and networks, Muungano attracts a different kind of people.

> Within Muungano everything is a process. Everything we do is not a project, the data that we collect, the saving. It is something that has life its own, a process that will continue. After [this generation] is gone there will be another generation to continue. The generation of leaders we have now, how do they get the history of this struggle? How do they know Muungano to be 20 and to be where it is? People sacrificed, people died, people sacrificed their jobs, careers, families, for us to be here. Part of returning that spirit is connecting the old and the new – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Figure 5. Civil society protest flyer, circa 1993

PRISONERS DAY

On March 3, 1992, riot police brutally attacked mothers of political prisoners fasting at Freedom Corner Uhuru Park Nairobi.

Release political prisoners (RPP) pressure group has adopted this day as prisoners day.

This year on Sunday March 3, prayers of political prisoners and justice shall be held at All Saints Cathedral at 10.00 a.m. There shall also be commemorative events at Uhuru Park including watering "Uhuru Trees" at Freedom Corner. Come share a fasting day with us.

For: RPP Executive Committee

Many of the first members of Muungano were also part of the anti-Moi Release Political Prisoners (RPP) movement Source: Joseph Kimani.

BOX 3: MUUNGANO'S TOOLS AND THEIR EVOLUTION OVER TIME – SAVINGS GROUPS

In 2000, when the new support NGO developed links to SDI, they promoted the idea to Muungano of evolving from a grouping of activists drawn from the slums into a federation of settlement-based community savings schemes, based on the SDI model. To achieve this, each of Muungano's leaders would need to return to their slums and establish community savings groups, from which they would draw a mandate to represent the slums.

The whole idea of community organising was to help facilitate Muungano – through the savings – to consolidate. This was a time when the discussion was about the leadership going back to the grassroots, back to their settlements – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya.

A community mandate was necessary because government, in response to Muungano and other advocacy efforts, had started promising to regularise land tenure. If this happened, greater accountability to the slum communities would be needed than that provided singularly by Muungano activists. More slum dwellers would need to be involved in a fair and transparent way, particularly since slums were not homogenous communities. They consisted of many competing interests, each positioning to capture the benefits of land regularisation, for example the conflict between a powerful minority of 'structure owners' and their tenants, in some cases 95 per cent of a slum's population.

The proposed change split the movement. Half of Muungano's original leaders returned to their settlements and mobilised residents to form groups. The others realigned with the rights-based or political movements, with which they had stronger ties than to their settlements. The name *Muungano wa Wanavijiji* remains a shared identity. It would take time for an answer to emerge to the key question of the split: **how does saving quietly in settlements stop evictions?**

Leaky roofs

The first saving groups collected one shilling a day from each member. Weekly savings were recorded and banked in a central account by Muungano's support NGO. Groups had a chairperson for weekly meetings, a secretary, and a treasurer.

Meetings were a precious opportunity to talk about issues affecting settlements. Although laws banning assembly were repealed in the early 90s, this practice continued in slums, and if found by area chiefs, people meeting in groups could be arrested, detained, fined,

and sometimes beaten. In this period, chiefs had powers to issue temporary licenses for needy families to occupy public lands, and in urban areas many used these to exert control or levy unofficial taxes on informal settlers. In large settlements, chiefs co-opted 'elders' to act as informers. So early Muungano groups met covertly, in members' shacks or religious venues. Instead of clapping to acknowledge a contribution to discussion – the noise might attract attention – they would 'send the compliment through the air' by wiggling their wrists towards the speaker. This is called *umeme* and remains a signature of Muungano meetings.

If caught, savings were used to pay the unofficial fine; its main value was not yet monetary, but as the glue holding the community together. The community savings tool was speedily adopted because it efficiently furthered Muungano's early messages, '*when your slum is demolished, do not go far; when the bulldozers leave, come back and rebuild'.*

We knew that when people come together without doing anything, they'll become disparate and stop what they are doing. So we thought saving could be like a sticker, to stick people together. We started saving to make people come together. We and the other slums starting saving one shilling a day – it was called shillingi moja moja – although still sometimes we could not save – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

It was from the group meetings that the chiefs' powers would be broken. One savings group conspired to carry out repairs on all houses that needed it without informing the chief or paying the customary unofficial fee. They started one day, all at once, and it became apparent to the chief and administration police that if they were to, they would have to arrest everyone. It marked the end of the chief's power over that community. Soon, the power of collective action was demonstrated in more slums.

Leaky systems

Early 2000s, changes in Muungano's perception of community savings accompanied external changes – regime change, a moratorium on demolitions, a Ministry department and national budgetary allocation for slums upgrading. There was hope of government support to regularise and develop slums, and communities' savings would demonstrate their willingness and ability to upgrade their settlements. Savings as a symbolic act of resistance was changing into a means of achieving housing, water connections, drains, or toilets. Daily savings were redefined as

continues

a household's surplus at the end of the day. The federation underwent a surge in new groups, from 37 in 2000 to 167 in 2002, to 252 in 2003, and moved outwards from Nairobi to all Kenya's major cities and towns.

For the most part, group-level systems remained unchanged. But groups became more autonomous in managing members' savings. And with the growth in groups came a crisis of lost savings leading to the demise of groups. It became a huge discussion. 'Group revival meetings' were a regular federation budget item. Muungano introduced new measures, learning from savings systems in other SDI federations. They defined and strengthened roles; for example, treasurers should now be women. Groups began to audit each other quarterly.

All the savings schemes that were there, only men stood up and said 'I am a treasurer of this savings scheme'. I said, 'Oh my God. Men, how can it be that they become treasurers?' They said, 'That's how we work in Kenya, because women are not supposed to lead organisations'. Then I said, we have to challenge this. I'm not going to agree with you that women should continue to be in the kitchen. We want to change the mindset – Rose Molokoane, South African Homeless People's Federation.

Money sitting in the bank

The strengthened systems stemmed leakage, but the real solution came from an initiative developed not to address loss of savings but to enable loaning. Savings were sacrosanct in Muungano's early years and it was difficult to withdraw them. In the hope that the new government would regularise tenure and provide infrastructure, savings were intended to help this happen and finance houses when it did.

The suggestion from other SDI federations that savings could be circulated as loans for shorter term ends – school fees, small businesses, family crises – was hard to sell in Kenya. But around 2002, an 800-strong group of traders in the informal Toi market in Nairobi eventually broke the stalemate. More adept at handling money, they designed a loaning system for their members with different loan products, vetting and collection systems, and checks against risk (UNDP, 2014). One particularly successful loan product called *mara moja* ('immediate') could be issued at any time of day or night, by collectors who held the day's savings collections. Many traders buy stock early every morning from wholesalers, and if produce was bought with cash, rather than on credit, they could negotiate for better prices.

The loan in time changed the lives of many small traders, so that today Toi market has a substantial share of the city's main fresh produce business. Money generated from the small loan fee paid for night security, garbage collection, improved passageways, a toilet for the market, and a meeting hall for the group.

We looked to what the micro institutions were offering and we said, what are these challenges? You are given a lot of money that you don't know what to do with. Your operating capital is KSH 10,000 but you are given 50,000 with five months to pay, so every week they are expecting you to pay more than 5,000, which you can't afford. In terms of savings there's a fixed amount. We realised that poor people don't work well with a fixed figure, so we wanted something flexible in terms of repayment. We sat down in the market and said, what can people afford? 'In a day I can pay KSH 20.' And that's how we started, at a very basic level. And we graduated. By 2007, we had people taking loans up to 150,000 shillings – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

I remember a saving meeting in this rusty corrugated iron building whereby they were starting to learn how to give loans through their businesses at the Toi market. It was so interesting for me on the system that they were using to give loans, it was a very transparent system. I copied that idea back to South Africa and it helped me to encourage the loans system between our members – Rose Molokoane, South African Homeless People's Federation.

Starting in Toi and moving to other groups, loaning encouraged daily collective scrutiny of money going in and out, and in this way brought safety to savings, allowing Muungano's savings systems to develop further. When groups later began upgrading projects, the value of robust systems became even surer.

The key element is just doing savings, because savings mobilise people. Savings are resources, you put your money together so you put your minds together. You have a target – what do you want to do? We wanted to get houses with water and toilet. From there, we have groups which formed for income generating projects, small businesses. When you to bring them together they can think how to start a project for their own income – Michael Njuguna, Muungano member, Kambi Moto slum.

BOX 4: MUUNGANO'S TOOLS AND THEIR EVOLUTION OVER TIME – PEER EXCHANGE

Muungano is structured as a network of groups. One group visits another group. Muungano learns through seeing. When you go to another place, you learn what they are doing and bring it to your place or even make it a bit better. When they come to your place they learn what you are doing. Basically, in the settlement we learn through doing and it's easier – Nancy Njoki, Mathare.

There is always a way that you can borrow the ideas from somewhere else, where you find there's other people who have faced the same challenges – Isaac 'Kaka' Musa, Muungano member, Mathare slum.

Peer-to-peer exchanges have always been important for Muungano – for learning, solidarity, mobilisation, and building leadership. The federation helps different communities in settlements that share the same kinds of problems to interact, networking them at local, regional or international levels. Groups share information, exchange experiences, and learn practically from one another, including by participating in other groups' activities. Exchanges can make communities aware they are not alone, that there are others facing similar crisis, and can motivate and challenge them to confront their problems.

Between 2000 and 2002, many local exchanges between settlements in Nairobi and Athi River, and some international ones to India and South Africa, helped Muungano develop the tools and rituals of savings, enumerations, house modelling and planning, building skills and confidence. From 2003, Muungano spread throughout Kenya and the numbers of savings groups grew. As the support NGO's capacity to service the increased demand became diluted, local or regional exchanges became the main strategy for engaging slum communities and transferring skills and capacities. Later, as Kambi Moto's success became clear and political attitudes to slums softened, peer exchanges became a vehicle for building communities' capacities to undergo land regularisation. Around 2006, the federation took over the lead in organising exchange visits within Kenya.

Our group was propelled in 2003, when we had our first exchange to Kambi Moto to see the housing. The reality now, seeing the family of the federation – the old, the young. You could even participate in doing daily collection in those exchanges. And it was fun! In fact I remember, in our group most of the youths were now grabbing the responsibility of being daily collectors – Erikson Sunday, Muungano member, Kisumu.

One of Muungano's most significant series of exchanges began around 2003, when SDI asked the young Kenyan affiliate to help build a federation in Uganda. This was a brilliant opportunity to learn through teaching, an intensive process (between 2003 and 2005 there was nearly always a Kenyan team in Uganda) through which Muungano built a lot of leadership itself. Uganda was a space to test different types of organising and enumeration techniques, and for reflection, pushing Muungano to think deeply about how tools they promoted in Uganda served their own local contexts.

I went to Uganda in 2002. And part of my challenge, the Ugandan federation was mobilised around projects. It was not mobilised around a struggle. And I usually say there's a difference between the Kenyan federation and these other federations of these other countries. The Kenyan federation was mobilised around an issue and that issue was evictions and forced demolitions. So the activism and the struggle came from pain, it came from suffering. As opposed to these others which are, you organise, you save, you'll get a house, save, you'll get a toilet – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Uganda served as a stepping stone; from here, Muungano went on to support federations in other countries like Ghana and Sierra Leone, teaching particularly around enumerations. Around 2010, SDI initiated the idea of regional 'hubs' – support networks where federations could build a closer relationship with their neighbours, and also hold one another accountable. The 'SDI East Africa Hub' was formed between Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania:

The East Africa Hub is where the three countries share what they have done and achieved. And people learn – Kenya learns from Uganda and Tanzania, Tanzania from Uganda and Kenya, Uganda from Kenya, Tanzania. In 2013 they started the LME (learning monitoring and evaluation) initiative and I saw it working [better] than before. Before it was without a systematic way for everyone to report – everyone used to report their own ways. Now, if you go to a Ugandan report, a Kenyan report, you'll get them reporting in a uniform way. So you understand what they are doing – Dorice Mseti, Mukuru.

continues

The hub meets regularly, about once quarterly. And at this point, Muungano was confronted with the realisation that the young federations they had helped to build had grown up. The role of teacher is not static; there is a need to sustain momentum. The hub nurtures a healthy competition between Muungano and its neighbouring federations, spurring them on to strategise and reflect on their next growth path.

The Kenyan federation is a bit older than most federations. Muungano, I think in East Africa it started in Kenya. So they have trained other countries on the importance of people in the settlement having their own groups, deciding on their destiny, and helping them to be empowered, to request, to ask for their rights as citizens. We taught some countries and they have surpassed us, they are on top of us. I think [in Uganda] they are doing very well in partnership with the government. They are ahead of us, even their mode of documentation is a bit better than Kenya. So it's also, we go there to learn what are they doing, how can we do it too? What can we copy there, to bring to our country?
– Nancy Njoki, Mathare.

Figure 6. The agenda for a visit by federations and development organisations to Huruma during the first World Forum, which was held in Nairobi in 2002

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION MEETING IN HURUMA-NAIROBI KENYA: 02-05-2002:

PROGRAMME:

2.00PM- 2.30PM	ARRIVAL OF ALL GUESTS FROM WORLD URBAN FORUM
2.30PM- 2.35PM	WELCOMING REMARKS
2.35PM- 2.45PM	INTRODUCTIONS
2.45PM- 2.55PM	UPDATE ON HURUMA SAVINGS
2.55PM- 3.05PM	NAIROBI FEDERATION-HISTORY
3.05PM- 3.15PM	ELISHE- MOMBASA
3.15PM- 4.05PM	SLUM DWELLERS INTERNATIONAL

- THAILAND
- ARGENTINA
- NEPAL
- PHILLIPINE
- SOUTH AFRICA
- CAMBODIA
- NAMIBIA
- ZIMBABWE
- ZAMBIA

4.05PM- 4.15PM	HABITAT
4.15PM- 4.25PM	CITY COUNCIL
4.25PM- 4.35PM	GOVERNMENT OF KENYA REPRESENTATIVE
4.35PM- 5.30PM	GROUND BREAKING OF THE HSE MODEL
5.30PM- 5.45PM	PAMOJA TRUST
5.45PM- 5.50PM	VOTE OF THANKS
5.50PM	DEPARTURE….

Source: Joseph Kimani.

BOX 5: HOW GRASSROOTS DATA COLLECTION EVOLVED OVER TIME AND INFLUENCED THE PROGRESS OF KENYA'S URBAN DISCOURSE

The government plan the urban areas forgetting the informal settlements and the people who live there. Mukuru, it's known as an industrial area, and before, the government didn't know that Mukuru is made of people settlements. Through the data we collected, we proved that people do live there. It's an achievement for Muungano – Felista Ndunge, Muungano member, Mukuru settlement.

The relationship between data collected about slums by their residents and the formation of urban policy in Kenya is not a direct one. Muungano communities mainly undertake data collection to develop solutions to specific issues in settlements. And from there, solutions for individual settlements permeate to policy discussions at city or national level. Enumerations might be undertaken collaboratively with government agencies; donors supporting community initiatives might have interactions with the state; community solutions are sometimes documented and shared in forums where local or national governments are present – or across national boundaries through SDI.

Over the last two decades, Kenyan state investment in improving informal settlements has grown steadily. But, it is only when communities lend themselves to development processes that community and city resources can be combined in a really transformational way – and information is one of the most catalytic resources that organised communities can contribute.

Similarly, policy decisions are usually preceded by changes in practice or perception of how to address challenges, and community enumeration and mapping processes can often catalyse such changes.

1993–1997

When the *Muungano wa Wanavijiji* movement first emerged in the 1990s to counter the spike in forced evictions in informal settlements, it rallied around information from two new studies showing that over half of Nairobi's population was living on two per cent of its land, in dense and squalid conditions. The significance of these studies was tremendous.

Map 4. Early mapping of Kibera as part of the 1993 Nairobi slum inventory by Matrix Development Consultants
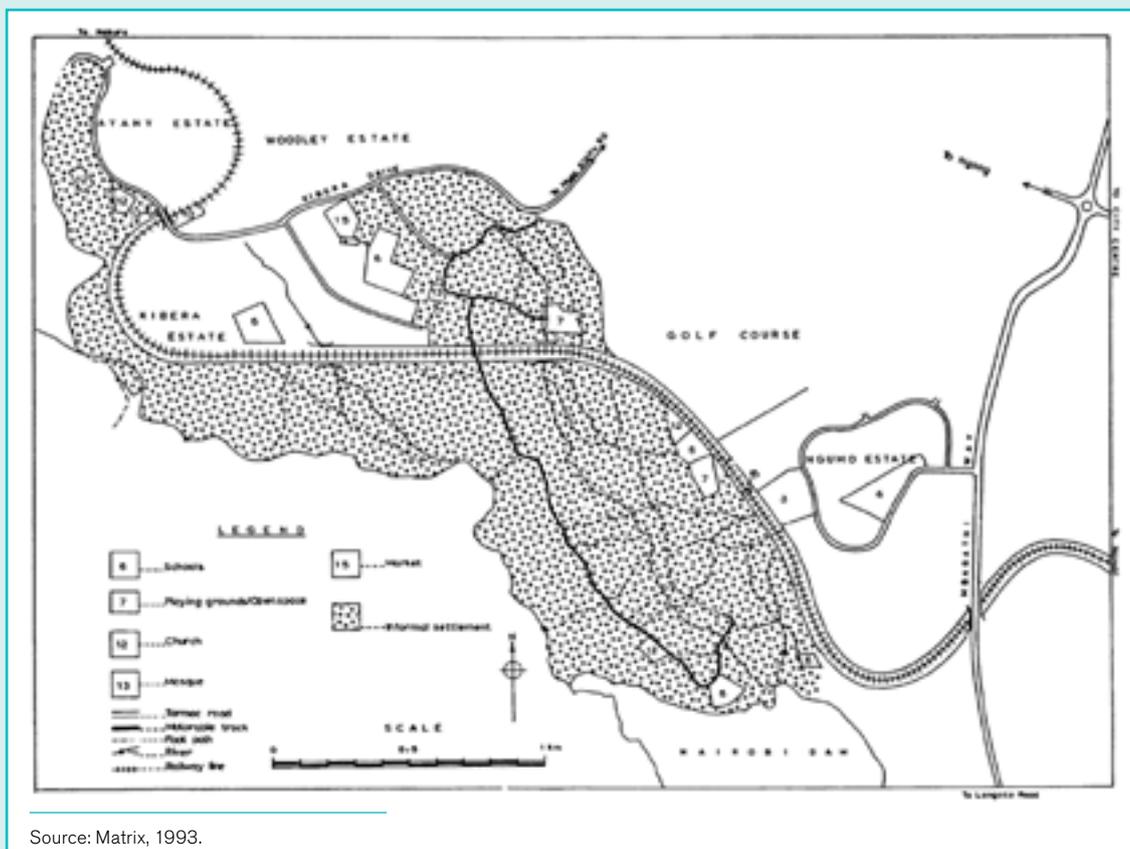
Source: Matrix, 1993.

continues

Until then, slums were largely ignored in Kenya; they were not seen as part of the city's fabric, and slum dwellers were not a political or economic constituency. These surveys gave form to the movement and visibility to the issues it was fighting. The first urban discourse was thus instituted.

In 1996, in response to slum violence and a new rhetoric that was underpinned by these studies, the state established the Nairobi Informal Settlements Coordination Committee (NISCC). NISCC instituted a moratorium on slum demolition in 1997, providing respite for both the state and Muungano to start exploring ways in which the settlements could be regularised.

1998–2004

Initially, Muungano had used broad data for advocacy, but around 1999 SDI introduced the community data collection tool. This was good timing: Muungano was in discussions with the city council about the transfer of land tenure rights and if these opportunities came to pass there was a need to establish who in the settlements would be entitled.

The first enumeration by slum communities was carried out in five settlements in Huruma in 2000, with the 'knowledge and blessing' of the NISCC, in order to plan a slum upgrading project. It was a rudimentary exercise and Muungano learnt in the field, but it helped to demonstrate how self-enumeration can change the state's perception that settlements are temporary. It was preceded by an exposure visit for NISCC officials to Mumbai, which created an appreciation that organised slum communities could participate in state urban renewal projects.

Three years later, the first central government initiative to provide solutions to slums, the Kenya Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP) was formed and with it the first national budgetary allocation for slum upgrading. Data from the Huruma enumeration was submitted for the pilot of this new initiative; Huruma was not selected, but Muungano would find a place in KENSUP as a primary community protagonist.

With the support of federations from Zimbabwe, South Africa, and India, Muungano undertook a second, larger enumeration in Korogocho, a big slum next to the city dump. The land had been given to 'the people' by the president, but the NISCC needed to establish 'which people'. This really tested Muungano, bringing out the power of information, complexity of informal settlement dynamics, and knottiness of the issue of entitlement. Structure owners in Korogocho felt it was not in their interest for tenants to be counted and the enumeration was resisted powerfully.

2005–2009

It was always clear to Muungano that enumeration was about communities collecting data, but during the first few years, support professionals worked closely with community members, perhaps even taking the bigger role. As Muungano members picked up data collection quickly, soon only community members were filling forms in the field and eventually, the Kenyan alliance's data collection strategy was entirely led by the federation. As the community released its NGO staff from roles, they could begin grappling with new areas, such as mapping and data presentation. Now, new cadres of professionals and partners began supporting Muungano enumeration – planners, surveyors, GIS technicians, and academics.

In this period, Muungano communities collected data that fed into major state infrastructure projects; conducted a city-wide enumeration in Kisumu; and moved out from Nairobi to collect data across nine of Kenya's major urban centres. Very large-scale activities honed skills and confidence in enumeration and GIS technology, leading to deep reflection on how to organise enumerations and produce data, and cementing partnerships with local authorities, universities, aid agencies, and private sector firms.

A precedent was set in this period on the state treatment of involuntary resettlement of slum dwellers, in part through Muungano's involvement in a major state project. Processes to develop land and housing policies began, with the participation of slum communities.

Figure 7. Sample identity card for project affected persons, used as part of the railway RAP enumerations

Cheti cha Kuthibitisha Kuhesabiwa
Kenya Railways Enumeration Card

NUMBARI YA MUADHIRIWA (PAP No.)

JINA LA MUADHIRIWA (PAP NAME)

ID No.

TAREHE (DATE)

SAHIHI YA MWENYE KUHESABU (ENUMERATOR'S SIGNATURE)

SAHIHI YA MUADHIRIWA (PAP SIGNATURE)

Eng. Benedict M. Kimau
Safety Manager
Kenya Railways

Source: Government of Kenya, 2005

2010–2016

In 2011, the World Bank-funded national slum land and infrastructure project – the Kenya Informal Settlements Infrastructure Project (KISIP) was established. If Muungano ever really influenced national government approaches to upgrading, it has been through entrenching the practice of community enumeration as the basis for upgrading into KISIP (and KENSUP).

Following devolution in 2010, county governments begin to grapple with their responsibilities towards people living in slums, and, seeking to know the scale of their challenge, Muungano's skills in community-based data collection became more valued at this level. In the last few years, the federation has undertaken data collection activities in partnership with several county governments seeking to undertake land regularisation in their regions. In 2013, as part of SDI's *Know Your City* campaign, Muungano profiled all the slums in five Kenyan counties, including Nairobi.

Muungano's data collection activities have changed scale, moving from settlement to zonal and city levels. Viewing the slum challenge through a city lens has illuminated some major challenges. For example, the 2013 data revealed that over half Nairobi's slums were on private land. The city-level intervention required to find solutions to this will need more than the replication of extant Muungano approaches and solutions to settlements in the city. In the last few years, the Mukuru slum belt has become the setting for Muungano's work identifying these new approaches. A 2016 profiling of Mukuru revealed another emerging challenge: 30 per cent of its slum shacks are now double-storey, pointing to the future of population growth in slums. Without the possibility of finding new lands, slums have begun to densify in new ways.

Figure 8. Extract from Muungano's recent enumeration of SEPU village in Mukuru slum belt

room uses

0   20   40   80   120   160
                                          m

businesses
mixed used (res+business)
institutions
sanitation facilities
residences

Source: Nyambuga et al. 2015

Lastly, as Muungano continues to expand its advocacy and focus into new areas, for example public health and climate resilience, these activities are increasingly undertaken through research collaborations. To these, Muungano brings its core competencies in organising and conducting community information collection.

> *Enumeration was a strategy that worked. It was never easy. There was a lot of mobilisation that needed to be done, a lot of resistance that you needed to go past, and therefore there's a way that enumeration was able to comb out the different levels of power. Even communities themselves began to understand, 'Oh, this is how we are, this is how complex our settlement is.' For the longest government never had any form of data… [A] few colleagues used to go to the Survey of Kenya, where they have all these cadastral maps. And you would find all the information in government is only of formal areas, but not of informal areas. So the many years that we invested in collecting data, whether government will appreciate it or acknowledge it or not, there's quite a bit of data that we made available. And when they started being more keen on working on informal settlements, there's a lot of data that they relied on that we had collected* – Irene Karanja, MuST.

3

Correlations

This paper explores Muungano's impact over its 20 years by charting points of contact between the state and Muungano's approaches to slum problems, and how these have influenced change in policy and practice tangibly in the settlements. This section tracks three areas of correlation, each representing a different facet of Muungano's achievements to date. Periods described by these three correlations are not discrete, there is much overlap.

The first covers 1996 to 2003, and concentrates on changes in state attitudes to informality. Muungano's mobilisation and advocacy in its earliest years was directed at fighting evictions through protest and activism. Around 2000, focus began shifting towards seeking solutions. The correlative 'flip side' here is progressive attitude changes on the part of the state.

The second correlation looks across 20 years at how Muungano and the Kenyan state have – at times separately, at times in partnership – approached the task of designing solutions to the problems of informality and slums in Kenya. The third explores structural issues since 2003, specifically Muungano's experiences leveraging state and non-state resources to finance change in slum issues.

Map 5. Kenya and Nairobi: areas and settlements discussed in this chapter
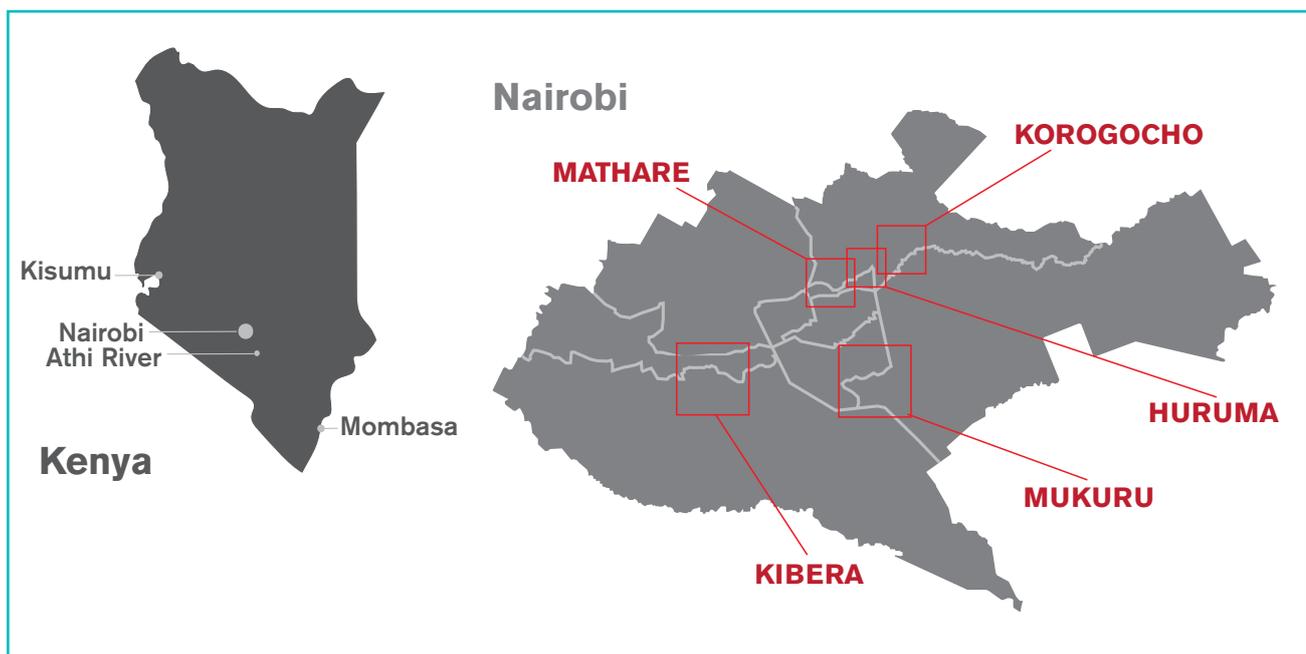
3.1 First correlation: Muungano mobilisation and state attitudes to informality

One of the biggest achievements of Muungano was just creating an acceptance by the state that informal settlements are here, they are part of our reality, they are a housing solution for the poor, that housing solution is not sufficient, and that the state must begin to intervene; eviction is not the way to go. So just that acceptance by the state. And now the state beginning to create policies and mobilise money, actually resources, in order to address the slum issue – Jane Weru, AMT.

1996–1997: Recognising the slums

Muungano's early struggle was the struggle for the recognition that slums existed and that people living in them had rights to benefit from the country's growth. In 1996, slum housing was typically shanties of mud and wattle or iron sheets, with densities as high as 250 units per hectare. Access to water, electricity, basic services, and infrastructure tended to be minimal or non-existent – 94 per cent of slum residents did not have access to adequate sanitation (Alder, 1995). Structures were let on a room-by-room basis, with most households occupying a single room or part of one, at an average 5 people per household (Ngau, 1995).

We fought until the government heard our voice. Because we knew that one person cannot be heard, but if we join and make noise and disturb them every day, they'd say, 'Let's hear them.' They started acknowledging us: 'There is Muungano, in slums. They are people who are fighting.' Back then the government was even more corrupt than now. When a slum was demolished, the land would not go back to the government but one politician would grab that land. If it was a few people making noise and going to government offices it would not have worked, but we joined hands in all the areas we fought for. Korogocho and Kibera people came to fight for Kamae and Soweto. If you had a case, all Muungano members would come to court. And that's why I say Muungano is strength. If it was not Muungano I don't know whether there could exist any slums in Nairobi or elsewhere. That was the first step, to retain those slums. The second step is to develop those slums – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

In the 1990s, the most effective strategy for us was recalcitrance, just saying 'Moi must go'. Going out on the street making the slogans and the case for what you see as the object of injustice. It worked then because I don't think the state then was willing to listen to anybody. And if it was not for the social movements, the urban organised groups pushing for change, it wouldn't have gone very far. Until the social movements got out into the streets and made the city ungovernable – shops were closed, public transport didn't take place, paralyse economic movement – things wouldn't have moved the way they have – Patrick Ochieng, Ujamaa Centre, civil society activist in Nairobi and Mombasa.

Besides responsive resistance to evictions, Muungano's main approach was campaigns and advocacy in partnership with civil society organisations focused on rights and political influence. They rallied around data from two early studies, by Matrix Development Consultants (Matrix, 1993), and Peter Ngau of Nairobi University (Ngau, 1995), which showed that 55 per cent of Nairobi's population was living on 2 per cent of its land, making visible for the first time the scale and condition of the city's informal settlements. Civil society groups' international links – to diplomats and international NGOs – provided financial support and a platform for advocacy.

This marginalised sector has been ignored in the major development plans and the efforts of the government. To make matters worse, violent evictions have been conducted resulting in deaths, loss of properties, diseases and physical abnormalities, lack of food and shelter as well as psychological trauma… Muungano intends to sensitise, discuss and dialogue the plight of the slum dwellers and squatters, among ourselves, religious leaders, NGOs, politicians, business community, interested individuals and parties, UN bodies, donors, diplomats, in order to put pressure on the government to reform the land law and policies – Extracts, Muungano wa Wanavijij manifesto, 1996.

The state's first significant move towards slum recognition came in 1996, with the establishment of the Nairobi Informal Settlements Coordination Committee (NISCC), in response to a general public and political feeling that slums were a problem and something needed to be done. The committee was chaired by the provincial commissioner (PC) of Nairobi, the (then) province's head of administration, rather than the Ministry of Land and Housing, since at first the state only really understood slums and slum issues narrowly in terms of security and of Nairobi. This acknowledged

the existence of informal settlements and was therefore an important step towards recognising the magnitude of slum issues. The NISCC made provision for a consultative committee on which sat representatives of Pamoja Trust and others of Muungano's early civil society support groups, and although embedded in the state, was extensively influenced by those civil society organisations (Cordaid, 2004).

In 1996, the second UN conference on human settlements, Habitat II, took place. The resulting Habitat Agenda ('The Istanbul Declaration') was likely influenced by Kenyan activism around forced eviction. For example, the advocacy and whistle-blowing activities of Davinder Lamba's Operation Firimbi[5] campaign against land grabbing and corruption in Kenya was awarded a UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour shortly afterwards. Lamba worked closely with the emerging Muungano movement, facilitating community mobilisation and strategic thinking, and channelling advocacy. Muungano also played a key role in Operation Firimbi. Firimbi is 'whistle' in Swahili – wherever there was an eviction or threat of eviction, people would 'blow a whistle' and Muungano would come to resist.

Around 1997, the Bretton Woods institutions began pushing Kenya to develop a country poverty reduction strategy (PRSP), adding a powerful new voice to growing Western pressure on the government to recognise tenure insecurities, urban land irregularities, and human rights in regard to forced evictions and land grabs. Slum issues were still little understood by the state, but through the influence of internal pressures and external conditionalities, it began to recognise that it couldn't just keep demolishing slums (Klopp, 2000). In 1997, the NISCC recommended a moratorium on slum evictions in Nairobi.

It is imperative that any actions relating to informal settlements in Nairobi are preceded by a clear expression of good intent on the part of the authorities. This should include the formal recognition of all existing settlements, a moratorium on all demolitions, an immediate stop on allocations of all public land that is already settled… For the purpose of recognition, it will be necessary to define the limits of existing settlements and to ensure that construction of houses in existing informal settlements does not take place… [N]o demolitions of informal settlements should be allowed without consultation with the affected communities and without the provision of appropriate alternative accommodation – NISCC, 1997 (in COHRE, 2006).

In reality, this was largely symbolic, not effectively enforced, and in the absence of a real implementation framework had little effect in stopping slum evictions over the subsequent years, as Muungano members' experiences and the announcements of continuing evictions are testament (COHRE 2006). Only slums on public, not privately owned, land were considered. And the moratorium wording paid little attention to the particularly problematic state practice of procuring the police to evict informal settlements on government-owned land.

2000–2003: Thinking about solutions

Around 2001, the state began a shift towards formulating policies and mobilising resources to address land and slum issues. At their estimate, by around 1999, Muungano had forced acceptance by the state that informal settlements were part of Kenya's urban reality. The next few years saw a gradual shift in where the federation chose to place its energy, from a focus on stopping evictions towards solutions for land regularisation and upgrading housing and services.

Two initial sites were Huruma and Korogocho slums in eastern Nairobi. In both, it looked likely that the state would give land to the communities, so with the support of other SDI federations, notably Zimbabwe, South Africa, and India, the Kenyan federation took advantage of the opportunities they afforded to test out SDI's tools for community-based development. (Below, we discuss the change in attitudes that led to these opportunities, and in the next section we look at approaches to designing solutions).

2001: First opportunities for land regularisation – Huruma and Korogocho

In the late 90s, Muungano started exploring with Nairobi City Council if some slums could be regularised. A small slum population of around 2,500 families in six 'villages' in Huruma became the agreed focus.

In contrast, Korogocho's story was rather the exception to how most slums were being treated by the state during this period.

It was the year 2001 when President Moi was just passing around there, doing his normal functions of visiting people. He just decided to stop abruptly at Korogocho and said, 'The people of Korogocho, from today I've given you this land' – Henry Otunge, Korogocho.

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[5] The Operation Firimbi (Blow the Whistle) Campaign was a project initiated in Kenya to curb rampant land grabbing and corruption. Spearheaded by the Mazingira Institute, it aimed at blowing the whistle on all forms of corruption and informing the authorities, and also sought to bring Kenyans together, organising to secure small, locally achievable solutions (UNCHS, 2001).

This declaration drew in the provincial commissioner as head of the NISCC, to figure out how to implement it.

It was felt that we needed to link up with the government, so that we can begin to influence the way the government handled slum upgrading. We reached out to the Indians and agreed that we needed to go for an exchange visit to India, so that at least the government could begin to understand how exchanges and how enumerations were carried out. So an exchange visit was organised and we went to India – the Provincial Commissioner, the Nairobi City Council Director of Planning, and myself. And they agreed that we would come back and begin to do enumerations with the assistance of the Indian federation – Jane Weru, AMT.

I remember one of the best experiences, I came here, met Jane, and she immediately went and met the Permanent Secretary of the Government of Kenya. And we decided within the next 10, 15 days, he will come to India and see what the development is all about – Jockin Arputham, SDI President.

The trip exposed the officials and, by extension their state departments, to joint slum upgrading initiatives by the Indian SDI federation and government. Back in Kenya, the trip had far-reaching effects as the provincial administration and city council began to recognise the initiatives being undertaken by Pamoja Trust and slum communities and incorporate them into their slum upgrading strategies (Pamoja Trust, 2001). This visit secured approval for Muungano to enumerate Huruma and Korogocho (see Section 3.2).

There was a need to establish which people the land should go to. And that first enumeration really tested us, because it brought out the power of information. In Korogocho, the community were not decided on who would get land, tenants or structure owners. And collecting names of tenants was resisted very powerfully. And then we saw that this tool was really powerful. We worked with central government to do the enumeration in Korogocho. We got a lot of support from other affiliates of SDI – Zimbabwe, South Africa, the Indians. We got the provincial commissioner of Nairobi and all the chiefs and district commissioners coming to Korogocho just to make sure this happened, that we could create a set of data that would be acceptable to the state for the allocation of land – Jack Makau, SDI Kenya.

2000–2002: UN-Habitat and government of Kenya joint programme

The state began upgrading projects in this period, in Kibera (Soweto East), Athi River, and Mathare (Mathare 4A). Muungano's major influence was cementing the importance of community involvement in slum enumerations at the start of an upgrading process into the state's methodology. This is reflected in the key role Muungano played in changing the methodology of KENSUP, the federation's effective use of data to advocate in Huruma and Korogocho, and its involvement in supporting upgrading processes in Athi River.

We participated in the first World Urban Forum and we had so many [SDI] people and NGOs from other countries, so we had a big group in Nairobi. We went to the UN the whole week, sharing about the issue of slums. And then President Moi also said he welcomes that idea and he would like those people who can support the upgrading of slums. He's ready to allocate some of the land within the slums. So that's where we were able now to start in Kibera – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

Around 2000, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) established its head office in Nairobi under a new director, Anna Tubaijuka. It is likely that this provided an economic and reputational boost to the city, putting pressure on President Moi that Kenya be seen to be improving its poorly regarded human rights record in informal settlements, bringing state moves towards greater sensitivity on slum issues, and influencing Moi's impulsive decision in Korogocho.

Tubaijuka was interested in developing a slum upgrading project in Kenya, taking the view that a UN body based in Kenya should demonstrate its abilities in its own backyard. In February 2001, a joint UNCHS and government of Kenya slum upgrading programme was announced (UNCHS, 2001).

UN-Habitat was at this point not really aware of Muungano, but following the announcement, the NISCC was brought in and Pamoja Trust with it. NISCC was tasked with identifying a suitable site for a pilot upgrading, to selection criteria developed by UN-Habitat, which brought in external specialists for advice. Korogocho and Huruma were both suggested, but eventually Soweto East village in Kibera was selected. Very complicated internal politics were revealing themselves in Korogocho at this time, and

even Muungano's view was that it might not be the right choice. Huruma's enumeration data was presented, but the settlement was considered too small. Kibera had a high profile, being notorious at this time as the 'biggest slum in Africa'.

It became clear that NISCC was not right for a national programme and that a new vehicle was needed. KENSUP was therefore set up as a government of Kenya slum upgrading unit with two secretariats – at the Ministry of Housing and UN-Habitat.

Internal records from the time show that it was very much Muungano's intention to influence KENSUP's upgrading methodology (Pamoja Trust, 2001, 2002a, 2003, 2004). However, despite growing relations between SDI and UN-Habitat at the global level, Muungano initially had little profile within KENSUP. The federation and Pamoja Trust had little upgrading track record and Kenyan context expertise came from the ministry, despite few officials having been into Kibera.

2003: Budgetary progress

KENSUP's initial funding came from UN-Habitat. Subsequently, in the June 2003 national budget, significant financial allocations – half a billion Kenyan Shillings – were for the first time made towards slum upgrading, through KENSUP. This allocation was a real marker of attitude change in the country, made shortly after the general elections in December 2002, where a new government (Moi was still in power, but shared) was elected on a ticket of political liberalisation (Muungano sought to take advantage of the run up to the elections to cultivate political goodwill towards its members, holding meetings with leaders of the two main political parties, who both signed memoranda committing to work towards adequate shelter for the urban poor).

2003: KENSUP's Kibera enumerations

When I worked in the civil service we were meant to carry out planning in settlements and towns with very little consultation. We were government, all powerful, all knowledgeable. Of course we weren't knowledgeable or powerful. A piece of humbling experience: we went to Kibera and tried to map out simple things like land use. All structures look similar, in our opinion many of the structures fell into the category of residential – shops look like homes, homes look like schools. Unless you lived in Kibera you would not be able to tell whether this was a small industry, a home, a school. We came up with very good plans, but to our surprise the people did not take up the plans – Musyimi Mbathi, Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Nairobi.

While KENSUP was being built as an institution, Muungano's plans for upgrading Huruma were progressing rapidly. The federation was learning from upgrading models and methodology in South Africa and India, and building savings to show that communities can contribute towards improving their settlements. With particular energy, Muungano had grasped the importance of community-based enumeration as a component of upgrading to ensure everyone was included.

With the budget allocation, KENSUP had public money, lending the programme a new onus of accountability. Now, KENSUP had to go to Kibera and demonstrate what the money was doing. Muungano facilitated the first initial meetings between the Ministry of Lands and Housing and the communities in Kibera, explaining KENSUP and helping build a residents' team with which the programme officers could work.

In Muungano's reading, this was where the attitude change towards community-driven slum development stopped. At this point, Muungano was probably Kenya's most prominent civil society 'meddler' in slum upgrading. While the ministry was clear that it needed to find out who the residents of Kibera were, Muungano's enumeration methodology and the data it had already collected in Kibera were considered insufficient for KENSUP's purposes. UN-Habitat experts and ministry technocrats therefore developed a new 16-page form and methodology for enumerating the residents of Kibera, and formed an enumerator team of local university students, ministry, and UN-Habitat people.

The team went to Kibera to enumerate in 2004. They were quickly chased away. Muungano's community organiser professionals intervened, negotiating with the Kibera community to allow things to proceed and recruiting 40 Muungano members from Soweto to act as 'enumeration monitors'. The KENSUP team were told Muungano would just provide security, but these 40 people quickly became part of the enumeration team and the exercise effectively continued with the federation's support.

A few smaller public projects in Mathare and Athi River had taken place earlier (for the latter, Muungano conducted the enumerations), but the KENSUP enumeration in Kibera Soweto East was a first step in the first substantive government slum upgrading. Originally designed for professionals, it ended up with communities leading the process, and this was a key moment in cementing the role of communities in (planning for) slum upgrading processes. Until recent dispensations under the 2010 constitution, this approach was not widely present in government practice. If the events in Kibera hadn't happened, state attitude to slum upgrading could well have led to

mainstreaming of top-down practices, with communities relegated even further as beneficiaries.

Data is not numbers; data is a process. Even just being able to get this information of 10 households, somebody has to negotiate with different levels of that political economy. And sometimes it's not even us, it's the communities themselves who go to the head man and negotiate for days on end, 'Please allow us to collect this information' – Irene Karanja, MuST.

The gradual change in state attitudes towards informal settlements over this correlation period can be characterised by three major recognitions: (i) that informal settlements exist and need attention; (ii) that informal settlements' problems relate to land rights, tenure security, and land grabbing; and (iii) that forced evictions do not represent a solution – a potential solution might be recognising people's rights to stay on the land where they are, followed by planned upgrading. Our view is that this is the limit of attitude change. Today's Kenyan state has yet to go further to acknowledge the lead role communities themselves must play in transforming informal settlements. This has been Muungano's central tenet throughout its 20-year history, and the movement is still trying to make the case.

3.2 Second correlation: Designing responses to informality

We don't need 'experts'. We are the experts – Emmie Erondanga, Director of Miss Koch, a community-based organisation that began in Korogocho slum and civil society partner of Muungano.

Through case studies, this section tracks the evolution of some of the approaches and methodology the state and Muungano have used in designing solutions to informal settlements in Kenya, as well as some responses to improving informal settlements in the country that have been tried by sub-national bodies.

For Muungano, the starting point has been the savings, enumerations and house modelling tools. In partnership with others, these have allowed the federation's energies to move progressively forward: into small and then large-scale upgrading; from village-scale to settlement and city-level enumeration; and to shift focus from communal to individual services. Muungano has been involved in building a spectrum of models

for different slum situations: in situ, incremental slum upgrades; resettlements where the state provides land and others where communities save to buy land; various ways to access basic services. Recently, another shift has been from a narrow, direct advocacy on housing and land, to thinking about how public health, air quality, food security, and other aspects of slum life can help forward the movement's agenda.

As mentioned, the two main national vehicles representing Kenyan state efforts to tackle slums have been KENSUP and KISIP. KENSUP is a country-wide, long term strategy (2005–2020) focusing on housing and other issues, with seed funding from UN-Habitat/World Bank Cities alliance and government of Kenya (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). In 2008, project activities under KENSUP were taking place in Nairobi, Kisumu, Mavoko, Mombasa and Thika (UN-Habitat, 2008), although there is little more up to date information. KISIP is shorter term (2011–2016, extended now to 2018), focused on infrastructure and land tenure in 15 municipalities, and funded by the World Bank (US$100m), Agence Française de Développement (US$45m), Swedish International Development Agency (US$10m) and the government of Kenya (US$10m) (World Bank, 2016b).

2000–2001: Beginning to understand the challenge of entitlement – Korogocho enumeration

[At first] acquisition of spaces by urban poor was through squatting and invasions. A lot of public land that was idle, but there was no housing stock, so people would come, find space and construct. But over the years people began understanding that they can make these spaces more commercial. They've seen the pattern that people are coming and the demand for housing is going on. Now there's another layer of political ownership in slum communities in the business of creating housing stock. So people are not coming to squat, but looking for a house between this range of rent – Irene Karanja, MuST.

In the fight for secure tenure in slums the question is 'tenure for whom?' (Yahya, 2006). The issue of entitlements in slums, which sets structure owners[6] versus tenants is a live one in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi. There is a growing body of research on the large-scale illegal tenancy present in informal settlements in Nairobi and the challenges these present to upgrading and land regularisation initiatives (see, for example, Huchzermeyer 2007, 2008; Rigon, 2015).

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[6] The informal equivalent of landlords. These can also be residents of a slum, but in Kenya are more often 'absentee' middle class investors, who also form the governance of most informal settlements.

Map 6. Korogocho informal settlement in Nairobi: 2003 and 2016

Source: DigitalGlobe (Google Earth and ONA).
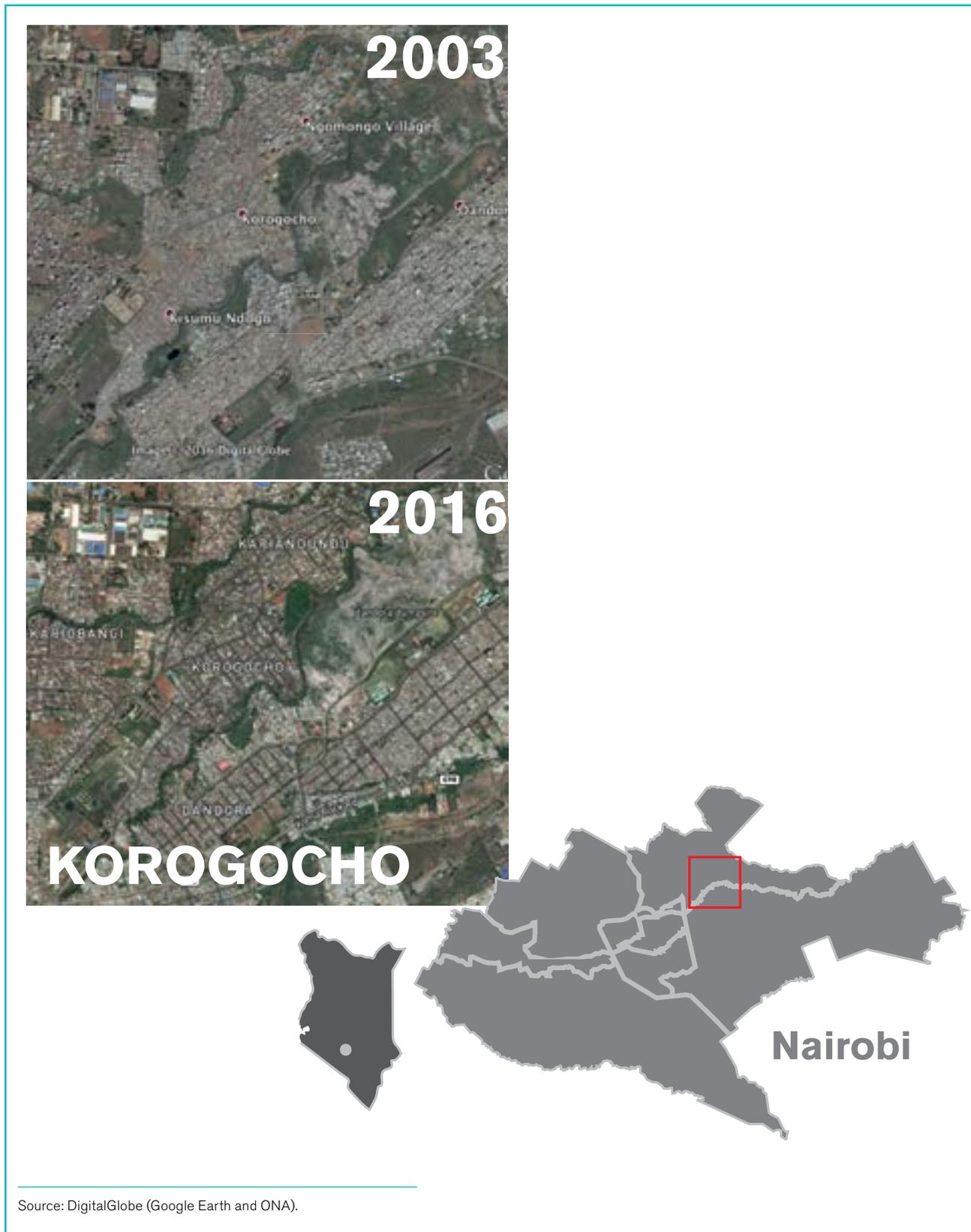
Muungano came face to face with this in Korogocho, early in its shift from protest towards solutions. The initial promise of Korogocho (and Huruma) land regularisation had been about people securing the right to the places where they were staying. The next question was 'what happens after land has been secured'?

> We hadn't realised the tenant structure owner issue until the intervention in Korogocho. Up to then, all the settlements in our eyes were homogenous – 'the oppressed poor against the middle class'. Korogocho taught us that the biggest issue [in land slum regularisation] was entitlement – within a very heterogeneous settlement situation. There were all these groups with conflicting interests, one example being that of structure owners and tenants – Jack Makau, SDI Kenya.

Muungano at this time was being introduced to community data collection by SDI and with the backing of Nairobi City Council conducted an enumeration in Korogocho. This was itself a challenge. The effort to secure Korogocho's land had been led by a well-organised group of (largely resident) structure owners in the slum, but many Muungano members in the settlement were not structure owners. The enumeration was fiercely resisted by many structure owners, who did not feel it was in their interest to have tenants counted.

> The community in Korogocho are divided into two groups: structure owners and tenants. When Muungano arrived they wanted to involve all stakeholders. Unfortunately, structure owners were not interested to work with tenants. They felt threatened by the way Muungano works because it doesn't discriminate against anybody in the community. Muungano brings all stakeholders on board and then helps them to approach common issues with common understanding. But structure owners felt threatened. They feel that when we involve tenants in the issue of housing they might lose big in terms of land and other things. So structure owners were the main challenge. Some of them even ran to local courts. I remember when Muungano wanted to do enumeration, the tenants were threatened by the structure owners that they should not register their names. It was quite tense – Abdi Mohamed, Muungano civil society partner, Korogocho slum.

The enumeration eventually took place in 2001, with support from the provincial administration, SDI federations from Zimbabwe and India, and under heavy protection. Serious violence was only avoided by good preparation – a lot of mediation, a Korogocho committee combining structure owners and tenants, and mobilising politicians to support the process.

Day 3 19/7/01: *We hold another meeting with the elected committee to strategise on the enumeration. The committee informs us that they have 140 people ready to start the enumeration. These teams will start with numbering the houses to test the waters on Friday. They will try and ensure that every house is numbered even those that will refuse will be counted by proxy… The next stage will then be to administer the questionnaire. The committee is keen to start… This will be the only victory that the tenants and those structure owners that have chosen to work with the committee can take… In the afternoon we go to Korokocho [sic] to meet with the committee after the District Officer had addressed the committee. We are met by an angry mob of structure owners and have to be escorted out of the settlement by armed policeman. The situation is obviously very tense as a result of the District Officer's announcement that the enumeration should go ahead* – Extract, 'A Zimbabwe perspective on Korogocho', Beth Chitekwe (Zimbabwe SDI federation's support NGO).

The enumeration revealed a population of 40,000 people that was 90 per cent tenants. The slum has very high densities and Muungano's 2001 analysis was that if land was divided by population, everyone in Korogocho would have access to 1.25 square metres.

Even though Muungano exited from the Korogocho upgrading, the experience would serve to frame the challenge as one of designing a slum improvement process where tenants would be eligible. There was recognition from the start that Korogocho would prove more problematic than Muungano's parallel entry into Huruma (on which see below and Box 6), since the settlement was much larger and the community considered to be more politicised, with clear ethnic divisions between structure owners and tenants (Weru, 2004).

The magnitude of the issue of entitlement for structure owners and tenants was not anticipated by Muungano in Korogocho in 2001, where it was exposed to a highly complex situation of serious conflict without having had time to develop appropriate responses or models. The upgrading in Huruma was much more successful in this respect and others, in part because it was on a significantly smaller scale and thus provided the space for Muungano to develop some solutions.

> If you see the housing project in Huruma and the issue of structure owners and tenants, it's easy to solve because of the way we were approaching that issue, telling people, 'You say you have 20 rooms and you claim to be a landlord and yet you don't have any security of tenure – we are all the same.' If you are a tenant or a structure owner, you all have the same problem if the eviction comes. We were able to get awareness on land issues, the ownership system, so that now the structure owners can

understand that they don't own anything, the land is for the government. The structures are theirs, but if the government wants to take the land they would demolish, so we would be the losers all of us, be it you are a tenant, you are a structure owner. That's why now they accepted the idea of coming together and accepting that, 'How can we share the land?'
– Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

2002–2009: Muungano and the state's upgrading models – Kambi Moto, Huruma, and KENSUP, Kibera Soweto East

There are community people who accept the houses that they have been provided. The reason is simply because they were not consulted during planning and designing of the houses. If we can be supported just to get land, then from that point we can proceed on our own through the savings we have made; we can continue with planning and designing and other things. The community felt that they are left out of activities like procurement and construction; let the community be involved. I would also tell the community that there is no structured leadership, every member should be given a chance to express their views. If these ideas are brought together, there will be no perception that this came from the chairman, chairlady or treasurer. In Muungano, we want to do it differently – Peter Chege, Kambi Moto.

Both Muungano and the state initially underestimated the importance of entitlement. Once the issue was recognised, they took quite different approaches to deal with it. For Muungano, the key to this difference is the broader difference between approaches to upgrading. Broadly, the government of Kenya's response to informality has been to start by developing a project through a project framework. While for Muungano – and SDI in general – the response is framed as a solution developed within the community, for which the first step is to build social capital and thereby ownership, only after which the community is facilitated to develop, design, and deliver the project.

KENSUP's Kibera Soweto East project began in 2004, collected data on residents in 2005 and began temporary relocation and building around 2009 (Fernandez and Calas, 2011). According to the government of Kenya, the first residents received keys in 2016 (MyGovKenya, 2016), although detailed information is scarce. KENSUP's 'pilot' in Kibera has been a long process, mired in difficulties around eligibility, temporary relocation (Fernandez and Calas, 2011), and community fears of non-affordability and corruption in the eventual allocation (Huchzermeyer, 2008). Ninety per cent of the Kibera residents targeted

for the upgrading are tenants, and relations between tenants and structure owners in the slum are complex (Fernandez and Calas, 2011). Muungano's contention is that issues of entitlement have been a key factor in the confusion that has bogged down KENSUP in Kibera. Essentially, the state's conceptualisation of slum upgrading has inserted benefits into a highly distorted market, preventing a balanced realisation of the right to housing and raising fears of displacement among slum residents (Huchzermeyer, 2008).

Structure owners who have 30 structures, when they are told that they will be relocated to other place and get only one structure this becomes a challenge. Because the 30 structures are where they get their incomes, and this brings more conflict. The harmonisation of tenant and structure owners has become a challenge – Felista Ndunge, Mukuru.

[W]ith the government, people are not involved, it is the government doing itself. They involve people by asking people questions, but the construction itself there is no community involved. It is given to the contractors who hire people, do houses and go. But with [Muungano] community are the ones doing the work, they are the ones to buy the materials, to participate from the ground, design their houses. Everything, until the allocation, they are the ones. And even the repayment of the loans for the housing, they are the ones who are doing. But with this the government people don't know how they are going to pay. For Kibera Soweto East [KENSUP] they formed the cooperatives, but because of politics many people never saved money. Some were saying the government is building free houses, some there's no houses the government is building for you, people were not clear about the project. That's why you find even now it is a problem, because we were supposed to do allocation of the housing in 2014. Up to now, people are going to court all the time, there is a lot of conflict from the community. Still we are waiting to see whether it will succeed and the right people will get the houses. It is a big challenge because of the government working system – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

Early influence of SDI federations, particularly from South Africa and India, has been important in shaping the approach to upgrading chosen by Muungano. In 2002, during an exchange they challenged the brand new Kenyan federation:

They essentially said, you can't walk into a settlement and upgrade it. You walk into a settlement and build social capital – then you upgrade. How to build social capital? You have a set of tools – savings, enumerations, exchanges, house modelling…
– Jack Makau.

In other words, **the process is equally, if not more, important than the outcome of the activities**, a rhetoric repeated throughout SDI. This focus on building social capital first was the key point of departure between the direction SDI drew Muungano towards when the Huruma upgrading was being planned, and the state-led initiative that launched KENSUP with UN-Habitat. In subsequent years, despite good ongoing contact between Muungano and KENSUP (and later KISIP), approaches to designing solutions to slums largely continue to diverge.

We conclude that if Muungano ever really influenced state approaches, it has been entrenching the practice of community enumeration as the basis for upgrading. In other respects, although community participation is integrated into both KISIP and KENSUP project policy, it has not been strongly adopted in practice (Anderson and Mwelu, 2013). Muungano's model (see Boxes 3 and 6) has however been recognised internationally, for example in 2003 when it was awarded the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour for the Huruma slum upgrading.

One of the biggest achievements in Huruma was to build a community that can then build houses. The community has been built. The task of building houses is a long term one and can go on for many days. These houses can be duplicated, not just in Kambi Moto but in other settlements, that's an achievement. It means this is a model that has its own life and can move out there and change communities. I've heard of other communities borrowing from Kambi Moto and using not just the product but also the process. The setting out of the process in Huruma was a big achievement. The process itself. Of course the product is good but we want to say the process of arriving at that house is good… The conceptualisation of the process was based on agitation for right to life in the city for the urban poor and how that can be translated into tangibles that people can enjoy even as they discuss rights. Rights can be arbitrary, so conceptualisation is a key ingredient. Using simple tools and simple approaches you can engage a community from the grassroots to realise something, while developing another network with other establishments around. That to me is great. Now, Kambi Moto is discussed in schools of planning and architecture, and there are many visitations. Many days to come people will still reflect on Kambi Moto and draw lessons from it – Joseph Mukeku, Architect and Muungano partner, Nairobi.

BOX 6: THE PROCESS IS EQUALLY IF NOT MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE OUTCOME OF THE ACTIVITIES – KAMBI MOTO, HURUMA

Since 2001, Muungano's process framework has been to establish savings schemes in a settlement, carry out enumeration with savings scheme members and wider Muungano, do house modelling, then develop a solution in the form of a community plan. Roughly, those were the steps taken in developing the solution in Huruma (Pamoja Trust, 2002b). Each of these steps, or tools, has two dimensions: an internal community dimension (causes change within a community) and an external dimension (aims at change within local or national government, or other stakeholders outside the community):

TOOL	INTERNAL CHANGE	EXTERNAL CHANGE
Savings	Build organising capacities, consensus, resources.	Create agency and voice that can be heard beyond the settlement; alternative governance that challenges problematic traditional settlement governance structures.
Enumeration	Counts the entire community and in doing so secures broad participation. Everyone has some understanding about what is going on. Information becomes a basis for community discussion.	Give a process legitimacy, presenting the situation in a way government can understand, and provides data for planning.
House modelling	Builds community consensus on the distribution of a community resource, land; "Once we upgrade how do we share it out?".	Challenges the whole project design approach.

Kambi Moto, Huruma

Kambi Moto is the first project we did for housing, which now we use as a precedent for Muungano to show the government that if they can support the community maybe by giving land and encouraging people to come together to do savings, it is easy for them to do housing without any conflict – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

In 2001, communities in five settlements on land held by Nairobi city council in the eastern Nairobi ward of Huruma came to an agreement with Nairobi City Council – and later signed an MOU – to upgrade their settlements. Description of these villages gives a flavour of some of the settlement profile information Muungano typically collects (see, for example, Pamoja Trust, 2009):

- Kambi Moto was established in 1975 as a vegetable and charcoal market. Population increased and slum housing began to grow. In 1995, 1997, 1999 and 2004, serious fires destroyed most structures, hence the name Kambi Moto: 'camp of fire'. In 2007, the population was 1,241, in 539 households.

- Mahiira was established in 1978 by squatters from a neighbouring area left out of a land allocation. Village elders divided up the land, people built houses using cardboard, and later rebuilt from mud and iron sheets in straight lines of a uniform 12x12 feet,

Map 7. Huruma informal settlement in Nairobi: 2002 and 2016
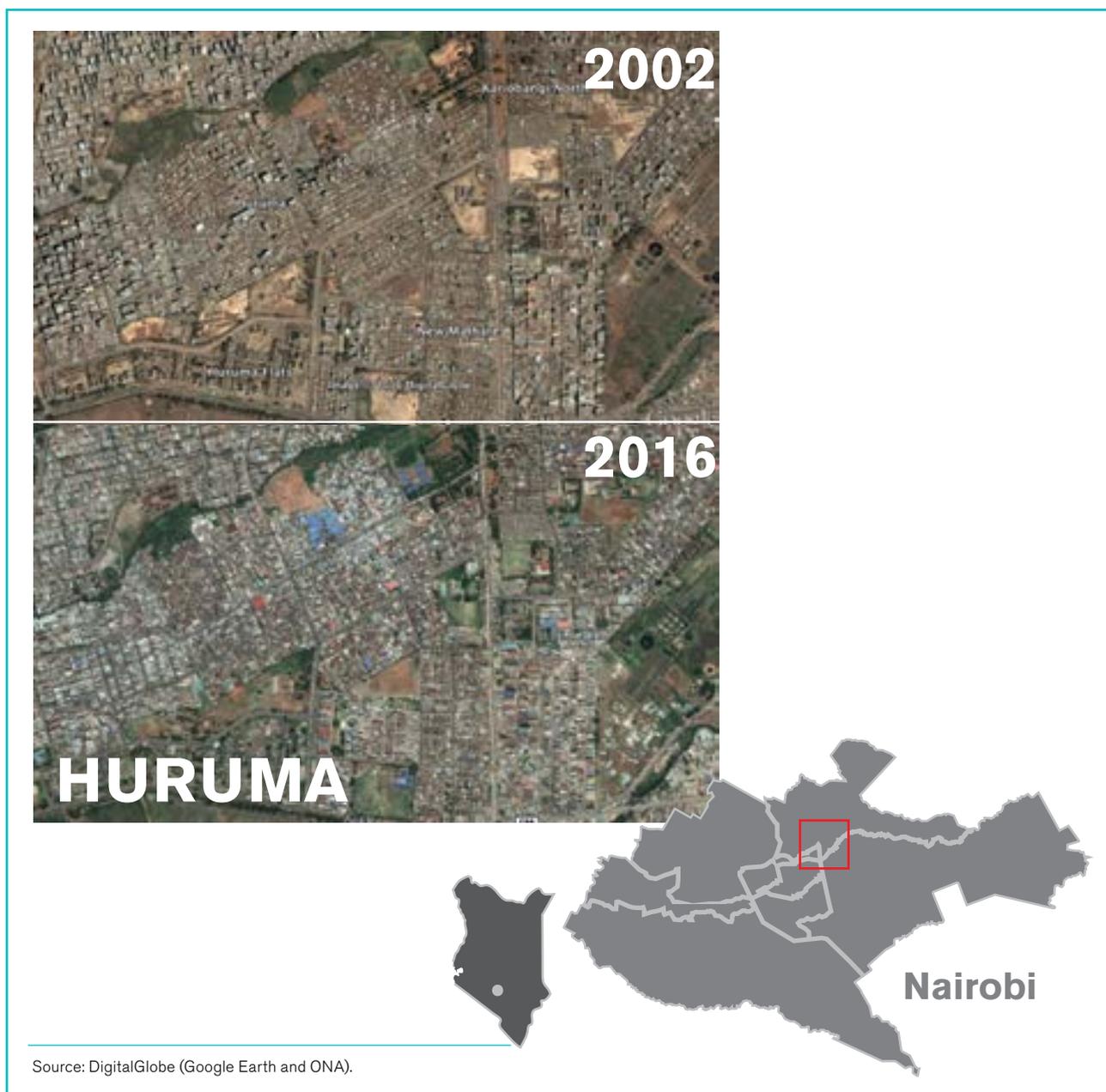
Source: DigitalGlobe (Google Earth and ONA).

after 220 houses were destroyed in a fire in 1983. Mahiira means 'the place that was burnt'. In 2007, the population was 1,174, in 384 households.

▪ Redeemed was formed in 1978 by squatters evicted from a neighbouring site. Originally called Post, the village was renamed after the Redeemed Gospel Church, which assisted with reconstruction after the settlement caught fire in 1986. In 2007, the population was 798, in 259 households.

▪ Ghetto began around 1979 with 380 people left out of another land allocation. They squatted on vacant land between other slums and built temporary houses of paper, since they believed the government would soon allocate plots for them. They are still there. In 2007, the population was 2,365, in 813 households.

▪ Gitathuru was started in 1976 next to the Gitathuru River and residents were allocated the temporary plots by Nairobi City Council. In 2007, the population was 986 in 314 households.

The settlements started with an enumeration exercise with the exception of Madoya, a potential sixth settlement, where almost all structures belonged to one family – by threatening their tenants with eviction the family managed to resist an enumeration (d'Cruz *et al.*, 2014).

Upgrading began in 2002 with Kambi Moto. Dwellings are multi-storey and high density, financed by individual savings, groups' savings, and resources channelled through the Kenyan urban poor fund, the Akiba Mashinani Trust. Over 100 units have been built so far in Kambi Moto and processes are now taking off in the other settlements. Overall, Muungano estimated that around 300 houses have been built so far (Muungano Support Trust, 2015). In 2015, the communities were visited by Cabinet Secretary Charity Ngilu, who declared that the government will issue land tenure certificates to the residents (ibid., 2015).

The upgrading was driven by the community, with Pamoja Trust mobilising and assisting with setting priorities, and technical support from architects and academics. Below, residents of Kambi Moto, others from Muungano, support NGO staff, and an architect partner narrate the process:

In 2000 we started savings groups. Six villages formed a committee to talk with the Nairobi City Council and come to an agreement. Every group had a daily savings and they had specific days of meeting but when we are going for the talks we go as one committee. We came to an agreement between the Nairobi City Council, Huruma and other stakeholders like Pamoja Trust – Peter Chege, Kambi Moto.

Nairobi City Council told us to go and organise ourselves, both structure owners and tenants. We started thinking, when the city council releases the land to the community, what will we do with it? Where will we get the money to construct houses? Through the support of Nairobi University and Pamoja Trust we started dreaming how the settlement will be and the kind of house we will get – Michael Njuguna, Kambi Moto.

The dreaming process had clear stages. First was mobilising the community and bringing them together to set priorities; what they want to realise in the design of their spaces. There were a lot of issues – not everybody on the same page – but through facilitation they were able agree on the priority areas. Kambi Moto were clear from the beginning that housing was the biggest priority, as much as there were other needs. We discussed with the community one-to-one: 'This is what we want.' At that point the engagement was very basic. The community would scribble sketches and for those who couldn't conceptualise sketches we used methods like pacing out, say, three steps by four, 'That becomes my room'. They also sketched on ground to scale: 'This is the expanse of my space' – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

We started enumerating the number of people living in this settlement. How will we accommodate everybody? Because in the slum where we stayed [shacks were] 10 by 10 ft and we need a permanent house with all facilities. So how can we fit to this piece of land without making people move out? We started saving our small amounts of money in order to support ourselves in this process – Michael Njuguna, Kambi Moto.

Collecting that information was measuring out the settlement, and enumeration. We were able now to look at the realities, 'If you want this kind of a house and this number of people, it's not possible. We need to modify the houses to fit the people who are there'. At that point the biggest challenge was to agree on the amount of space that we could provide. Some of the initial dreams from the community were really broad, providing for car parks, even swimming pools. Tying the reality of the space available and the people that needed to be accommodated we had also to consider the cost of the house and how much people can afford. So we brought these realities out in a common forum and the process of scaling down the dream was undertaken by the community. [Another] of the issues was that everybody wanted a claim on the ground. We could not stack them like in apartments. So the design had to be modified, again with the input of the community – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

Once a design had been broadly agreed, mobilisation shifted to a different scale, from people in the settlement to their neighbours and the city administration. This was done in 2001 with a ceremonial launch of a cloth model of the Kambi Moto house design.

We came up with a plan, which we took to the Nairobi City Council. We launched our model house with a mayor of Nairobi City Council. The ground we have a sitting room; first, bedroom; then the second, bedroom. That was a cloth model and everybody appreciated the model – Michael Njuguna, Kambi Moto.

A cloth model is a model of the house at scale one-to-one, on a timber frame enclosed with cloth. The purpose of this exercise was to ensure that residents, neighbours and the city administration were able to understand at scale one-to-one the envisioned housing for Kambi Moto. Partly it was also to ensure that we had some space in terms of negotiating for the adoption of the plans and approval of the plans for the construction – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

Communities go to the local government and say, 'We want to you to come and launch this house model'. These are the same guys who were trying to refuse them to do enumerations or different activities. But when they see this house model they want to be a part of it, to come and officially cut the tape – so prestigious! What they don't know is that they are actually signing up to an upgrading. For professionals and technocrats in government house models are powerful in being able to also reshape their thinking about how they see space. You're not forcing somebody to accept, you're just exposing them. 'Just come and see this model, that's all.' But when you leave, even though you don't acknowledge, you will still agree and something in your soul will make you know that these people need you to approve to what they want to do – Irene Karanja, MuST.

Community training and then construction began in 2003. Houses could be built incrementally, an important link between the savings and construction model. Kambi Moto was influenced by exchanges with the Indian federation adopting ladhi slabs technology, which allowed the community to take charge of storeyed construction where otherwise more expensive technical input by contractors would have been needed, pushing up housing costs. As it stands, the average Kambi Moto house cost US$ 5,000 (d'Cruz *et al.,* 2014).

We considered to working incrementally, because of limited resources. To start off doing a room on the ground that could take extra two rooms on top. Start off small so you reach many people but allow individuals to contribute the little they have. We didn't want anybody displaced, so those who give up their space for construction would

be absorbed by their neighbours. We avoided clearing the whole settlement. Incrementally, even in terms of rolling out the units on the ground, was a key consideration when we started construction – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

We started negotiating with the structure owners to demolish their structures. We had a lot of problems that time, a lot of people interfered. But Nairobi City Council gave us letter to continue on the ground and they approve. From there we started demolishing five units; we started constructing; more people agreed to demolish their structures. We started with the first site in 2003. In 2005 we completed the first 34 units. After that all people in this settlement joined the group. The first site was a training process, we educated people on how to construct. It was a voluntary job; we just paid skilled labour, unskilled was provided by the community. Second site was 2006, 2007, 28 families got houses and that time I benefited. The next was 2008, 2009, this time Kambi Moto got a lot of problems, inside politics. We constructed 24 units, which were very hard to give to the members, because most people were ready to get houses. The houses are 24 and beneficiaries are more than 24. So how to choose who will get, who will wait was a problem. We stayed for a whole year without issuing them, then we agreed and the beneficiaries for site 3 got their houses – Michael Njuguna, Kambi Moto.

The design process continued throughout construction of each cluster, with community gradually relying less and less on professional support.

The design process was never separate from the construction process. As we went on we kept modifying the design to meet the needs of the community. At some point we noticed issues we had overlooked, like we had not factored in for the physically disabled in the initial design, so we had to modify that. We kept designing, from the start, when we were constructing, and even when they were living in the houses we noticed they were modifying things. We learnt a lot from that – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

The Council MOU provided for some flexibility on meeting official housing standards.

My background was purely mainstream so there was that big jump from applying mainstream standards to an environment where we tinker a lot with some of those standards. This challenged me to not just rely on building standards but to look at how requirements evolve from user needs. Many people came and said, 'This is a ladder, it's not a staircase.' But who defines the staircase? If the user can go through it comfortably and they don't fall, it's a good staircase. The densities are way beyond what is allowed for that area, but our argument was, long before we planned it

those people were living there and in a worse setting. So really what we did was just to improve it, make it better but also create an opportunity for people to live in the same environment they were before. If you can improve it and allow them to live there even in these huge numbers, then that's fine. We expect that they can access services even in such high densities – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

2002–2005: 'Doing small things at scale': federation confidence and growth

I believe in doing small things, not big things – Emmie Erondanga, Miss Koch.

We realised we have been talking of land and shelter for a very long time, there are other immediate issues within the settlement. Housing seems like a very long term dream, but what do we do? People are still queuing just for basic services. Someone asked me what are the things that an ordinary slum dweller wants? And I said just three: shelter, food and water, and a place to shit. Just three basic things. So while you are addressing the bigger issue, you need to address immediate needs. People are still using flying toilets, still queuing 20 minutes every morning for things we take for granted – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

In 2002, Huruma was progressing well and Muungano felt that they now had a successful, proven methodology and set of tools, which they were able to use to design a solution to transform informal settlements. This gave the federation confidence to expand, and from 2002, the movement very quickly went national, with Nairobi and Athi River members spreading the message and establishing savings groups in settlements in many other towns and cities.

Muungano itself was mutating very fast. Themselves. They were the ones spreading the savings more than even the community organisers were getting to those settlements – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya.

The expansion was relatively unplanned and with little NGO support. Essentially, Muungano grew rapidly when it was still in a learning period. The transfusion of the lessons of Huruma to the federation from their professional and technical partners – how the upgrading had been negotiated and designed, the support required to make the SDI tools effective – had not reached a point where Muungano could replicate Huruma. The spread of the movement therefore diluted tools and efforts: savings groups increased quickly and there was insufficient back office power to channel this growth towards complete settlement transformation. Institutional publications from 2004 and 2005 document the support NGO's realisation of its own

diminishing capacity to deal with the spike in demand generated by Muungano's expansion (Pamoja Trust, 2004; 2005).

However, there was a significant upside. Once a savings group has money, many options are open to them and without a strong steer towards upgrading, new groups' energy and resources went into developing many smaller solutions for every conceivable slum scenario. Muungano learned how to approach water, sanitation, drains, health, and loaning for livelihoods or school fees. A second driver can be traced to the aftermath the 2002 national elections. At this time, civil space in Kenya opened up and the contract between state and citizens altered. Muungano was responsive to the new regime's message, that citizens would be supported in their self-help efforts. Even Kenya's GDP growth around then optimistically spiked upwards, a change mirrored in settlements as slum communities started organising for development rather than resistance. For this reason, SDI methodology began to resonate across communities.

The reality is that no Muungano intervention in an informal settlement since has been as transformative as Huruma. There are other reasons, but in part it is because the entire capacity of Muungano and its NGO was dedicated to building Huruma, as well as the efforts of other civil society, technical, and academic partners. A lot happened behind the savings groups to ensure their success: staff from the support NGO spent a lot of time at City Hall and worked out affordability issues; SDI from India and South Africa were often in Nairobi guiding the savings, enumeration, and house modelling; while the community enumerated, their professional support sat up late at night analysing the information collected, making sense of data in order to facilitate the conversations with government. So although Muungano in Nairobi learnt from Huruma, when they were persuaded of the process and spread out across the country they did so without sufficient back office support (Pamoja Trust, 2005).

2004–2008: Doing big things at scale – the railways resettlement plan[7], Kibera and Mukuru

Things have changed, we have moved from the streets, we have gone to the negotiating table. We heard a lot of 'we sold out' because we are sitting now with the enemy. For me it doesn't always have to be a fight. If you look at what we have achieved for all these years by sitting down, negotiating, collecting information, it's more than just moving in the streets and saying 'We don't have' – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

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[7] Officially, the East African Trade and Transport Facilitation Project Relocation Action Plan (RAP) (Government of Kenya, 2005)

Map 8. Kibera informal settlement in Nairobi: 2002 and 2016

2002

2016

KIBERA

Nairobi
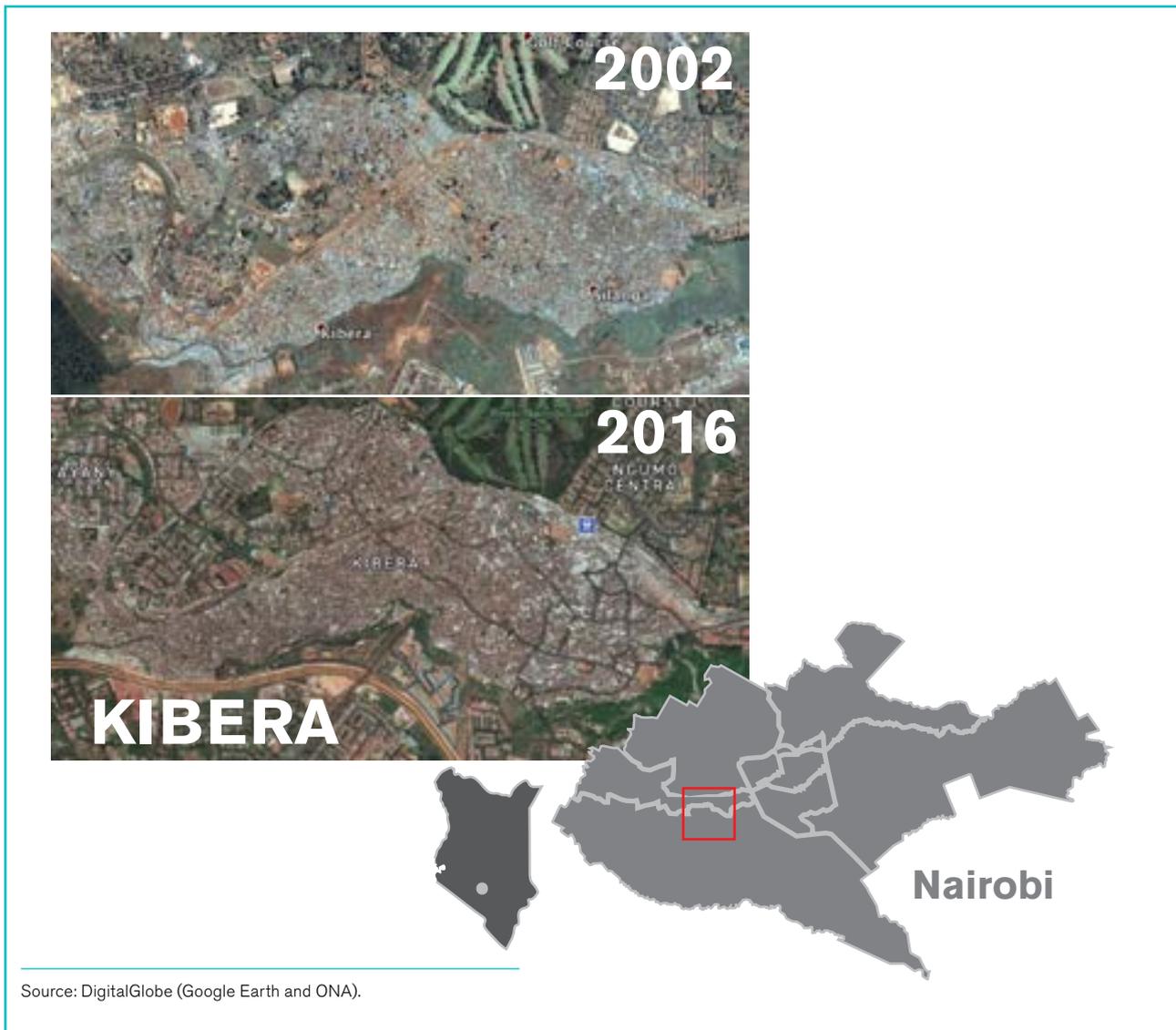
Source: DigitalGlobe (Google Earth and ONA).

Muungano has brought about instrumental changes – the railway resettlement project, for example. Affected persons were to be evicted, but the choice to stand with Muungano enabled the railway dwellers to be given alternative housing. Some have been given the units while other are in the process of receiving. Were it not for Muungano it would not have happened. Muungano also organised for some of our colleagues living along the rail tracks to visit India on an exchange to learn from a similar project. This informed the housing designs as currently constructed to fit many of the beneficiaries. Muungano has really educated the poor – Margaret 'Mama Night' Atieno Okoth, Muungano member, Toi market, Kibera slum.

This project involves the upgrading and resettlement of 9,000 families and businesses along an eleven kilometre stretch of rail line through two of Nairobi's largest informal settlements, Mukuru and Kibera. It is a US$30

million Kenya government and World Bank funded programme to remove families and business sitting on the thirty-metre wide buffer on either side of the railway track and re-house them on its outer ten metres – effectively creating a 20-metre buffer for use by the railways, and improved housing and trading space for the residents. Construction began in Kibera in 2013 and is ongoing, with the first families moving in 2015.

There were notices to evict all people living along the railway buffer in 2004. Following large scale protest by civil society, including Muungano, the federation offered to design a win-win solution. This involved organising an exchange visit to India for the top brass of the Railways Corporation to see how the Indian railways and the SDI alliance had dealt with similar encroachment. Later, Muungano was contracted to develop a Relocation Action Plan (RAP) (Government of Kenya, 2005).

The railways RAP's impact on how the Kenyan state deals with large-scale resettlement of informal communities faced with the threat of eviction has been to enforce the global position that government must bear the cost of displacements of communities on public projects, irrespective of the legality of tenure of those affected. These principles have now been adopted into state policy. Muungano's other key success has been that community participation was positioned at the centre of this large informal settlement upgrading.

The development of the resettlement plan strengthened Muungano's tools of community organisation, community enumeration, and community planning. This in turn would impact on Muungano's capacity to undertake the large-scale city-wide enumerations the federation was conducting around the same time in Kisumu (see later in this section).

The limits of influence

Up to 2004, Muungano had had a degree of influence over government approaches to informal settlements – through protest and then during the formation of KENSUP. In a sense, the railways project signalled the limits of this influence. While Muungano had some sway around instruments and discourse with Nairobi City Council and sections of the Ministry of Housing, this was not reaching into wider government culture or to the executive. The evidence for this is that in 2004, when the Kibera/Mukuru section of the rail network looked to be the main barrier to a private concession of the national railways company – these densely populated segments were forcing trains to slow down to walking speed (AFDB, 2011) – eviction notices were promptly issued to all communities living along those stretches of the line. The Railways Corporation was the first government department confronted with a significant slum situation at a time when upgrading was now thought to be accepted government policy. With the eviction notices, all the progress made in slum agendas and sensitivity to settlements seemed to have been thrown out of the window.

Muungano changes strategy and networks

We knew that the Indian federation had negotiated for the relocation of 20,000 households from the railway reserve and they had worked with their railways. So we went to Kenyan Railways until they got tired of seeing us, 'Why don't you just go to Bombay and see what the Indian railway has done?' We managed to get four professionals from Kenya Railways to go. They met their counterparts, discussed and aired worries, 'If we give our reserve, what happens if we need an expansion? You have given up much of your reserve, what will you do in the future?' And these questions were answered by the Indian professionals. At the end of the day they were persuaded… They

appreciated that they needed to find a human solution to this problem. I think once professionals meet their peers, it's more comforting – they are able to answer technical questions that we cannot. Because when we speak to them, they start from the assumption that we're biased. And I'm sure we are biased! And it is done in an environment that is not tense – we have lots of fun. Railway people have the most fantastic stories. So by the time you come back you've built trust, friendships, and people are more comfortable to speak to you about their fears; you're able to work better. So when we came back, they invited us into their negotiations with the International Finance Corporation [that was financing the concession]. They actually invited us to join them as part of the negotiating team, and we then managed to help negotiate for the relocation of slum dwellers in Kibera – Jane Weru, AMT.

In 2004, the railways project also tested civil society relationships within the movement. Up to then, Muungano had been perceived as the grassroots partner of many civil society organisations protesting forced evictions. The Huruma savings, enumerations, and house modelling had been understood by these CSOs as activities that sustained the movement, but were not fundamentally different to the established protest ideology of the early Muungano years. So in February when the eviction notices appeared along the entire 11km stretch, Muungano and the civil society organisations all returned to fight mode. The next months saw many protests, daily newspaper petitions, legal cases by Kituo Cha Sheria and Hakijamii, and global advocacy from Amnesty International. Eventually, in June, the government indefinitely suspended the eviction.

In August, Muungano took Kenyan railways officials to India and later in 2004, Pamoja Trust was contracted as part of the team that would draw up the RAP for communities living along the railways. These moves were seen as acts of betrayal by the civil society movement around Muungano – with SDI and Pamoja Trust's support, the communities had been co-opted by government.

In a sense, Muungano took a step away from their earlier support network, recognising more promise in the SDI network having arrived at an understanding that the halting of an eviction does not in itself present a solution. The railways project presented an opportunity for the Kenyan alliance to test out its ability to design solutions – in the form of a resettlement plan – that put to use the SDI savings, enumerations, and modelling tools on a far bigger scale than Huruma. These were tools, or rituals, designed to put urban poor communities more in the development driver's seat. Huruma in 2004 was a successful model, but its small scale – about 2,500 families, 300 in Kambi Moto – was not representative of and therefore replicable in many

of the settlements where Muungano was strongest. Like Huruma, Korogocho, Mathare, and Kibera were largely on public land, but with far larger populations requiring a bigger push to build the necessary social capital in the face of far greater resistance – particularly in respect to entitlement as Muungano had already found in Korogocho. (Other slums that are both large and on private land require a still different approach to designing solutions. This is discussed later).

Policy legacy

Things have changed. The forced evictions have lessened and if there is a village that is to be affected by demolition it is usually where there is no other option, or it's in private land, or by the riverside, or maybe the reserved by the government for a different purpose. But there must be a relocation plan, that is one achievement of Muungano. Before they do the demolitions or people are moved there must be a plan for where they will go – Felista Ndunge, Mukuru.

According to the government they were supposed to be evicted, but because of the power of savings of women and the power of the federation, they changed eviction into relocation and educated the communities to understand why they should be relocated from where they are staying. I think it's a very big project, internationally it is recognised when we go to these international platforms. And the railway relocation of Nairobi, it's whereby the member states start to understand that evictions is not a solution, but engagement and talking to the people about relocation. This relocation process has created an impact for federation of Kenya to influence the government of Kenya to understand that working with people brings more results – Rose Molokoane, South African Homeless People's Federation.

Until the railway resettlement, state policy had calculated resettlement compensation based on legitimate tenure. Muungano's involvement in developing the resettlement plan changed this for the project, and eventually at the level of national policy. Now, project-affected people are compensated, regardless of whether they have tenure or not. This is one key achievement of Muungano's involvement in the project.

The World Bank considers this one of its more successful resettlement projects and the Kenyan government also makes much of it (Kenya Railways, nd). Yet, the project also shows that many advancements in policy that touch on slums, and indeed slum upgrading projects, happen only when the slums come in the way of broader city or national improvement programmes, and not purely on the merits of improving slums.

The Bank is undertaking a review of their resettlement policies (World Bank, 2014), which has involved looking at Kenyan experiences and visiting Muungano, and is considering explicitly adopting much of the model used in Kibera, including the principle of community enumeration as a basis for entitlement, that communities can handle grievances, and process of developing the relocation action plan that Muungano defined (personal correspondence, World Bank staff).

Outstanding issues

Of particular note in the Kibera/Mukuru railway RAP was Muungano's designed approach to compensating project-affected persons, which included absentee structure owners, but only nominally. No compensation was earmarked for them because it would effectively double the amounts paid out.

In considering the complex issue of slum upgrading entitlement in the context of what Huchzermeyer calls Nairobi's 'processes of commercialisation [which] have resulted in a complex structure of economic stakeholders who have acquired a degree of social legitimacy to extract profit out of the trade of inadequate basic necessities to the poor' (Huchzermeyer, 2008), Muungano considers this treatment of structure owners who do not actually live in the slums to be a key statement of its principles. The World Bank, however, argues that absentee structure owners are important stakeholders in a slum upgrading project, since on the macro level it is this group that have provided housing stock for up to half Nairobi's population. While Muungano agrees with this principle, our position is that it is not one that could be effected in practice.

2003: Taking a wider perspective

Around 2003, once Muungano was confident of the process through which slums can transform, its theory of change became that the state would be compelled to replicate a strong enough process model evidenced by structures going up in Huruma. Muungano's next role would then be promoting that model to government. This theory gradually changed, catalysed by experiences described in this section, to a realisation that the federation was the model. Muungano itself is the process through which slums could transform and no upgrading model or plan just by existing will change the urban landscape (Pamoja Trust, 2009).

Unfortunately, this insight coincided with Muungano's nationwide growth and corresponding dilution of technical capacity to undertake another Huruma. Still, Muungano began to reason that attention was needed in each and every settlement in the city (ibid.) and over time this then evolved into an approach to designing

solutions that looked beyond the settlement scale to the city as a whole.

In 2002 and 2003 there was a conversation in Muungano about, who we, the slum dwellers, were? We had a huge meeting and all settlements had representation into the enumeration team, so we had this huge team. We said we'll start by profiling the settlements. And that was beautiful – we would all go to one part of the city and then divide ourselves, 'You go to these settlements, you'll go to these'. There were those that were going to record the history, map the boundaries of the settlement, 'security' – marshals that would walk with us and if any contestation happened were there to talk very politely and say, this is what we are doing. It began building the consciousness of communities and everyone started owning this move. Yes, we need to know ourselves, we are tired of evictions, we need to know who we are. Who are we? We're the federation. What's the federation? Muungano wa Wanavijiji. The profiling also became a catalytic activity to bring communities to join and understand our values as a federation, why are we doing what we are doing, why is it important for us to collect data? We kept collecting those profiles almost for two years, in rain and sunshine. There was also a bond happened within the federation: 'People are coming to our settlement to do a profile, there'll come a time when we'll be in their settlements' – Irene Karaja, MuST.

Muungano has now taken an inventory of Kenya's slums every five years, starting in 2003 in Nairobi, in 2007 adding Kisumu and Mombasa, and including five full counties in 2013 (Pamoja Trust, 2003, 2009; MuST, 2014). In the 2012–13 city-wide enumeration, Muungano's thinking was different and more evolved: change wasn't happening fast enough, and what was required was not only an enumeration and intervention in every settlement, but also a city-scale intervention. This was influenced by the launch of SDI's *Know Your City* platform, which has helped frame the thinking since.

2005–6: City-scale enumerations in Kisumu

In 2005 we started city-wide enumerations [in Kisumu]. All informal settlements were enumerated under the 'Cities Without Slums' programme. We started seeing a huge gap in services, in infrastructure, so we started advocating for services, for inclusivity, for voice and space for the people.

There used to be a lot of bilharzia and cholera: we wrote to the municipal council of Kisumu and told them that Nyalenda [a slum in Kisumu] is a time bomb. We started advocating for the trunking of the sewer line up to that place and for the adoption of new technologies for toilets – Erickson Sunday, Kisumu.

Cities Without Slums was a global initiative launched by Cities Alliance in 1999, with slum projects in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, and a focus on secondary cities (UN-HABITAT, 2005). In 2004, through SDI, Muungano became involved in the Africa pilot in Kisumu.

Muungano was moving quickly out of Nairobi, but all its projects were still Nairobi-based. A few Muungano savings groups were emerging in Kisumu, and the federation now seized the opportunity to understand a new city and engage with its communities and government. In cities, scale relates not only the physical size of the city and the population; with size comes complexity. While Kisumu had many problems, secondary towns can afford better access and influence to more senior decision makers. In Nairobi, Muungano competes with many powerful forces, and there is less room for slums on the agenda.

The Kisumu enumeration and social mapping took place in 2005 and 2006. It was a huge exercise involving 800 community enumerators, counting 44,000 households in all slums in the city, and essentially creating a city-wide federation in one sweep. Nairobi staff and community members temporarily relocated to Kisumu. The first professional planners joined the support NGO, and planning students from Nairobi University were also brought in to boost GIS capacity. As a movement, Kisumu represented the growing up of the Kenyan federation as an affiliate that could contribute to SDI's global agenda: proof of capacity over learning experience.

Until this, Muungano had defined, understood, and undertaken enumerations in response to a particular community's threat or opportunity. *Cities Without Slums* raised the stakes in regards to the quality and quantity of data the federation needed to produce – requiring maps, databases, and a full city-wide enumeration, rather than just profiling (for the difference, see Box 5). Kisumu was at a different scale, honing the federation's skills and confidence in enumerating and GIS technology, and involving deep reflection on how to organise an enumeration and then produce data (Karanja, 2010).

Map 9. Mapping of Nyalenda informal settlement as part of Muungano's Cities Without Slums enumeration of Kisumu
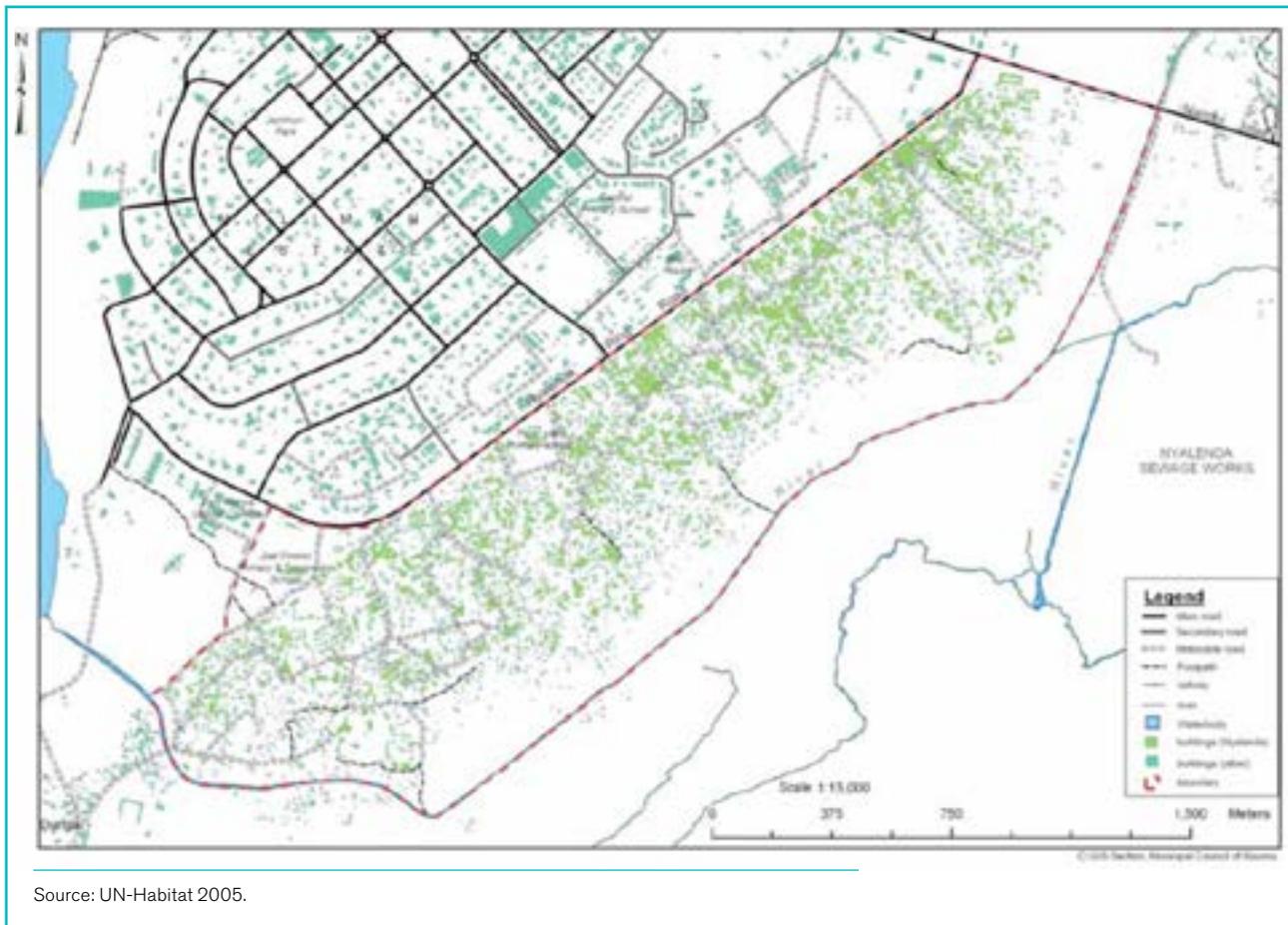
Source: UN-Habitat 2005.

BOX 7: BUILDING CONNECTIONS WITH ACADEMIA – THE MUUNGANO LINK TO UNIVERSITIES

Muungano have teachers in the villages that at times are consulted even by top lecturers and students in higher learning institutions like Nairobi University. They come for research and we share with them not only about our lives here but also how it is important to have a harmonious co-existence among the community – Peter Chege, Kambi Moto.

In 1995, the work of Peter Ngau, a Nairobi university lecturer, showed that 50 per cent of the city's population lived in informal settlements occupying 5 per cent of its land (Ngau, 1995). At this time Kenyan academia was largely critical of the fledging loud efforts of civil society to address urban informality and questioned what poor communities could contribute to solving the city's problems. Nevertheless, Ngau's figures were taken up and helped catalyse the emerging social movement in Nairobi against forced evictions from slum land.

Later, Muungano's affiliation to SDI brought community enumeration to its set of strategies and

collecting data about slums became a way to build relationships with city and national government. By 2004, Muungano was regularly visiting the Ministry of Lands and Housing to present community data, while in parallel, the ministry's slum upgrading programme had started developing a slum GIS database for Nairobi. GIS mapping was new and the members of the Kenyan alliance often found themselves in the ministry GIS lab working out how to share data with the interns brought in from Nairobi University's planning school.

I believe residents ought to be empowered to know settlements better than we who do not live in them. And here comes an opportunity, through [Muungano], who came over to the office to find out what we were doing. From that moment a relationship was cultivated between the peoples' federation, Muungano, the government and other partners in terms of understanding our settlements better. And that's the best way to

continues

begin developing solutions to the settlements – Musyimi Mbathi, University of Nairobi.

Also in 2004, Cities Alliance launched Cities Without Slums, and through SDI's Muungano was selected to undertake citywide enumeration for the programme's African pilot in Kisumu (Karanja, 2010). Needing to deliver GIS maps of Kisumu's slums but lacking capacity, Muungano also turned to planning students; the project's scale required engaging the entire Nairobi University undergraduate planning class of 2005. While the planning faculty remained disinterested, the students were keen for real field experience. Some years later, five of these students would be employed as city planners in five cities where Muungano works.

In 2006, two planning students joined Muungano's support NGO as community enumeration programme officers. In SDI orthodoxy, communities not professionals were supposed to collect data, but SDI affiliates in India and South Africa were also engaging with academic institutions, affirming the links the Kenyans were exploring.

In 2007, Muungano provided small grants to students who addressed slum topics and the planning faculty got more involved in the way the students developed their research, which was supported by the Rockefeller Foundation and proposed by the chair of the Nairobi University Planning Department, Peter Ngau.

Also in 2007, a team from University of California, Berkley visited Muungano in Nairobi as part of a scoping study on community-generated data practices. There were two backdrops to the visit: Muungano in Mathare slum was in negotiations with the city over their water supply, for which Muungano was delivering a long-term water reticulation plan; and discussions Muungano was participating in between the government and World Bank for the US$ 300 million slum infrastructure fund (KISIP), for which Muungano was arguing that community enumeration data should be used for project baselines. In both cases, working with the universities could legitimate community data in the eyes of the government. With funding from Rockefeller, Berkeley and Nairobi planning schools with Muungano held a joint urban studio to plan water systems for a cluster of homes in Mathare and the city water utility installed water in the slum (WSTF, 2010). Unfortunately, KISIP was designed to work only with private sector consultants, effectively excluding civil society, communities, and universities, but the collaboration still influenced the final KISIP terms of reference.

Between 2010 and 2012, the partnership between Berkeley, Nairobi University, and Muungano grew, with successively ambitious urban studios that undertook zonal planning in Mathare with community groups; now, the current focus is in Mukuru (Nairobi Studio, nd).

We now know how to plan ourselves, we have those skills. It is only the papers that we don't have – we have not gone to planning school, but with the help of Professor Ngao we are community planners, we can plan our community very well if given a chance. We have come so far. We have learnt a lot. Leadership skills we have learnt a lot – and not we, I. I have learnt a lot – Emily Wangari, Mathare.

The connection with universities has lent Muungano different and powerful access and advocacy. As collaboration continued in Kenya, SDI and Rockefeller facilitated exchange visits with universities in Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, aimed at encouraging slum federations and national public universities to work together. The African Association of Planning Schools has now adopted the community/university planning studio model as a key element of their mandate (AAPS, nd). SDI federations have also adopted studios as a tool that picks up from community enumerations, allowing slum communities to participate in planning whilst sensitising and educating future generations of planners and city administrators on informality.

Muungano has a direct connection with the communities. In essence we are negotiating, we are dealing with, we are working with communities. If the people in the settlements see us working with the Muungano, then they will believe in us, they are ready to accept us. Muungano has equally benefited from students and professors who have keen interest in working within the settlements. We have Muungano and affiliate organisations taking up one or two of our very good students to support them. We as professors have had opportunities to work with Muungano side by side, in research projects for example. This action-oriented way of working with Muungano has helped improve learning experiences within the universities, because you see a good way where practice influences, impacts upon teaching or the theoretical part. And theory also informing Muungano work – Musyimi Mbathi, University of Nairobi.

2007–2009: Planning for services in Mathare

Along with Kibera, Mukuru, and Korogocho, Mathare is one of Nairobi's largest slum areas. Situated in north-eastern Nairobi in the valley left by a closed quarry, between the rivers Mathare and Gitathuru. Mathare is home to around 200,000 people, although the most recent government census put it at 80,000 (Corburn *et al.*, 2012). In reality, the slum is a series of 13 contiguous settlements, some on public land, some on privately owned land, and each with a distinct history and demographics at times in conflict with each other. It is therefore not one community, but 13 communities living side by side. Both the water provision and zonal planning covered all these villages for the provision of services.

Probably Nairobi's oldest standing informal settlement, in colonial times Mathare valley was where the Mau Mau resistance hid. As an informal settlement, it wasn't supposed to exist, but the city needed to be built and for this it needed workers and a quarry – Mathare valley is the remains of a quarry and the people of Mathare built Nairobi using stone from their settlement. It has a long tradition of resistance and violence, with the complex socio-political forces that make slum upgrading a sensitive issue in Nairobi more than usually present in Mathare. Mathare residents were active in Muungano's early years, later dropping away with the reorientation towards savings, the initial Muungano 45 leaders from Mathare not recognising the utility of resistance through savings for their purposes. From 2001 to 2008, there were few people from Mathare in Muungano and little federation structure in the settlement.

Map 10. Mathare informal settlement in Nairobi: 2002 and 2016

Source: DigitalGlobe (Google Earth and ONA).
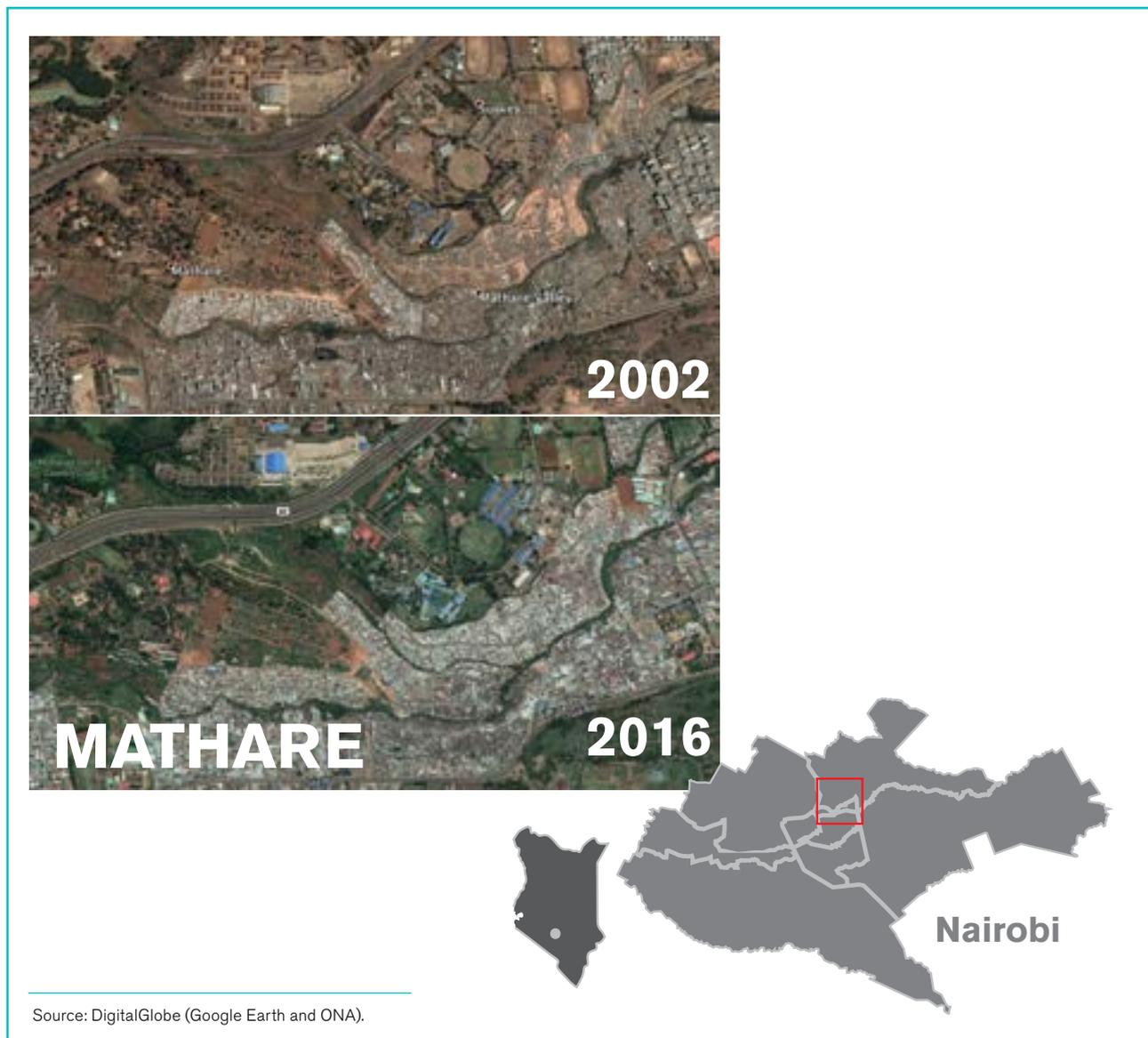
Formal water provision

In October 2007, the state, in conjunction with utility companies, carried out a mass disconnection of services as part of a violent operation to root out the *Mungiki* – gangs controlling roads and the illegal provision of water and electricity in Mathare. The disconnections were indiscriminate, leaving 26,000 households without water (Nyambura, 2015). They led to mass demonstrations by residents and politicians (it was an election year). When Mathare residents came to Muungano's central office, saying 'we need to do something', for the last three days the entire settlement had been denied water. Muungano went with the residents to the water company, which was eventually compelled to provide free standpipes as a temporary solution.

Dialogue with the Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company (NWSC) revealed that one of its biggest problems in the area was theft and spillage from illegal connections. The 'Mathare water project intervention' therefore began in 2008, a partnership between the NWSC, Muungano (through Pamoja Trust) and the Water Services Trust Fund (a state body that financed service provision in underserved areas), aiming to facilitate clean formal water supply into Mathare (Nyambura, 2015). For this, Muungano developed and piloted a community engagement model that was rolled out across Mathare. Initially, Muungano had little structure on the ground, and so had to begin by establishing residents' associations to support the communities to engage with the intervention (with the benefit of history, it was considered that immediately starting savings groups might complicate the issue; these came later). These associations then did something interesting – they offered to remove the informal infrastructure themselves, as a sign of good faith, generating a lot of goodwill with the state. Both sides worked fast, and by 2012, 38 water kiosks stood in 11 villages, with 29km of trunk water pipe extended into the settlement. Nyambura, (2015) is the account of a water company employee's experiences planning, installing, managing, and billing for formal water services in Mathare's chaotic context – competing interests, opaque governance structures, landlord-tenant conflict, violence, crime, and evictions by fire for land grabs.

After the fire burns, the area chairman would come: 'This is the [eviction] notice. Don't rebuild'. We used to just build with burnt iron sheets – temporary, you will renovate later – because when you leave, somebody would come and put a permanent house and leave you out. So after we put out the fire, with the materials that are left you just built, so that you don't leave the land bare, so that nobody can come and start building. We had so many fights… There

was a woman who came and brought some trucks with building materials. She said, 'I'm giving you two days so that you can leave and so I build my permanent house'. So after she left, we told some people to come with sacks so that they can carry the materials. Down here we have a river, so we carried the materials and dropped them in the river, so when the woman comes back with the police, no one will be found with the materials. At night we took the materials, disposed them in the river and when she came after two days she found no building materials to build and no one to take to court or police station. I think she has spent so much. We have never seen her again – Emily Wangari, Mathare.

The residents' associations morphed into planning teams that assisted in the development of a zonal plan; an infrastructure plan developed in from 2009–2012 by a team of community planners and academic partners (see Box 7). Rather than responding to conditions within the settlement, the plan sought to integrate Mathare with the city by demonstrating how trunk infrastructure (water, sewer, electricity, transport etc.) could be extended and laid out in the slum (Corburn *et al.,* 2012). It has since formed the basis for installation of a trunk sewer line, reticulation of water trunks, and the opening up of access roads in Mathare.

Gradually, Muungano built a settlement-level network and then saving schemes that ran alongside these teams. Mathare is known for frequent fire outbreaks used as a means to evict residents by plot owners or land grabbers and, as a result, residents were very cautious about agendas that touched on security of tenure (Nyambura, 2015), but were more than willing to engage with Muungano on issues of water and infrastructure.

One of the major lessons for Muungano through these Mathare processes of water and zonal planning around infrastructure has been that organising to deliver land reform can unearth deeply rooted divisions and significant contradictions in settlements, and can therefore be a difficult conversation to instigate. While both Mathare interventions had their points of conflict, organising around services can be an efficient intervention – quicker, with clear and immediate benefits, and less a source of contention between competing interests such as structure owners and tenants – because it is less likely to compel a community to deal with its demons.

Communities have a lot of dynamics within themselves. For example, such powerful people controlling electricity, water, roads in the settlements. It's amazing that in other places we take for granted access to water and electricity. Yes, basic services, but not in the settlements. In the settlements we

have 'water brokers', people who decide who gets a connection, who does not. People who distribute electricity from the main power lines to you and I, and not anybody who can engage in this business despite the fact that we know people have a right to access them. Very powerful people in the settlements who decide who builds, for example, a kiosk on the road side. Not anybody can do that. You need to pay. You need permission from the 'brokers'. People who decide the cost of land and where you can actually put up a structure in the settlements. Those are intricate ways that people live within the settlements. If we did not use a people's approach, we would not know any of this… and I believe that is one way of coming up with real solutions to the settlements. There is so much that goes on behind the scenes that we do not know – Musyimi Mbathi, University of Nairobi.

2008–2009: Thinking about individual connections – Mathare and Kisumu

Through the 80s, 90s, and 2000s, provision of services to settlements largely meant communal – communal toilets, communal water taps, and so on. The above engagement in Mathare created a shift in how the federation saw services.

We came together, negotiated with Nairobi Water, and they started an [individual connections] pilot programme in Kosovo [a village in Mathare]. When you look at our settlements Kosovo have managed themselves well and the houses are well managed, but in [Kiamutesya], things are more mixed, so we started with Kosovo. The project worked. Then they came to our village and the other villages and built us water kiosks. We had then to advocate more, so that they will connect water in households. Government are still delaying, but we do have the water kiosks – Emily Wangare, Mathare.

Map 11. Mapping informal settlement land ownership as part of Mathare zonal planning in 2010–11
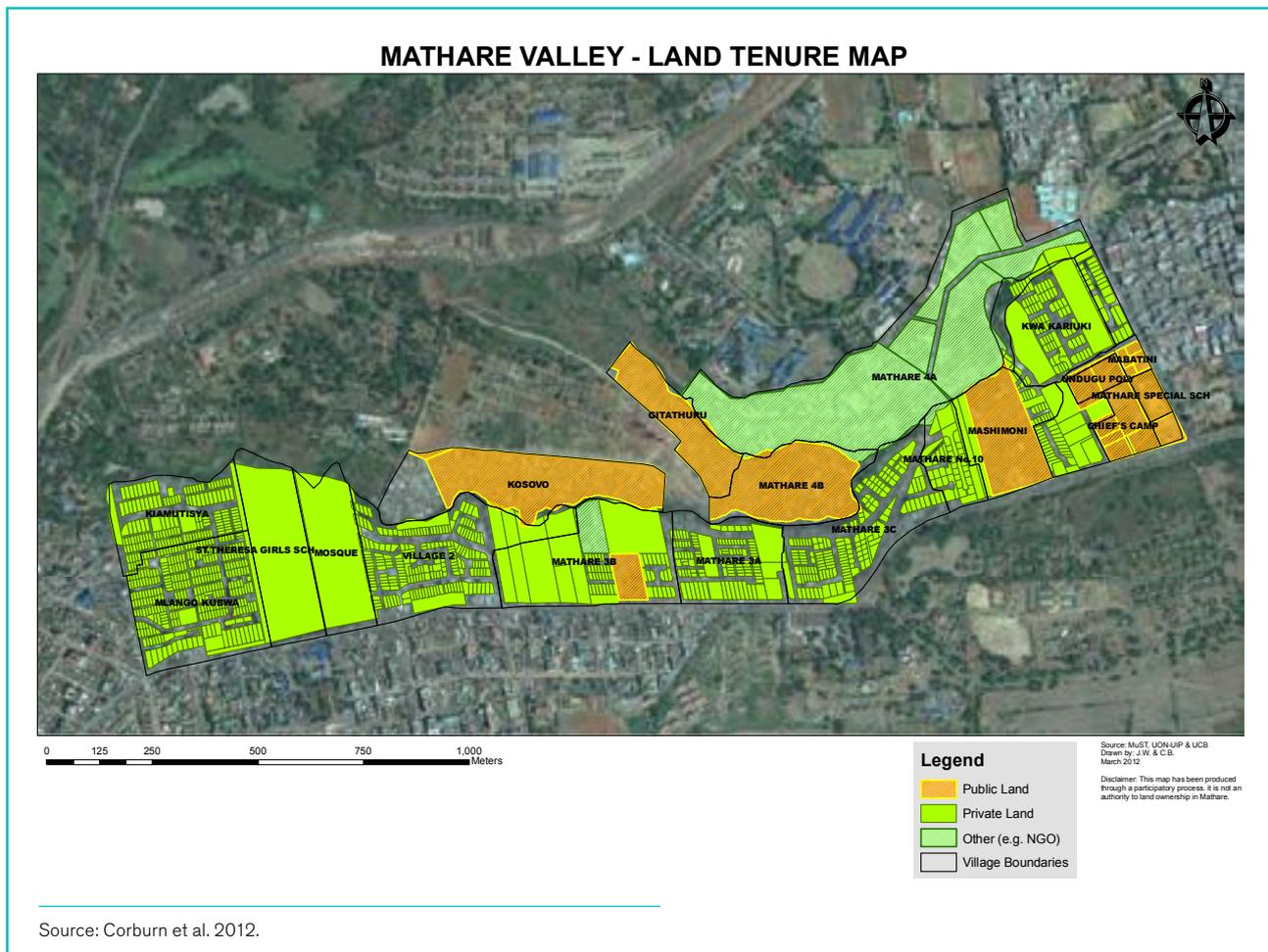
Source: Corburn et al. 2012.

At the opening of a toilet in Kiamutisya village in Mathare, the community reception was oddly muted despite the popularity of the German Ambassador who was launching it. Later the residents explained to Muungano that the toilets were only functional until 6pm – after that, women didn't go because it was in a dangerous enclosed place. Mothers stopped giving water to their children at 4pm so they did not have to go to the toilet at night. So, in Kiamutisya, a new communal toilet was not wholly an achievement.

Muungano's expanding dialogue with the utilities was touching options for metering slums. Many things were pointing to individual connections in Mathare, and so when the water supply intervention reached Kosovo village, it was a mix of infrastructure agreed with the residents, including pipeline extension, water kiosks, and a pilot for individual household connections (the original proposal by the water company had been to just extend pipelines along the periphery of the settlement (WSTF, 2010)).

The World Bank's Water and Sanitation Programme was adopting a similar position around this time (for example, World Bank, 2008) and early discussions were underway around the formation of KISIP. Much of Muungano's focus and activities related to infrastructure at this time, and it was becoming apparent that the emphasis of its advocacy around service provision needed to change from communal to individual connections.

The lessons of Mathare transferred to Muungano in Kisumu, where a group picked up on the idea of individual connections and successfully negotiated with their water utility to act as a 'delegated water management system' for distributing water to individual slum households. The utility laid trunk pipes as far as the entrance to the settlements, where the federation had built a shed to house around 120 water meters for individual households, then the last short stretch of piping from the meters to houses was financed through AMT with donor funding. The community group monitored meters and collected payment from households, buying water in bulk and retailing at a higher price, which was still lower than that which formal settlements were charged. By 2009, they had seven trunk lines to different settlements and were running a tidy business, and the enterprise is still going strong with the Kisumu federation as one of utility's most efficient service providers (see, for example Castro, 2009). Sadly, however, the savings groups involved have closed their doors to new members and so the projects, while brilliant, do not build critical mass and the groups involved have less interest in the housing agenda; successes come with risks.

2012–2013: City-wide solutions – Mombasa land use zoning

The coast [is] different. It was invaded by settlers much earlier than the rest of Kenya – Arabs and Portuguese slave traders – so the experience of subjugation is much older there. The British didn't colonise the coast in the same way as the rest of Kenya because already the coast belonged to the Sultan of Zanzibar. The Sultan and the British did some administrative agreement on how to govern the area – rights to land and land tenure was entirely the Sultan's business as the owner of the [coastal] strip. Lots of indigenous people had run away for fear of being captured as slaves; by the time they were coming back a lot of lands they owned had been appropriated by outsiders. Because of Islamic land tenure they were allowed to settle, use the land. You live on your land but you don't own it. So you can only do temporary investments because the land does not belong to you. People there are struggling for citizenship at much more basic level than they are struggling for it elsewhere – Patrick Ochieng, Ujamaa Centre, Mombasa.

This joint power-sharing agreement between the Sultan of Oman and the British essentially dispossessed all the indigenous populations along Kenya's coast. At independence it was agreed that a strip of land six miles inland from the entire coastline belonged to the Sultan. The Kenyan government set in motion a process to buy this back, and these lands were essentially then transferred to Kenya's elite. During this process, indigenous communities were being squashed into increasingly smaller spaces and many became slums.

Mombasa only joined Muungano through savings groups after 2002, but in the 1990s, Kituo cha Sheria and others were very engaged in land challenges along this coastal strip. Some of Kenya's first significant civil society concerns over land issues were built around Mombasa, although with little resolution.

They say that we have houses without land. How can that be possible, did we build our houses on air? A very strange case – Mama Noor, Muungano member, Kisauni, Mombasa.

Broadly, Muungano members in Mombasa are more development-oriented than activists, seeking technical solutions, and therefore much of Muungano's impact has been around savings, credit, and livelihoods, with little significant resolution to essentially political land issues. In 2008 and 2009, the federation in Mombasa and along the coastal strip grew in size and ramped up activities, conducting a city-wide profiling exercise, implementing programmes funded by the World Bank and the European Union, and attracting around 600 new savings schemes in Kwale, Mombasa, and Malindi (Pamoja Trust, 2008).

Muungano has helped us build a strong relationship with the government. We can easily meet the governor, MP and they are fully engaging Muungano and even the area chief. Selling the Muungano agenda to the government has been very easy – Mama Mariam, Muungano member, Kilifi, coastal region.

Muungano has had a consistently positive, longstanding relationship with their local government in Mombasa. Consequently, land issues have always remained on the table, and when following devolution Mombasa's new county government began to develop an integrated strategic plan for the city, while this focused on economic growth and tourism there was also significant sensitivity around problems of informality.

When the new devolved system of government was introduced, we found that being in Muungano opened up a lot of opportunities. We had mapped our settlement and enumerated ourselves. The data from these profiles help our advocacy for land tenure in the new government structures. In this way Muungano has helped us get recognition – Amadi Sudi, Muungano member, Matopeni slum, Mombasa.

In 2012, Mombasa County approached Muungano. They wanted to recognise informal settlements in their area and see how they fitted into the city plan, but they had limited technical capacity. One of the federation's support professionals was seconded to convert the entire county into GIS format, using Muungano's enumeration data and county land ownership records. This also provided the federation itself with a huge amount of information, including the landowners of all 99 informal settlements in Mombasa. Mombasa County used the new GIS land use map for zoning, creating a new zonal category of 'high-density low cost residential areas' and applying this to most of the land on which the county's informal settlements were situated (Simiyu, 2015). This was a big shift. The zoning protected all informal settlements, which regardless of land ownership could thereafter only be for 'high-density low cost residential' uses. The county's message was that, while complex layered land ownership interests in the city meant it was unable to resolve Mombasa slums, it was essentially a 'slum friendly city'.

While Mombasa's land use plan acknowledged informal settlements as informal settlements, it didn't address tenure issues and these continue to be a problem. But the case shows one approach to city-wide solutions, and what can be done by a receptive county government with expanded powers.

2013–2016: Unforeseen gentrification through state-led upgrading – the Kenya Informal Settlements Infrastructure Programme

Government-led slum upgrading initiatives take a lot of process because of bureaucracy and the people involved. It is not a community driven, but rather, sort of policy driven, unlike Muungano's approach, where the community actually looks around and sees their own need, and develops their own solutions from what they have seen as their needs. The government come and just assess needs and develop their own government-funded solutions. For communities, identifying their own needs and their own solutions [is important] – Abdi Mohamed, Korogocho.

The Kenya Informal Settlements Improvement Project (KISIP) was initiated in 2011 and targets 15 municipalities (World Bank, 2016b). It is a US$165 million programme funded by the World Bank (US$100m), Sida (US$10m), the French Development Authority (US$45m) and the Kenyan government (US$10m). Unlike the longer term but rather opaque KENSUP, KISIP has a short term focus (five years, recently extended to seven), and greater and more transparent accountability to its funders.

KISIP aims to 'improve living conditions in informal settlements in selected municipalities in Kenya by enhancing security of tenure and improving infrastructure based on plans developed in consultation with the community' (World Bank, 2016b). However, recent project documentation reveals that, while successful investments have been made in many communities, targets relating particularly to tenure security have been revised substantially downwards (World Bank, 2016b), from 71,000 'people benefiting from improved tenure security' to 25,000 due to 'slow progress so far in distributing ownership documents to residents of informal settlements'. At the same time, targets for 'people benefiting from improved infrastructure and services' have increased fivefold, from 200,000 to 1 million.

It would seem that infrastructure upgrading in informal settlements – roads, services, etc. – is progressing without parallel improvements in tenure security. In the highly-commercialised context of Kenyan slums (Nairobi in particular), this is a recipe for gentrification, as state-funded improvements in slum conditions will be used by structure owners as justification for raising rent, displacing poor tenants through 'market-led evictions'. Indeed, Muungano's observations on

the ground in Nairobi are that sites of state investment through KISIP have seen immediate value capture by the market. Many of the structures along road built through Kibera very quickly converted to permanent materials and densified to two or three storeys. In Mukuru, Muungano has mapped processes whereby structure owners consolidate slums into tenements following infrastructure improvements. The new homes attract a higher-income set of tenants, displacing the poorer people who were there. This is development, certainly, but lacking protections for the population intended to be helped. Such projects change the physical positively, but devastate the community.

KISIP, a national project with a city-wide approach to upgrading, was very much in Muungano's interest. During the negotiation and design phases, Muungano went to many World Bank meetings with the government and in 2009–2010 created a fact sheet for every Nairobi slum – allowing the state to build its case for KISIP based on data Muungano had provided. Working closely with academic partners, the Kenyan alliance dedicated much energy to the programme's formation. But latterly engagement with KISIP has lessened, a key hurdle being the state's chosen procurement route for implementation, which is only eligible to private sector consultants, blocking any significant involvement of non-profits and CSOs.

Still, KISIP's methodology starts with a community enumeration, and as with KENSUP we consider that one of Muungano's major achievements over its 20 years has been to embed the practice of community enumeration as the basis for upgrading into government practice. The programme has also completed many projects and, in a sense, brought significant infrastructure improvements to many settlements – water, sanitation and drainage, roads, and street lighting. In many ways it has delivered what it was conceptualised to do, but outcomes have been far more unpredictable, with much gentrification and reaffirming of negative community structures of governance. Could this have been foreseen?

> We had to do profiling in Nairobi as a whole: where the services like toilets, where we dump things, places where we can get water and so forth. So when the government realised that we have that kind of information, they used the information to take to the ground to work. What they did was just to verify if the information is correct and they found that we were excellently okay. They used the information and we are very proud of that. In fact, they should be paying or something, because they are using our sweat. If you use somebody's documents, it is good to at least

to give back, so that that person will be motivated – Henry Otunge, Korogocho.

Do you have SECs in your community?[8]

An ongoing entry point for Muungano, in a sense a side benefit of KISIP's configuration, has been the many federation members involved in the programme's community governance structures, or Settlement Executive Committees' (SEC). The alliance's observation has been that, KISIP has frequently started in an area by selecting settlements to work in where Muungano is strongest – in Huruma, Mathare, Mombasa, Kisumu, etc. – targeting low hanging fruit provided by Muungano's work.

> One coordinator for KISIP once said to me, that after the KISIP experience the coin finally dropped with us where you guys were coming from – we had no idea it was that hard. KISIP's unwritten intervention strategy is to identify where Muungano is and build a SEC around them. It was such a change, they were such technocrats when they started out – Jack Makau, SDI Kenya.

We argue that this is because the only places where KISIP's project goals can really be achieved are where the community is already organised. Muungano interventions around savings groups aim at creating an alternative governance that will organise for the kind of transformation that benefits everyone in a settlement. However, in general, Kenyan slum governance structures are arranged chiefly to protect slum real estate and the interests of structure owners. Upgrading to benefit all is usually not in the interest of such leaders, since it distorts the captured market. Essentially, if traditional slum governance structures have little interest in upgrading that includes tenure security (as KISIP was initially designed), and Muungano aims to create an alternative that does, when KISIP launched, organised Muungano communities formed the bulk of slum communities willing to engage with the project (notwithstanding that it includes both tenants and structure owners). And KISIP's poor record on tenure security gives weight to this.

> Upgrading has a lot to do with negotiating, yes with the community, but also with another level of political leaders within the communities. These are the people who have innovated the art of providing housing stock and no form of upgrading can be permitted if you don't go through them. Tenants are the ones who suffer when there's lack of sanitation or water or all other things, but for you to deliver to the wider community there's this critical level that you have to go to. It's hard for tenants to go and tell the landlords,

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'This is what we want', because what the landlord will see is an opportunity to increase rent. How do you bring in infrastructure without necessarily making it too expensive for communities? When I look at some of the settlements that government worked in and provided infrastructure, it was always the settlements that were very easy to work in – Irene Karanja, MuST.

The SEC is KISIP's intervention unit of governance and community vehicle for upgrading, a model originally defined by KENSUP to sit above other community structures. It consists of around 10 to 15 representatives of various interests in the community – the chief, a social services officer, representatives of religious organisations, NGOs, owners of structures, tenants, youth, disabled people, women, etc., and is intended to bring the voices of all groups together to make decisions on upgrading. It also incorporates stakeholder interests of civil society organisations and the provincial administration. This model's structure – and in particular where it locates accountability – is fundamental to the difference between the government's and Muungano responses to designing solutions to informality. Over time, the SEC has become focused on vertical accountability to government, becoming more a government vehicle in a particular settlement than a community voice. Muungano's alternative is the broader based savings scheme, with no barrier to entry apart from to settlement outsiders, and little proscribed structure in terms of size or membership (which usually evolves over time) – these, for all their deficiencies, are designed for horizontal accountability to the settlement.

Gentrification is a constant threat to slum interventions in Kenya, and in essence KISIP has the same problem as KENSUP: it focuses on project frameworks without building the capacity of communities to be at the centre of these projects. Muungano's theory of defence against gentrification could be described as 'providing incremental ownership rights', the idea of occupation by a community rather than individuals sitting along a continuum of ownership, strengthening claim on the land.

For example, in an ongoing engagement in Kiandutu slum in Thika, residents conducted an enumeration early in the process, further solidifying collective identity as an organised community. The next step has been a successful project, in this case building communal toilets, requiring council approval – recognition from local authorities that communities have a right to water and sanitation in the place they are living. From there, Muungano has begun a two to three year planning process for upgrading, which will involve many people and a significant voluntary investment of time. All this builds further ownership, so that when the land title is eventually given, both individuals and the community have a strong sense of ownership, serving to check gentrification, at least for a while.

These are long processes that generate strong ownership. But they are very difficult at scale, which immediately diminishes this sort of ownership – a production line providing land rights without sufficient ownership.

In Kambi Moto, only a handful of the 100 units built have been sold, by people 'moving upwards', not returning to poverty as is often the case where gentrification occurs. Land is held communally with individual leases, so in several cases when people have got into debt or fallen ill with medical bills, the community takes control to prevent them selling up, which might mean temporarily moving their neighbour back to a slum, renting out the house, and managing their house repayments from the rental income.

If you look in way that Kambi Moto was done, it never focused on grand achievements. It just focused on very winnable things. The first thing you see us do is a single house. No slum upgrading has ever started with a single house. They want to roll out many houses. But in Kambi Moto when we broke ground it was a single house – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

## 2012–2016: Mukuru: designing solutions on private land

In Nakuru settlements, the land is not state owned but private. If you come up with an idea about fighting for ownership rights most people will not back you up because they feel that although this is a very deplorable place they are living according to what they can afford. Private land is a challenge to develop because of the resistance of the people living in it. If you propose roads be built so that there be easy movement, street lights be put in place or electricity extended to reach the people, they rebel fearing that this would lead to loss of land or increase in rent – Sammy Njoroge, Muungano member, Nakuru.

The Mukuru belt of slums forms one of Nairobi's largest informal settlements, 690,000 people on 500 acres of mainly privately owned industrial land. Muungano has worked closely with communities there for many years. Mukuru is extremely overcrowded, with inadequate, expensive, inaccessible basic services, and constant threats of eviction due to land contestation (Muungano wa Wanavijiji/Akiba Mashinani Trust, 2015).

Muungano's early protest and activism played a part in slowing evictions across Nairobi. But, subsequent change it has affected in the city has been mainly on publicly-owned land – Korogocho, Huruma, Mathare, Kibera – despite the fact that the majority of slum land is in private hands (ibid., 2015), for which KENSUP, KISIP, and diverse civil society efforts are yet to generate any real solutions.

Map 12. Mukuru informal settlement in Nairobi: 2002 and 2016
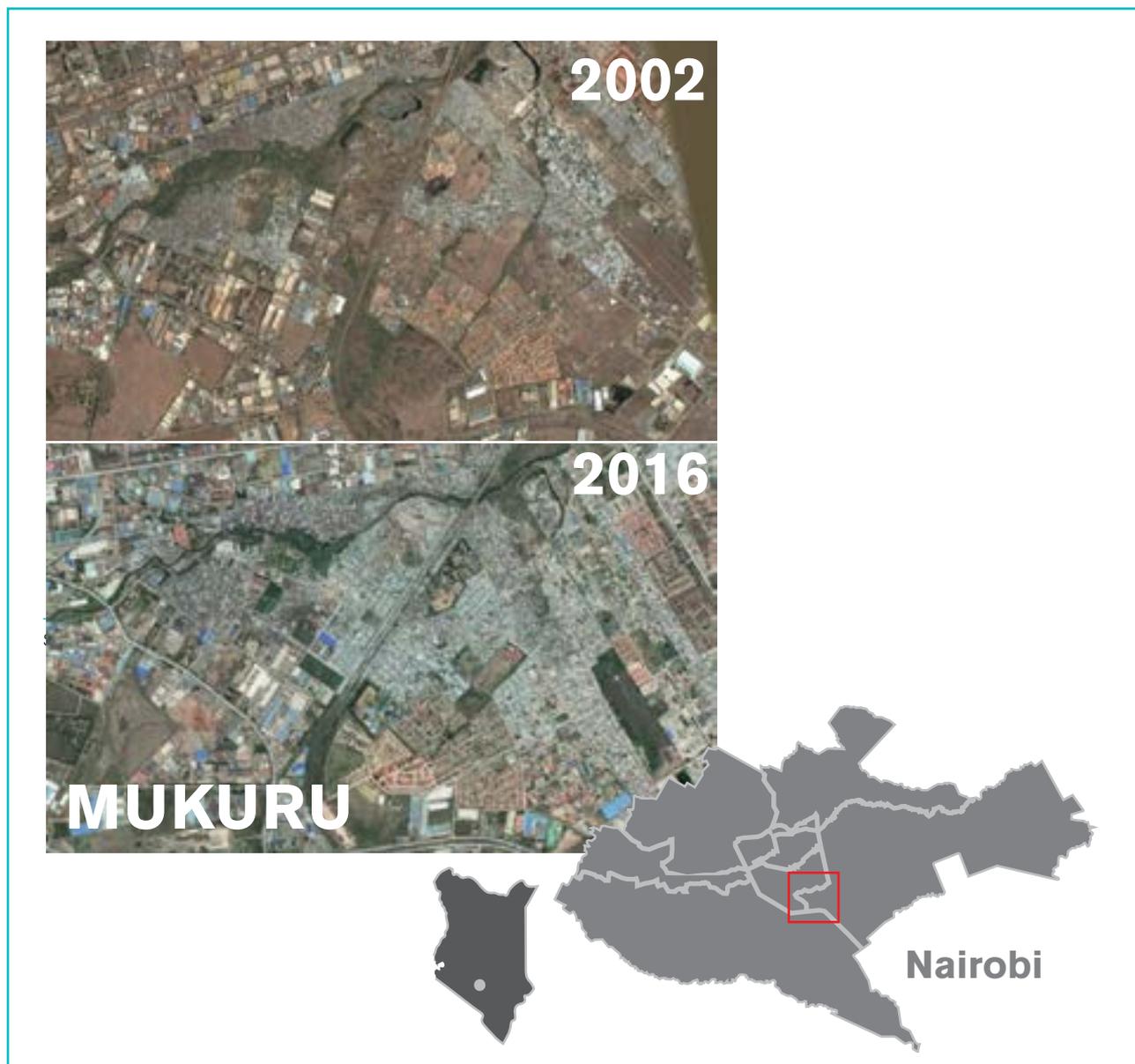
Muungano's current focus on private land and on Mukuru is therefore an attempt at solutions at scale, and for land that is more contentious and also more representative of slum land in the country. The problems of private land and the new state institutions needed to tackle them are the new site of Muungano's co-production process, and the beginning of a new cycle of contestation, engagement, and negotiation for the federation.

It should be clear by this point that opportunism cuts through all Muungano's actions. Its overarching aim is to position itself to deal with current challenges, whatever these are. In keeping, the starting point that inspired the whole subsequent focus on private land was in 2011 when communities from Mukuru faced with evictions started coming to the federation office.

We had received 20 evictions notices within Mukuru and it was imminent, [grabbers] had started moving in. How do we get these people angry enough not to move, to start fighting these evictions? First thing we did was to organise. We got documentation, a legal team went to court, we got an order that says everything stays as it is. In the meantime, we started mobilising, organising, creating awareness. We worked with the media, youth, religious organisations, and with communities, to groundswell to a point where if you were to call for a demonstration, people came out. We did a research on who owns Mukuru. We have disrupted auctions; we have stormed into offices of these land grabbers. When we were serving them court papers to appear, we used to mobilise 500 people just to present. If we could have just kept quiet and left it at that, Mukuru now will be

Figure 9. Eviction notice (left) and community association response (right), Mukuru, 2010 (Nyambuga et al, 2015)
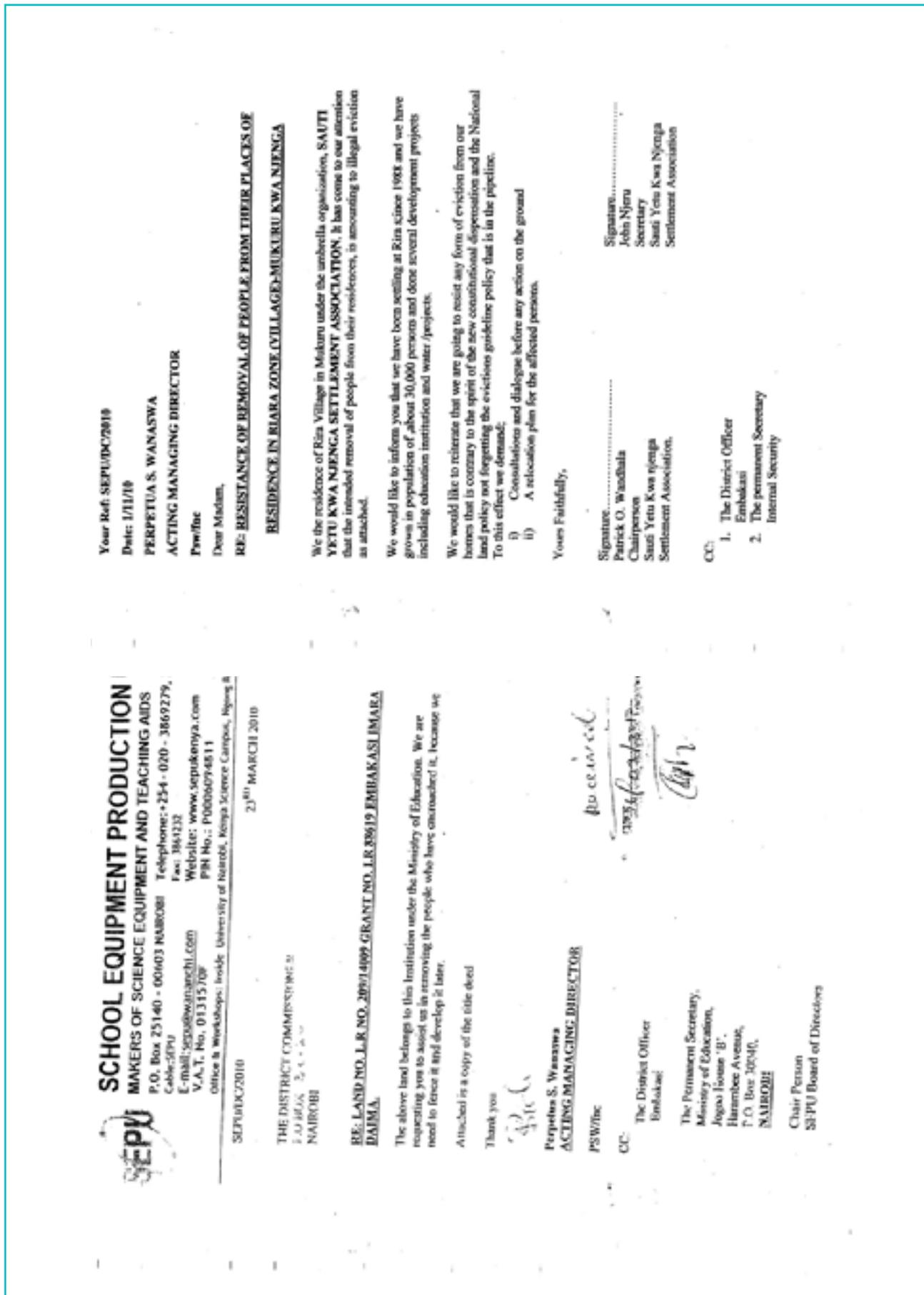
gone, all of it. Mukuru is there because of what we did in 2012, 2013 – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

The state is absent in Mukuru's land space, and in this absence of a state response to informality, the market steps in. It is legally possible but politically unfeasible to revoke Mukuru's titles. There are some powerful owners of Mukuru land titles. And many titles are mortgaged to banks. Compensation is another option, but market values on the land are high. What's happening right now is that land title owners, conscious they have no real possession on the ground, are selling their rights to structure owners in small parcels. Structure owners are entrepreneurs. With legal tenure they can access finance from the market to build tenement housing – essentially vertical slums, but a kind of housing and for a market they understand. In the process, opportunity is lost for achieving greater equity and good urban renewal (see, for example, Huchzermeyer, 2011b).

Muungano's work in Mukuru also attempts to clarify a political message, that housing for the poor cannot be entirely a private good left to the market. In Africa, of the interesting solutions to privately owned land that have resulted in noticeable improvements in slums, the evidence is that most were underwritten by strong central government commitment, guidance, and support (Yahya, 2006) – for example, South Africa's strong housing subsidy system.

We realised we cannot fight the battle of land grabbing just by going to the court and focusing on the issue of land, so we started the campaign on sanitation. The land has been planned for industries not settlement, but here we are living here. We want the government to re-plan Mukuru as a residential area. It is a private land – so the government cannot provide us sanitation services. The campaign was asking the national government to do an inquiry in Mukuru to see if sanitation is good. And we know the sanitation is not good. So if the government does sanitation planning for us, that means they will have revoked the titles, and there will be no more forced evictions. That was the idea of the campaign. Because sanitation [in Mukuru] is really bad. Knocking at their offices and being turned down today, tomorrow, with time we'll get someone who will hear us out and we will [be able to show] that we once came here. We'll say 'one day we were at Ministry of Land, at Ministry of Heath, at the county

government, a different office, talking on this issue'. Somebody will realise the situation that we are going through is bad and will take us to another level. But with this new county government it's very difficult. They complain of not having enough money to do sanitation in Mukuru because it is a private land and they will be sued – Dorice Mseti, Mukuru.

Institutionalising solutions and creating new state institutions

The basis of the Mukuru effort is not developing a physical model like Kambi Moto, but attempting to create sufficient precedent to change the government's default position on slums on privately owned land, and thereby institutionalise a more robust government position on upgrading, different from the limitations of KENSUP. For Muungano, it is a shift from building models to building a mechanism for change.

Kenya's 2012 Physical Planning Act allows a county government to 'declare an area with unique development potential or problem as a Special Planning Area (SPA) for the purpose of preparation of a physical development plan' (Government of Kenya, 2012) and gives it authority to suspend all development within such an area for two years.

The Kenyan alliance, with academic and legal partners, is at present in the process of petitioning Nairobi County government to declare the area covering Mukuru and nearby Viwandani slum as an SPA. The process demands high standards of information for planning, and so, since May 2016 a Muungano team has been collecting detailed spatial and socio-economic data, working with 400 community profilers from all across Mukuru.

If the area is successfully declared an SPA, the planning process will require strong citizen participation. Muungano is developing a new community mobilisation framework to cover the estimated 150,000 households in the area, and piloting it in SEPU[9] village in the Mukuru (population 6,500) (Nyambuga *et al*., 2015). This model steps a little away from creating a representative community mandate through savings groups. As such, Mukuru also becomes the theatre where Muungano explores new ways of mobilising to reflect changed government attitudes to public participation in development planning.

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[9] So named because it sits on a single parcel of public land associated with the Ministry of Education's "School Equipment Production Unit" (SEPU) (Nyambuga *et al.,* 2015)

3.3 Third correlation: leverage and investment in informal settlement improvement

This section explores the contribution that investment by communities and others has made in Muungano's evolution**,** some of the strategies the federation has employed at various times, and what has been achieved. Investment by the community can act as leverage for state investment; Muungano has also explored leverage from alternatives, including private finance, and land banking.

2003: Akiba Mashinani Trust (AMT)

In 2003 we started the Akiba Mashinani Trust, because financially we had started to grow. We had to elect the committee to safeguard that kiondo [basket]. We elected four members from the federation and we wanted technical people and that's why staff are involved. In Akiba Mashinani, we give three types of loans: livelihoods, greenfield projects, and in-situ, constructing houses where we are living. From 2003 up to now we have done a lot. Our kiondo has grown, expanded, we have done wonders in our settlements – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

Huruma's finance model placed all housing costs on the community in the form of loans, and technical and design costs on donor financing. The state's role was just not standing in the way, although later infrastructure

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BOX 8: LAUNCH OF AKIBA MASHINANI IN NAIROBI, KENYA, 27 NOVEMBER 2003

One has to go back to March 1991 and to the very first federation meeting in South Africa, to recall an African federation gathering as moving as this morning's launch of Akiba Mashinani in Nairobi Kenya.

The event was a high intensity replication of the usual federation gathering. Busload after busload of slum dwellers arrived at Kasarani Gymnasium in downtown Nairobi, until there were thousands of poor people, mainly women, sitting patiently for hours as the hall filled up and the programme participants got their act together. They were entertained by enthusiastic community cultural events and by the usual barrage of exhortations, platitudes and slogans from the masters of ceremony. Then they sat patiently through a long list of speeches from ministers, dignitaries, and international guests.

And yet there was a spine-tingling poignancy to the proceedings. The thousands of slum dwellers in the audience were celebrating the launch of their very own movement. This was a kind of coming out celebration for Kenya's urban poor. As one of the banners said, the launch of Akiba Mashinani meant that voice and visibility was at long last being given to one of the most viciously exploited and marginalised urban poor classes in Africa. After decades of total insecurity, characterised by violent evictions and other aggressive anti poor practises by the State, the people of the slums of Nairobi and other Kenyan towns had gathered in their thousands to launch their own organisation, and to invite the recently elected leaders of the country to work with them to eradicate

homelessness, landlessness and poverty. Kenya's dispossessed had come together to declare their intention to transform the face of Nairobi, one of Africa's most troubled but dynamic cities.

Shack dwellers from South Africa and Uganda were there to help in the preparation of the launch and the sharing of the festivities. After two days of intense engagement they returned to their homes, infused and energised by the optimism, confidence and emerging power of their Kenyan comrades. They had been empowered by the knowledge that the Kenyans had not only come of age, but were aflame with a self-confidence and excitement that was going to simultaneously challenge and enhance their self-same struggles back home.

The patience and persistence of Pamoja Trust and hundreds of community leaders has paid handsome dividends. Nairobi's urban poor have at last got a real platform on which to build, an authentic voice that seeks engagement with formal institutions committed to change and that reaches out to similar communities in other parts of Africa and the globe in order to learn and to teach, give and receive, and build a movement that has the potential to bring real change to the cities of the South; the built environments, and to the current power relations that create the conditions for their extreme inequality.

Source: Bolnick, 2003.

and services costs were undertaken by the city. To start, Huruma housing was faced with three very limiting problems: affordability, design, and bridging finance. Communities could save only in small increments, but there were up-front construction costs.

For Huruma, the federation saw the need to separate the functions of building social capital and building assets. They reasoned that these should be undertaken by separate institutions, because assets might compromise efforts to build social cohesion (a focus on loan repayments doesn't lend to a feel-good meeting).

In this context, the Kenyan federation's urban poor finance facility, AMT was created, to protect the capacity building side by to some extent 'walling off' the bridge finance and loaning aspect. AMT was different from Pamoja Trust. The community represented most of the structure and governance, including a majority of board members. The logic was that as a community fund, assets created through AMT would remain in communities' hands.

Bridging finance from Miserior and Homeless International supported the Huruma phase one (34 houses). The second and third phases were financed through the Community-Led Infrastructure Financing Facility (CLIFF), a joint initiative of Cities Alliance and the Indian federation's support NGO, SPARC (Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centres). While community loan repayments were not reabsorbed into CLIFF, AMT had an obligation to revolve them and report on the revolving. CLIFF also emphasised leveraging state and private sector finance.

For an AMT housing loan, Susan (illustrative name) will provide a 10 per cent deposit, another 10 per cent will be loaned to her through her savings group, and the remaining 80 per cent forms an AMT loan (illustrative percentages). Susan's repayment is made to AMT through her savings group, spreading the risk and turning Susan's neighbours' savings through the group into collateral. In Kambi Moto, repayment from groups to AMT stand at almost 100 per cent, while repayments from members to the group often have defaults and delays that the groups dealt with internally, and which were mitigated by strong savings and systems.

In 2004, Huruma savings were strong, repayments were good, and Muungano was confident that, with affordable costs and bridge finance, the urban poor could pay for housing. AMT now entered period of exploration between 2004 and 2010, looking for opportunities to draw in state and private sector funding, including debt capital with local market finance. Would Kenyan mortgage providers buy the Huruma mortgages? One hopeful engagement with Equity Bank even set up a team to investigate the feasibility of a low-cost housing product. But somehow nothing amounted to much. The banks were looking at profit and risk, and they couldn't

assess risk in informal settlements. Most banking systems are based on individuals, but a system that accommodated the way AMT provides housing loans would have to deal with both collective and individual risk.

2005–2008: What didn't work – Muungano Development Funds

We believe when I'm well known in the group, I can be well understood in the network, and well trusted at the region, and well celebrated at the national [level]. Because we have a hierarchy of virtuous engagement – Erickson Sunday, Kisumu.

Many of the older generation of Muungano's members agree on one strategy that didn't work – the Muungano Development Funds (MDFs). These community-based microfinance institutions were suggested by Muungano in Kisumu around 2005 and by 2007, five regional funds had been established in different parts of the country (Pamoja Trust, 2008).

AMT was structured to manage external capital contributions, for example from donors to SDI's Urban Poor Fund International, that would provide as bridge funding for community-wide processes like upgrading or communal toilets, with community savings used to repay AMT loans. But there was some dissatisfaction in Muungano: AMT was not functioning in the way many communities thought it could, as a *kiondo* (basket) for their now substantial and long-term savings groups. They argued that pooling community and settlement savings at network or regional levels could mean greater leveraging muscle and provide system for individual livelihood loans. Converting AMT into a deposit-taking institution wasn't bureaucratically feasible, so the Muungano Development Funds were established.

This was a good strategy for the Muungano members to do business livelihood. It was for all members to contribute towards that livelihood and then get loans. But whatever goes with money, people put a lot of interest, and that is whereby we got to lose a bit of the direction of the Muungano. People were taking money and not giving back the money according to the process. People came from various areas not slum areas pretending that they are slum members and they disrupted Muungano. We were used to taking a loan of 10,000, 20,000, where somebody is telling you, 'I need 1 million, I need 500,000.' He or she could put a very big [deposit] in order to get, after getting, the money disappeared and everybody disappeared. Those who were having good faith in Muungano said, 'Muungano are thieves.' New members, said, 'Muungano are thieves.' That was the biggest challenge that we had in Muungano – Henry Otunge, Korogocho.

MDFs were completely owned by Muungano, not AMT, without much legal form and, to keep interest rates low, they were anchored in principles of volunteerism and broad ownership. Many continued to function at least through to 2008, delivering thousands of micro-loans. There was high demand among Muungano members and the funds fuelled growth in savings groups. However, while strong systems had been designed, the funds were not formally registered and inconsistent record keeping contributed to difficulties in monitoring loan repayments. Loss of members' savings and co-option by outsiders became increasingly common, and with it loss of the donors' and Muungano members' faith (Pamoja Trust, 2008).

The design was good, but later when it came to implementation there was a miscalculation. Because it was a dream for the poor people – us – but, when it came to implementation some people were brought it in that were not 'us'. Those people just came because of the fund. They didn't come because of the struggle that we've understood, the experiences we have learnt from the exchanges, the engagement we've been in national and regional and community level. They didn't understand Muungano's process is not just loaning and savings, but the MDF was just but to bridge the gap that the poor people can't access formal financial assistance through loaning. So this was a fund of Muungano, but was not benefitting the members of Muungano. We stopped it and blocked bank accounts and the members' savings are stuck in that bank account. We are still dealing with up to now – Erickson Sunday, Kisumu.

2004–2016: Creating unforeseen outcomes – Muungano's greenfield strategy

The group we are working with, 26 families, the majority are tenants. They have lived in these slums for many years. Korogocho slum upgrading focuses on infrastructure and does not address issues of housing and security of tenure. Government faces a lot of restraints and challenges in slum upgrading. We feel that it will take too long for people to be able to access better houses, so we have resolved to take our own initiative to move out of the slum area. We have already bought land and are ready to settle on it – Abdi Mohamed, Korogocho.

I joined Muungano in 2007. And with the savings that I've got there I've gotten a chance to be one of the Katani greenfield members. Many people are like, 'oh you're very young and you're going to get a house in

Katani'. And I'll tell them it's because of my savings. Even that ten shillings can bring change in your life – Katelyn Wanjiru, Muungano member, Mathare slum.

In a sense, Muungano's strategy around greenfield projects might be compared to KISIP's unforeseen gentrification. In 2004, the savings group in Toi market, Nairobi, approached AMT for financing support. Their hugely successful loaning scheme was generating significant surplus. The group majority were tenants in Kibera, but lived in different parts of the slum too spread apart for upgrading, so they wanted to harness their collectivity to buy a piece of land and build homes. A suitable loan and land were identified, and, in 2005, the group purchased 80 acres of land for 600 households for US$124,000 on the outskirts of the city. Around the same time, saving schemes in Nakuru and Huruma also initiated processes to buy land from the open market.

Views are mixed in Muungano on the value of greenfield projects. What real impact does this approach have on poverty? On the one hand, there is no doubt Muungano has found more transformative ways to address slums than this. The Toi group are all traders whose livelihood base remained in Nairobi and it was clear they were unlikely to permanently move from Kibera. And urban poverty in Kenya is so widespread that encouraging this kind of solution could just cause wide-scale city sprawl. Greenfields are essentially a private transaction and have little policy influence on the slums – if people just move out, buying land with individual savings, it does not compel the state to provide tenure security, infrastructure or services in slum; the message to government is that poor people can afford land and infrastructure and are just hiding out in the settlements. In the settlements themselves, this move is still only available to a few who can afford it, and it therefore becomes internally divisive; Muungano risks being seen as a movement only for those who can afford these projects.

We were very excited. Toi market bought land, we bought for Mukuru, Athi River… Then [Jockin] asked us, 'So you have bought land, where, 40kms away from the city? Ok, so you are telling the city and the government that you don't have a right to live in the city?' And we realised, this land buying thing we are sending the wrong message. We have to fight where we are – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Land markets are driven by political narratives. If you have a land in a place that has slums, why should the land be expensive if it was operating in the strictest sense, the way a market operates? Because we don't understand the land narratives, we have

sort of proceeded with this struggle the way a land man proceeds in the sea. You think in there you can breathe the way you breathe out here. Buying, for example. We can use buying as a tactic to tell the state that we are also serious. But if that becomes a philosophy across the movement, then it is problematic because there are places where we can win concessions merely by being, using other things, I don't want to say brute force but merely by occupying – Patrick Ochieng, Ujamaa Centre, Mombasa.

On the other hand, if Kenya's middle class can create surpluses and use this to leverage finance, why not the poor? Is it the role of Muungano to subject its members, the urban poor, to 20-year processes for them to achieve housing and tenure security? The Toi scheme was in many ways positive, involving successful traders that repaid their loans. Muungano has continued with greenfield projects and currently has one ongoing with 380 households that have joined together from slums across Nairobi.

[W]e have been able to buy many shambas [land] for the federation. In Nakuru four pieces of land, in Nairobi one piece of land, in Kiambu county 8 acres, in Machakos County more than 100 acres, in Timau people have secured land, which before they could not afford. [AMT] paid for them and they're repaying. So when I talk about the loans, there is an impact on the ground. In my house I have a big family and others are growing. In our village we are 7,000 people, but we can only bear 2,000. Where are the others to be taken? They are the 'spill-outs' who join the greenfield project. We buy land so they can go somewhere – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

Leveraging market finance – Toi market loans, Mukuru Sisal, and AMT's land banking strategy

Muungano's exploration into formal market financing outside of projects has been mostly conceptual and not got far. Two exceptions, both of which began around 2008, are Woodley (new Toi) market's loan system and the Mukuru greenfields project.

Toi market's loan graduation scheme

Toi market, a large informal market on the edge of the Kibera slum, was almost completely destroyed by fire in the post-election violence that swept through Kenya in 2008. Some Muungano stallholders were given a reconstruction grant from their MP of one million Ksh and rather than spending it on rebuilding market stalls, the group chose to use it as leverage (UNDP, 2014).

They negotiated a low interest line of credit with Equity Bank. At the time this was unprecedented in Kenya. The Toi savings group essentially created a bridge between the formal banking and informal trading sectors, taking charge of assessing and approving of loan applications, collecting loan repayments daily, and banking these weekly. With the one million Ksh as a guarantee, there was little risk for the bank.

I went to the Equity Bank in Kawangware and we showed them how we do it within Muungano. They liked the idea and without any security they gave us a credit line of 18 million shillings. All the traders got a loan without any capital. And the system worked very well. We told them you don't have to bring your officers, we are the ones who are going to do the appraisals, the collections – collecting receipts for you. If there is a problem and somebody has not paid you, just call us. And within one year we had managed to repay the entire 18 million shillings. And now all the traders could access individual loans from Equity – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Mukuru Sisal greenfield project

A group from Mukuru Sisal settlement, under threat of eviction, approached AMT wanting to buy some vacant 'greenfield' land being sold within the same slum. They had about 100 members and US$5,000 savings. The land was valued at about US$1.4 million for 23 acres. There seemed little chance they could afford it, but Muungano challenged the group to recruit 2,000 community members and raise US$100,000 in savings. In the meantime, they were successfully supported to enumerate and advocate against eviction.

A few months later, the group came back with savings of US$90,000 and 2,300 members. The Kenyan alliance approached the landowner on their behalf and negotiated down the price, SDI financed a partial guarantee on a bank loan, and eventually a bank was found – Eco Bank – with a sympathetic manager who had been born in a slum and was open to dealing with the alliance (the land title had been mortgaged to Eco Bank and the owner was in default). Many other banks weren't interested: although on paper the security was good, they didn't want to deal with slum dwellers – how do you foreclose on a property that belongs to 2,000 slum dwellers? 'Not a market segment we are interested in.'

Around 2010, the title was transferred to AMT and held against the loan, most of which was repaid. As repayments were progressing, Muungano and AMT began plans to construct housing. For the Kenyan

alliance, the project offered an opportunity strengthen the systems needed to operate as an urban poor fund and community mobilising agent for housing at a higher level than small-scale Kambi Moto (SDI, 2009). However, the group's leaders were also in conversation with private developers and at this point, around 2012, things became complicated. The land was appreciating rapidly (sevenfold by 2012) and a 2,000-unit scheme was a lucrative opportunity for private developers. They offered to repay the loan balance in order that AMT release the title to the community. AMT refused to proceed without the agreement of all members as evidence the scheme would benefit those for whom it was intended. This could not be secured: many had not been consulted on the private deal and now wouldn't allow the leadership group to proceed. A stand-off developed and remains to the present. The case is in court and there are still no structures on the land.

> Muungano bought land for those people but by the time we were starting this [the community group] were [only] partially from Mukuru Sisal… I was one of the people who enumerated those people, the group that started there, I know them. But later on, after realising that this land is a prime land, they tried to put Muungano aside to own this land by themselves. They got people from other areas, even outside of Nairobi – bringing money, so that they could complete the loan that they were given by the federation. They had changed the motive of the federation. Muungano is a process: you do the process step by step until you get whatever you need and when you are getting whatever you need, you are getting it [for] a hundred per cent [of the community]. And that is why we are having that chaotic problem in Mukuru. Sometimes they fight one another, they had conned so many people… Is that what we call Muungano? – Henry Otunge, Korogocho.

Many of the groups' 2,300 members were drawn from outside the original slum community. In the logic of Muungano's model of building social capital for collective decisions and action, a clear weakness of this case and other greenfield projects is that membership doesn't always come from one community. Another example, in 2004, Muungano secured funding to support a poor community in Athi River by purchasing 40 acres of land in the town. The community was small for so large a piece of land, so nearby Muungano savings groups were invited to join to buy the land. The 387 households that joined were still too few for 40 acres, so they were invited to bring in more members. Eventually, 300 more people made up the numbers, but they were not part of Muungano savings groups. The newest members saw this as speculation and rather than a community housing project, wanted to

parcel out the land into individually-owned plots, for resale. Like Mukuru Sisal, the underlying issue was land appreciation. That land is also still in standoff.

AMT's land banking strategy

Land banking is the practice of organisations (public or private) holding land for future development, sale or disposal. Despite the cases above, throughout Muungano's history, AMT has often used the appreciation on land it has purchased as a deliberate strategy to leverage resources from the market. For example, AMT currently holds land in Athi River Katani and Tigoni, both of which have appreciated approximately eightfold over four years. The Katani plot is eight acres, but community savings could only buy five, so AMT retains three in its name. To produce projects usually takes some years. The Tigoni land was purchased with the SDI loan intended for housing for the Mukuru Sisal community – when this entered standoff, the waiting capital was put into land banking rather than sitting in the bank. Land banking is a key strategy of leverage; AMT's approach is that if a settlement savings scheme has the capital, it should land bank.

Leverage from the state – land and budgets

So far we have looked at cases where Muungano has leveraged resources from the market. Now we turn to leveraging the state, distinguishing between situations when land is owned by the state, and when it is not.

Muungano's first real act of leverage with quantifiable monetary value was Huruma, where use of the land – and later titles – were transferred from Nairobi City Council to the community. In its early years the state had little money to leverage, but from 2003, regime change, strong economic growth, and a budget addressing informal settlement improvement have made clear the government is in a position to start to undertake investments in urban poverty. These investments will not be automatic, and when they happen it will often be for political expediency. In the case of the railways RAP, state leverage was achieved because it was a difficult situation that required resolution rather than through budgeting for an issue of poverty. Here, Muungano's leverage was the funding from Ford Foundation and SDI that covered a large proportion of the costs of the Kenyan alliance redeveloping a community-oriented resettlement action plan after the initial plan developed by international consultants was rejected by the Kenyan cabinet.

In general, the state implements state-led slum upgrading and therefore opportunities for leverage by

BOX 9: CONCEPTS, IDEOLOGY AND PARTNERS

Sometimes people think the things that the poor do they do out of serendipity. They just woke up, they tried something and it worked or it didn't work. We have to make the case that the things that communities do are led by science and well thought out views and processes. There's a whole body of research and thought, and different bases for these things.

There is a religious basis for the Muungano movement taking root, a strong liberation theology that led some Catholic priests to be part of this movement. And they gave a lot of impetus to it: when people saw a real priest come to live among them, pray for them when they lose one of their own, take them to hospital, it was easy for them to connect to organising that was being led by the Church. We had a non-violence movement that was pushing the same ideas, and their influence in Huruma and other places, using the idea of base groups in the slums to do discussions around change, has been very critical. Their trainings [were] useful in generating the kind of leadership that we have seen Muungano have.

We have had university professors who have given thought to the type of work that has emerged, that has strengthened Muungano. Kituo Cha Sheria, an institution of lawyers, developed the discourse around public interest litigation [and] have therefore availed a whole group of lawyers to the poor, from whom the poor have several times run to and gotten support even in terms of what is legally possible and what is not legally possible. And some of the definitions we are enjoying now couldn't have been if we didn't use that class of professionals to help generate the thinking.

We have had students coming to the movement to do their research and build a body of thought around some of these things that we have seen; surveyors, architects draw alternatives that they think can work for the poor. And some of the informal settlements have living monument and testimony to the contribution of professionals.

The essence is that all those little bits and pieces have been building blocks for Muungano – Patrick Ochieng, Ujamaa Centre, Mombasa.

the community are limited. Government budgets for informal settlements go through KENSUP and KISIP, which have thus far had limited reach in transferring resources to communities. For example, while in the last few years state investment in the National Youth Service (NYS) has pumped 20 billion Ksh into slums, this has now stalled through corruption. And while the NYS has often provided much needed services, it is also fuelling gentrification.

Increased government revenue has translated into slums through devolved funds, such as constituency funds. Project expenditure from those funds is often not strategic and often populist, pushed in a way that aims to avoid the kind of violence fuelled by disparity seen in 2007–8. The state's response to poverty is often hasty, low level delivery, and transitional. The government, at national or local levels, does not seem to have the capacities to develop longer term plans and projects.

BOX 10: THE STORY OF TIMAU, THE TOWN WITH NO SLUMS

Timau sits to the north of Mount Kenya near the borders of Laikipia and Meru counties. The land is beautiful, with mainly large-scale farming by white settler families and Kenyan elite. At independence many settlers across the country opted to sell up and leave; the government mediated transactions and many native populations organised as cooperatives, bought collectively, then shared the land amongst themselves. But, in the sparsely populated Timau region many of those living on native reserves under the British had been brought in from other parts of the country to work on the settler farms. Post-independence, they therefore had fewer customary rights or collective buying power. The effect on the area was to create slums out of the native reserves as poor landless farm worker populations became two or three generations, and resorted to building informally in pockets of land between farms, living in settlements rural in setting but with dense slum-like conditions. They were frequently moved around because the places they found were often parts of farms, planned towns, or gazetted forest area.

Groups of landless farm workers from Timau found Muungano around 2002 and began coming to the office in Nairobi. They were mostly second or third generation in the area. From 2002 to 2007 they built savings groups and for many years, with Muungano's support, formulated their land case, asking to be settled properly. They argued that since they or their parents had come to the area before independence and had no other place to go, it was the government's responsibility to make a plan for them and others in their situation.

In 2007, Muungano signed a broad memorandum of understanding with the Minister of Lands during the federation's regular activity of meeting prospective presidents and cabinet members to discuss evictions and land issues in slums in the run up to general elections. In general, little tangible change comes of these interactions. But the Timau community took the MOU very seriously, bringing it to their local planning administration and insisting on its implementation. When they were put off at the local level, they picketed the Ministry of Lands in Nairobi.

They did it on rotation – a group would show up outside the office of the Permanent Secretary at 8am and sit until 5pm when the office closed. The next morning the next group would come. The community were very poor. That day's petitioners would leave Timau at around 2am, hitching a ride in wholesale vegetable trucks to arrive in Nairobi at 6am and spend the day at the ministry, returning to Timau in the evening with the empty trucks. They would often bring gifts of live chickens or vegetables for ministry staff.

After two weeks of this, the Permanent Secretary admitted defeat and gave them an audience, and was presented with Muungano's MOU signed by his minster and president. So, at the end of 2006, Muungano's enumeration team, the local groups, and ministry and provincial representatives, enumerated the area's squatter population of around 1,500 households (UPFI, 2015). Since the land ministry had little capacity to plan, central planners in the Nairobi office just allocated a small plot for each household wherever it wouldn't affect their plans. Title documents were released to the community. AMT provided loans for the few thousand households that couldn't afford the small ministry fee for survey and allocation on each plot, for whom titles were held by AMT until loans were repaid. In most cases, households have not sold off their titles. It is a great example of leverage – with an MOU, some live chickens, and a lot of persistence.

4
Conclusions

What I can say is, our big dream – why we joined Muungano – is to see our houses upgraded and security of tenure. And so far, even if we have minimised, we have got not security of tenure. So, that is what our fight or struggles are for. And without security of tenure we are not ready to back off. When the government is planning or allocating some funds we want to see our people being allocated as equal as anybody else in our country. So we are [still] fighting for recognition. We are fighting for the government to involve us in their plans, in their work, whatever is being done. Whether it's housing, whether it's services, whether it's anything, we want to be included – Emily Wangari, Mathare.

I learnt: when they went to fight for the land not to be evicted from there, their data proved that there are people who have been living there, and for the rest of their lives they have been there. How the settlement began, and how they kept on going. Even though they were facing more challenges of evictions, they had to keep on going. Whatever the exchanges they went, what they learnt, how they brought it to the community, how the community grew, how the community changed their perspective – Eva Muchiri, Mathare.

The key question in the introduction to this paper was: **how has Muungano touched on the lives of slum dwellers in Kenya generally, regardless of whether they have ever heard about Muungano or not?**

The question for the conclusion then has to be: **if Muungano folded today, would it have done enough?**

The state of affairs today

In August 2010, Kenya adopted a new constitution, ushering in a new political and economic governance system that seeks to strengthen accountability and public service delivery at local levels. Significantly, Article 43(1b) aims to reverse attitudes that have led to exclusion by stating, 'every person has a right to accessible adequate housing and reasonable standards of sanitation', and Article 21(2), says that, 'the state shall take legislative policy and other measures including the setting of standards to achieve the progressive realisation of the right guaranteed under Article 43' (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

When a new regime, the Jubilee government, was elected in 2012, its manifesto made a guarantee for 'all Kenyans [to have] a decent home by 2020 by introducing a range of measures to upgrade the slums around Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and other urban areas'. The new government inherited a growing economy, and Kenya's economic overview indicates that the country can afford to correct decades of neglect in housing and servicing lower income groups. GDP growth rate averaged 5.6 per cent between 2009 and 2015 (World Bank Country, 2016d) and there is significant fiscal capacity.

Constitutional and economic gains have been reflected in minimal but unprecedented investments to improve slums. In 2014/15, a US$250 million National Youth Service programme cleared piles of garbage in slums, improved roads, built public toilets, health centres, schools and other social facilities. To do this the government engaged over 30,000 youth, mainly from the slums themselves (Okoth, 2015). The five-year Kenya Informal Settlement Infrastructure Project (KISIP) has also built roads, provided street lighting, storm water drainage.

Muungano has taken an inventory of Kenya's slums every five years, starting in 2003 in Nairobi, in 2007 in Kisumu and Mombasa, and five counties in 2013; creating city-wide profiles that give the federation a broader view. Data from the 2013 city profiles provides insights as to whether the right trajectory for inclusive cities had been set and it is just a matter of time before the cities correct themselves. Instead, the evidence suggests that the disparity between the informal and formal city in Kenya is widening. Conditions for slum residents continue to deteriorate and government efforts based on decades-old practice are not only ineffective, but have accelerated the challenges.

In 2007, Muungano counted 183 informal settlements in Nairobi. The subsequent count in 2013 established that the settlements had reduced to 158. The 25 settlements that were no longer there have not been upgraded to formal neighbourhoods, but instead demolished. And while the reasons, national security and so on, could be rationalised, the displaced residents of these slums are likely to have resorted to squeezing into the already dense surviving slums.

The 2013 slum count established that Nairobi's 158 settlements occupy only 2.1 per cent, or 10.92 sq km of the city's 695.1 sq km land space, in itself a damning indicator of the level of inequality (MuST, 2014). In some instances household densities reached 300 households in an acre. These settlements accommodate 429,363 households, against a total estimated city household population of 1 million. It also found that 7.1 of this 10.92 sq km occupied by slums are locked in land contestations, with a real threat of forceful eviction. And while the remaining slums were not actively contested, communities occupying them have no land tenure security.

Muungano's 2016 work profiling Mukuru slums revealed that 30 per cent of all slum shacks in the city are now double storey, an indicator of the future of population growth in the slums; without the possibility of finding new lands, slums have begun to densify in new ways. Muungano estimates that in the next ten years, Nairobi is likely to have a whole new layer of slums, sitting atop the old one.

Muungano data also shows that only 62 of 158 settlements have access to trunk sewers; that 9,088 toilet facilities serve an estimated slum population of 2.1 million people; 41 settlements have no connection to trunk water lines; and in total slums have 6,865 water taps, translating to 62 families sharing one tap (MuST, 2014).

In 2002, settlements all had different characteristics. There were settlements that were not very densely populated. You could still see spaces, children had places to play, women had places to do laundry. And bases where men sit and talk. So they were not very densely populated. I remember Mukuru at that time, was also not that populated, you'd still walk a few metres before you'd get to the next house. And Dagoretti was peri-urban, you'd actually find homesteads, which you don't find in other settlements, with clear demarcations that this is a piece of land where one family lives, spaces where they have their different livestock, all integrated. It might have looked dense, but then they had the different characteristics and organisation around how they used space. But then when I went to the same settlements five years later, the same spaces that we could see or walk on or just enjoy being a part of were all taken up by housing. More people had either come into the cities or those that we found playing as children now had become adults and had their own homes. There was basically densification going on – Irene Karanja, MuST.

The new attitudes

An attitude problem

Muungano changed the style of working into a dialogue. You are sitting and talking to the government, bureaucracy, municipal council. Whenever I used to come, all the confrontation was on the table. The model emerging from Kenya is a dialogue model. In the beginning it was a confrontation. In the next [few years], there will be leaders who will emerge from this Muungano process. They will be part of the development system. They will be part of the, I don't know, maybe the political bureaucracy – Jockin Arputham, SDI President.

A lot has changed in 20 years, perhaps most significantly the attitude that slums are blighted spots in a green city and ought to be removed. A shift towards calls for slums to be upgraded is evident in state rhetoric – in Kenya's constitution, ruling party's manifesto, national and city strategic plans – and in the existence of the Kenya National Slum Upgrading Programme (KENSUP), a Ministry of Housing department.

The rhetoric also reveals the underlying nature of these new attitudes towards slums. Jubilee party strategies will 'continue with the proposed slum clearance programmes, replacing them with decent housing' (Nairobi Studio, 2015. Kenya Vision 2030 is to 'install physical and social infrastructure in slums in 20 urban areas to formalise slums, permit construction of permanent houses and attract private investment' (Kenya Vision 2030, 2007). The mandate of KENSUP is 'implementation of housing and infrastructure projects in low income slum settlements as proposed by the counties' (Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, nd). Marked improvement in attitudes on the face of it, but with an underlying view that narrows the issue of informality into efforts for housing and infrastructure projects; one that is based on the premise that informality is a problem and therefore blind to the multitude of benefits and contributions slums lend to a city.

> *You can see there are surrounding factories around here. Most of them they were helped by the provincial administration by then, to put these factories. Most of these people who stays here, they work in these factories. And without workers these factories cannot work* – Evans 'Papa' Omondi, Mukuru.

The slum is part of a city and the two sustain each other (Yahya, 2006). Kenyan slums, pulsating with micro businesses and teaming with people, are primary markets for industry. They provide low cost accommodation, schooling, health care, recreation – essentially, life –for the mass of the city's workers. Without them, the city economy would grind to a halt. The majority of middle and high income homes owe the slums for the labour that takes care of children, cleans, and cooks – in a way and at a scale that countries with less income disparity could not maintain. Slums are perhaps the most vital link between urban and rural economies (for example, Jack and Suri, 2011; Morawczynski and Pickens, 2009). They are the city safety net that ensures almost insignificant levels of homelessness – the streets of Nairobi have far fewer rough sleepers than New York or London. The slums are a tremendous resource to the city, but the result of current thinking is that the logic of inclusivity has been lost. Instead, slum communities are reduced to beneficiaries of faulty visioning that imagines a problem by obscuring the complexity of informal communities and offers to fix it with 'decent housing'.

For instance, Nairobi's slums have an average tenancy rate of 90 to 95 per cent, which means only 5 to 10 per cent of the residents of slums own the structures that they live in. The majority of slum housing is owned by absentee, often middle class, investors, who also form the governance of settlements. Evidence of state upgrading in Kibera and 14 other urban centres through the World Bank-funded Kenya Informal Settlements Infrastructure Project suggests that government investments in slums lead to residents' replacement by a higher income population segment, as state-funded infrastructure improvement is followed by privately funded housing improvements, realising higher rental incomes and the almost inevitable displacement of 90 per cent of the initially targeted slum residents.

Muungano remains a singular voice suggesting that informality is not a problem and calling for slum-friendly cities – an assurance that slum upgrading is possible, but only where communities themselves are at the centre of their development. This paper submits that a battle may have been won, but the war on attitudes to informality rages on.

> *Many of us look at those informal settlements as a place where the poor are suffering and so on. But within those informal settlements there's a very active economy, which we don't understand very well. And so because we don't understand that economy we come in with this pristine idea that it should be developed. And yet, because it is benefitting certain individuals, those individuals will fight that kind of change. So if you don't understand that slum economy, I think it's difficult for you to proceed with the view that you're doing something extremely useful* – Patrick Ochieng, Ujamaa Centre, Mombasa.

A design challenge

By the year 2000, the focus on slums had largely shifted from clearance to upgrading. Both the state and Muungano moved on to designing slum interventions. Settlements were identified, processes defined, projects designed, technologies applied, and costs worked out. Kenya, having very little slum upgrading experience, had to work out appropriate designs and corresponding financing models. Design refers to a number of variables: in situ or resettlement developments; type of land tenure to be adopted; house typologies, settlement densities and layouts; modes of construction and; the roles that communities can take up in the upgrading.

Muungano drew its methodology from SDI and particularly the Indian experiences; the state had its project and procurement frameworks. Muungano's upgrading experience shows that different slum situations will require different mixes of design variables – for instance, some projects will be in situ and some have to be done on greenfield locations. The only consistent variable, which is also the most significant difference between Muungano and state design, is the role of the community.

By involving communities, KENSUP sought to achieve both community representation as well as vertical accountability. This meant designing a structure for community representation that was answerable to a slum upgrading project framework, ie the SEC. On paper, the SEC is a comprehensive and appropriate structure of project management.

Muungano's offering on community participation falls outside conventional project management frameworks and is markedly different from the structure applied by the state. The Muungano model first separates residents from all other stakeholders in the community – civil society organisations, the local provincial administration, and any other non-resident entity are distinguished from the community. This includes Muungano's support organisations, its urban poor fund, architects and planners who develop designs, and even city and national structures of the Muungano federation – these are not synonymous with the community and are instead technical support.

Secondly, the community and the structures they develop to carry out the project become the primary managers of the slum upgrading. Unlike the state or a conventional slum project, the community is not a structure of a broader project. Instead, the entire project infrastructure is designed and moulded to fit the community structure. The community makes the primary decisions of the project and funds for implementation are held in community-held bank accounts.

Over the years, Muungano and SDI have made large investments in building skills, systems and structures of communities that were undertaking upgrading. Funds were transferred and held in community accounts. By 2006, the Huruma savings schemes were holding up to US$50,000 in operational capital. Building these communities to be at the centre of upgrading was itself a difficult task. There were fights, delays, and money lost in the initial phases, but the focus from Muungano and its support professionals was persistent. And by the second phase of upgrading in Huruma the community was delivering housing below their quoted price.

Women in Muungano

The role of a woman in Muungano is very big. If you go to any settlement, there are many more women than men in Muungano, because everything lies on the shoulders of the women. So the issues and the problems pull us together to ask 'what is the solution?' And you have to fight. And afterwards, that's when men come and say, 'look at the progress that we have brought.' Women play the major roles in families, in development, everywhere. They are in the front line
– Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

The most important management component has been the centrality of women in all aspects of a community upgrading. This is not based on idealistic notions of women's rights or comparative physiological advantages, but because in Kenya many women are in the settlement a lot of the time, taking care of homes or working close enough to attend to both home and business, for this reason they have a significant interest in improved services and shelter. If a water seller conspired to raise the price of water or provided dirty water, women dealt with the water seller. They had an intricate knowledge of goings in and out of the settlement. They know when men are broke and when they have money. And they have a realistic understanding of household income, surpluses, and ability to pay for upgrades. That orientation and knowledge was channelled to ensuring efficiencies in slum upgrading – for example, if a construction foreman seemed to be drinking too much in the evenings, a check on stores would be done and any shortfalls quickly identified.

However, the reality is that for a movement that emerged from protest and has been geared to the assumed masculinity of upgrading tasks, placing women at the centre has been a hard task for the Kenyan federation. The insistence by SDI that Muungano have more women in key roles in every community has been critical to the evolution of Muungano's upgrading methodology.

What I see happening with the federation of Kenya is now the strong participation of women. We've got very strong women who can push this process forward. I'm still emphasising that we should really empower more and more women to take charge of this process. Because the women are more listened to than the men. You know the struggle of Kenya, men are fighting for positions, they always like to be on top. But as the federation, we should strengthen the women, so that whilst men are fighting for position, women are driving the processes and making it happen for their family and their future
– Rose Molokoane, South African Homeless People's Federation.

In 2006, Muungano resolved that the treasurers in each one of its groups would be women. In 2010 it resolved to have women make up one half of its national leadership. In 2014, it began a process to build a second tier of leadership that would grow to take up the reins of the movement. Almost all of the second tier national leadership are women. Yet the inclusion of women is not automatic or natural to Muungano – it is constantly challenged by the patriarchal structures of every informal settlement.

I think it's been a challenge. Kenya is male dominated. Looking at where we are now and where we were 5 years ago, there's been an improvement that has been slowly opening up space and forcing more women into meetings and creating activities that they take charge. A lot of women leaders we see now emerged from the sanitation campaign. And we are realising the power that comes with organised women – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

In spite of Muungano's internal structure issues, its lasting legacy in the design of slum upgrading methodology has been putting community women, and communities in general, at the centre of any development. No amount of research, or project design, or management has the capacity, the power, and the wit to untangle the complexity of informality with the same level of effectiveness as community women placed at the centre with all other capacities built around them.

I know the evictions were stopped by people who fought for the rights of their land. But not all the slums have acquired title deeds. The land has not been returned to the community. Your parents will not be there some years to come; we are the only ones who are going to be left. What are we going to do, if one day they come to tell us, 'Now you can disappear from here'? Our parents are not there to fight for us, so we need to do the same. We need to fight for the land, we need to know our population, what the community lacks, what we need. And our slums need to be upgraded. Because most of the slums are really horrible. We are really impressed and inspired by our peers and by our elders in how they struggled. They have really showed us it was a real journey. It wasn't easy, it was really difficult. But we as youths we need to also be like them. We should fight for our rights. We should defend what is yours. And nobody should tell you anything because you also know the laws and the policies of the land of Kenya – Eva Muchiri, Muungano member, Mathare slum.

Policy and resources

We resisted. Because of that pressure the government realised that there was need for land reforms. In 1999 they formed the Njonjo Commission, the inquiry on land allocation and distribution, which helped the government to understand how complex is land in Kenya. For example, Kibera you find the area chief has given land, the councillor, the youths, the village elders. Embakasi the MP is giving land; he's called himself a commissioner of land. Government came to realise that there is need for land reforms. They formed the Ndungu Commission [in 2003], inquiring on the illegal allocation of public land, and the report found that most public land – open spaces, health centre land, road reserves, so many areas – had been grabbed. They recommended revocation of titles, but very few were revoked. In 2000, we had the Ghai Commission about reform of the constitution of Kenya, and in that process land was one of the issues. Muungano managed also to give views to Ghai Commission about land… We have influenced policy developments which are pro-poor. We did not have a policy on land, but since 2004 we worked with the Minister of Land and Housing to push for house policy and land policy, enacted in 2009. We participated in the Eviction and Resettlement Bill, which is supposed to be completed soon. When you want to do an eviction in Kenya you must use that guideline. People have been evicted at midnight, during rainy season, violation of rights for so many years. We participated in the Community Land Bill. And even fighting for the Bill of Rights in the new Constitution of Kenya, it is because of the pressure from the social movements and the civil society. Through the federation we have been able to do a lot and help people come together for one purpose. Because that was the only way of engaging with the government, the political leaders, and fighting for our rights – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

Having advocated for and participated in the processes to formulate a land policy, a housing policy, an evictions bill, a community land bill among others, Muungano's rhetoric is not commensurately celebratory about these gains.

Years before ink met paper, these policies started out as new practices designed to go around obstacles. For instance, in its first upgrading, Muungano agreed with the residents of Kambi Moto that the land would be communally owned. However, because available formats for communal ownership such as cooperatives

or societies did not meet the residents' need, they developed their own form, complete with a set of rules. In part it said: all structure owners, resident and absent were eligible for upgrading; tenants who had lived in the settlement for six or more years were eligible, every family regardless of the number of structures they owned had one housing entitlement; the housing developed would bear the names of every family member.

Later, when the community land bill was in discussion, the Kambi Moto experience would lend to the thinking, not only its set of rules but also the benefits and loopholes of the system. The residents had first-hand experience about how decisions were reached, how exit was handled midway through the upgrading process, how new entry happened, how communities supported succession. The bill was but the codification of a practice long established, a milestone long passed and celebrated.

As early as 2004, Muungano had reached the conclusion that a more accommodating policy environment does not automatically translate to improvements in living conditions in slums (Pamoja Trust, 2004). Someone still has to go to the settlements and apply law, develop practice, and set precedent. The passing of policy and law is not an end in itself. Each policy sets in motion energy within slums to decipher it into real actions.

The upgrading was supposed to start by October 2015 but the government said they didn't have the money. It has taken very long, from 2004 to today, so many years, where people were contributing with so much optimism believing it's their project and their land, and upgrading would start within a year or two. There are no forced evictions any more. People are wondering why the upgrading had not started. This brought their savings spirit down and very few people are left saving because many had lost their hopes and focus – Felista Ndunge, Mukuru.

Muungano's experience is that it will take three, four, or even five years, to conceptualise and mature a project to the point where you break ground, where community vision is concretised, community organisation capacitated, and relationships with the state negotiated and built. It also takes time for a project to be designed and a finance strategy developed. It is here that the federation's day-to-day endeavours are situated: processes which themselves show up new gaps in policy and where new practices are developed beyond the scope of existing laws; practices that will evolve, scale and maybe one day constitute new policy.

As we were writing this paper, Jane Weru, AMT Executive Director, observed that, *"we are at a point in history where the law has converged significantly with the thinking of Muungano; where the opportunity for the urban poor has never been better. This will only last for a time and then the law will become insufficient and the cycle will start again"*.

5

Looking ahead: Provocations for the future

Kenya has changed tremendously over the last 20 years. Things that this young generation are taking for granted used to be a struggle then. And we appreciate, because we are part of creating that. So we need a new kind of activism. We need a new kind of doing things. And for me it's not only a Muungano struggle, it is a Kenyan struggle. You look at the youth between 18 up to 30 or even 25, this is a young person whose priorities are different and whose priorities are personal and very selfish. Fresh out of school, fresh out of college, 'What do I want to do? I want a good job, I want to move out of the slums, I want to get married, I want to get to marry.' So it's very difficult to keep a youth grounded within the course, within the struggle. He's also struggling with personal interests. He has to pay a rent, he has to do this, so what he would rather do? 'Would I rather go to Muungano house, spend the whole day or go to a community meeting? And in the evening I have to survive.' So we need to look at how do we do things differently. What are these things that are going to [attract] more and more youth, because as I said there have been tremendous gains, but the challenges are still there. They have not gone away. Most of our slums are still informal, still lack tenure. Most of our slums still lack services. Most of our slums, same characteristics. They are still there. So I think we need to look at a different way of organising and a different way of activism – Joseph Muturi, Toi market, Muungano national leader.

Social movements emerge to deal with an issue. They sustain over long periods not purely because the issue persists, but because they can change and remain responsive as the issue mutates. As Kenya's political economy evolves, it exerts a pressure on Muungano to adapt. The movement is also couched within the global urban discourse and is continuously learning and contributing to this agenda – sometimes directly, and sometimes as part the wider SDI network.

The push to change in Muungano is often intuitive, emanating from the grounding that its leaders have and their continuous interaction with peers across the global south. Increasingly, its leaders are active participants in global urban forums. New thinking often takes more deliberate form when it is exposed to communities. Within the slum context, ideas are shaped into tools and the tools are moulded into strategies and sometimes the new ideas become the basis for new strategies.

These are our ideas for Muungano:

Moving from voice to catalyst

I challenge Muungano, because housing and sanitation and good environment, belongs to all of us, the children, the young, the old. But how are we going to do this? We need to do this by joining forces and putting our focus to achieving the right things. How is our land and housing going to go to the next level? They need to start venturing into the government systems, to realise these goals. We have to take the bull by its horns. – Emmie Erondanga, Miss Koch.

Over the year 2016, Muungano has been engaged in reflecting on its most fundamental asset, the way it builds organisation within communities. The movement's constituent unit, the community savings group, has often had sufficient mandate to drive development in slums. More often than not community membership of the savings groups has been less than 10 per cent of a slum's population, but because the groups seek communal goods like improved services and employ processes like community enumeration where 100 per cent of the slum's population is counted, a legitimate representation has been achieved.

Perhaps the biggest impact of Kenya's 2010 constitution has been to entrench public participation into decision making on civic issues and development, effectively requiring greater public participation for decision making. This change has been especially relevant for Muungano, because Kenya's devolved government system places the mandates and resources for infrastructure and housing at the county level, which communities see as more accessible.

Going forward it should be self-sustaining and be a big movement that can be recognised even by the government. [A movement] which can make changes even in the policies of the country. Already we have started, but we want our voices to be heard more… When something is being is done for the settlement, we want Muungano to be the first stakeholder to be consulted – Nancy Njoki, Mathare.

The beauty with the devolved function it's a model for participation and one of the key strengths of Muungano is participation. It's a challenge of course to retain it as a movement – but the strength of Muungano is in its in movement form – Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

The federation has been able to awaken many people in the informal settlements who were not aware that they can engage the government and they can push the government… The idea of forming the federation [is] creating space for people to participate in development… We need to have people who are really for development. And these people who are really for developments, they are those ones who have been in the struggle and who are doing developments within themselves. Like us, we have groups, they do water projects, housing projects, lands for our people. We need people who are informed to participate in those forums. So that's why I'm saying, the federation must come together for the betterness of our future. But not to stay in the offices and forget the struggle of the people – Ezekiel Rema, Toi Market, Kibera.

Muungano views this shift, not as a challenge to the representation it has provided through the years, but as an opportunity to deepen its engagement and draw resources for upgrading. Muungano had the benefit of the experiences and models from other SDI affiliate federations. It looked at the Indian model that combines the more politically responsive National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) and the savings-based project-oriented Mahila Milan; at South Africa's FedUP and Informal Settlements Network (ISN); at how the Ugandan federation developed City Forums to broaden participation beyond savings groups.

The first tentative step, in 2013, was to set up County Forums, quarterly meetings with county governments to discuss slum issues. The forums intended to draw in other stakeholders in the slums, but since they operate outside of the county budget process, so far they remain regional Muungano meetings.

Engaging in policy issues to Kisumu it's wanting. To Nairobi it's kind of obvious – it's a practice they have engaged a lot. But for Kisumu there is need for sensitising people to know what are these policies, how do they translate to their daily lives, at what point should they participate or engage – Erickson Sunday, Kisumu.

In 2016, Muungano started to pilot another community organising model, dubbed *Leave No One Behind* after the tagline of the New Urban Agenda launched at Habitat III. The models places responsibility on savings groups to catalyse the establishment of residents' associations in their settlements, a recognised form for neighbourhoods to engage county governments. To ensure inclusivity, Muungano has adopted an organising structure that creates ten household units that aggregate into a settlement-wide association. In creating this community organisation duality, Muungano sees the savings groups lending to the associations values like strong participation of women and the many development capacities that have been developed through the years. Importantly, Muungano will use its enumeration processes to create street names and addresses, which it considers will deepen legitimacy of

the settlements, as well as open new opportunities. At the time of writing this paper, Muungano is working to set up these ten household clusters in two settlements, Mukuru in Nairobi County (population 220,000), and Kiandutu in Kiambu County (population 14,500) (Mbaka, 2016).

We have to look at broadening our social movement. Because that's another weakness with all the federations. We are only looking at our existing membership, and saying 'this is our boundary, we are focusing here'. But for the coming 20 years, we have to open up for other, maybe communities who are not interested in savings but they are interested in our process. We have to create a room to educate them on why these savings is so important. So how we are going to unfold this process, to engage the people who are not savers? Development is going to force us to do that. Because when we talk about sanitation, we can't do sanitation for only ten members in that settlement. We have to look at sanitation for the entire community – Rose Molokoane, South African Homeless People's Federation.

I think Muungano's challenge is the challenge of continuous mobilisation. Muungano has to ensure that it has greater buy-in. It has to build itself into a more influential organisation. It has influence on the ground, especially when evictions happen, but I think it needs to build that constituency – Jane Weru, AMT.

From settlement to city-level solutions

Muungano is a big process. We learn day by day and through earlier mistakes we have made. 20 years to come, where there are slums there will be permanent houses. I know, because we have already begun. AMT will be so big as to be able to cater for everybody. Those who are young now will be old like me and because they have already started learning they will do much better, much more, than we have done – Anastasia Wairimu, Soweto Kahawa.

Over the last 20 years, Muungano has worked with national and city governments, as well as local and international development partners to generate a broad range of solutions to different slum scenarios. Today, Muungano sees an opportunity for a significant increase in the scale of solutions, shifting from single slum settlement solutions to looking at the entirety of cities. In 2013, as part of SDI's *Know Your City* campaign, Muungano profiled all the slums in five Kenyan counties, including Nairobi (MuST, 2014). The data allowed the slum challenge to be viewed through a city lens. Around

the same time, numerous villages within Mukuru slum were facing possible evictions. All these settlements were situated on lands that had been privatised. With more than half the city's slums sitting on privately owned lands, Muungano considered a city level intervention was required.

The change in scale represents more than the replication of approaches and solutions across settlements in the city. This has involved a number of shifts from its past practice.

A broadened support structure

I would wish to see the next 10, 20 years, definitely learning a lot from the past… having solutions towards people's settlements. A town is about the people. It would not be a town if we had very beautiful buildings with no inhabitants. And I can assure you the solutions will come from the people who live in those settlements, not you or me, the engineer, the planner, the architect. Yes, we have a role to play. We will come of course as professionals, but play the lesser role – Musyimi Mbathi, University of Nairobi.

Whenever you enter a community and you take charge of the first meeting. And you go the second meeting: they take charge of the meeting. That does not make you irrelevant – Joseph Kimani, SDI Kenya

Traditionally, Muungano got its main technical support from its technical support professionals and the urban poor fund, AMT. Although Muungano still retains this primary support structures it relies increasingly on a broader set of formal partners. Ten years ago and increasingly, Muungano has been working closely with universities, particularly the University of Nairobi and the University of California, Berkeley. Through the support of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Muungano has entered a multi-disciplinary consortium to find solutions to the evictions threats in Mukuru (Muungano wa Wanavijiji/Akiba Mashinani, 2015). Each consortium partner brings an expert contribution on a particular facet of the problem: Katiba Institute leads legal action to halt the evictions and Strathmore University Law School will develop and model a legal solution; the universities of Nairobi and Berkeley are developing planning and slum upgrading solutions; Strathmore University Business School is looking at solutions to finance the models; Muungano mobilises the community and provides data to the process.

Widened focus

In informal settlements, between 40 to 60 per cent of the children are stunted. They don't have enough food, so in terms of mind, in terms of body, their potential is just, there. That is really heart-breaking. As a country, and as a city. With 40 per cent of our children in informal settlements, so that's around 25 per cent of the city, with that problem. Stuntedness comes probably from two ways: lack of food to eat, and also the environment. Because if you're always sick, you're not able to keep anything in the stomach, you don't absorb. So you can be a fantastic mother who's working hard, putting proper food on your child's table, but still the environment is fighting against you. So [the next generation's] battle is probably different. In the years to come probably evictions will not be such a big issue for you, [it will be] how do you want to bring up your children?
– Jane Weru, AMT.

Ensuring protection of the right of the urban poor to be in the city remains Muungano's primary concern. Traditionally, housing and services upgrading have been the key processes in ensuring the achievement of this right, but in the last three years, Muungano has begun to take a more integrated view of slums and develop advocacy positions from a number of new angles. In building the case for a stay on evictions in Mukuru, Muungano built a sanitation campaign that explored the public health impacts of uncertain land tenure situations, arguing that contentious land tenure locks slums out of investment in infrastructure, which in turn creates a public health problem.

Through a number of research collaborations, Muungano continues to expand its focus, advocacy and networks. Muungano has researched urban food security with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)(Ahmed *et al.*, 2015); undertaken air pollution monitoring with the Stockholm Environmental Institute (Odera, 2016); been involved in fire and disaster management with the Red Cross Society; has worked with Nairobi City County to develop a resilience strategy for Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities programme, and is currently exploring solar energy as a response to the electricity gap in slum settlements.

Diversified resources

Muungano is born out of the slums I think Muungano should constantly keep reviewing where the slum is moving towards. Because in my view the slum is not the space where people live, the slum is something bigger than that. They need to track where the slum is. People parameterise the slums as places where there is insecure tenure, but we've seen recently there is a lot of deviation from that definition. You cannot miss out to define slums from the perspective of economic empowerment… [For example] Today, most of what used to be urban authority housing schemes have fallen out to be slums. The people living in them cannot afford leave them, and once they are upgraded, then they will be pushed out. So that becomes something Muungano needs to tap on, because I think Muungano is bigger than the spatially-defined space in the slums
– Joseph Mukeku, Architect.

The interplay between design and affordability has always been a key issue for Muungano. Its default model house delivers 48 square metres of living space for US$3,500. The unit sits on a 16 square metre footprint in order to accommodate slum densities without displacement. The house is then developed incrementally into a ground-plus-two-floor house.

Despite the model's design and cost suitability, it only assumes the slum dwellers' ability to pay for a mortgage when land and infrastructure is obtained from the state. As a result, the first settlement to apply this in situ, incremental housing model, Kambi Moto, took ten years to completely transform all its slum shacks into the model house. As Muungano thinks of city-level solutions it is confronted with other challenges on this incremental model. Research by consortium partner, Strathmore Business School, shows that 10 to 20 per cent of slum populations – the elderly, the sick, children-headed households, and so on – are unable to make any payments towards housing (Muungano wa Wanavijiji/Akiba Mashinani Trust, 2014).

Muungano is faced with slum tenancy rates of up to 95 per cent of residents and the incremental model is based on a pre-housing process that equalises eligibility of tenants to own houses. In the locations where the model was applied, Muungano had to invest heavily in negotiating with owners of structures, sometimes for years, to reach a one-family-one-house

agreement. The difficult of widening ownership is further compounded by the growing popularity of low quality tenement housing, essentially vertical slums, which offer 12 square metres of rental space per household (Muungano wa Wanavijiji/Akiba Mashinani, 2015). Driving tenement housing is a trend towards 'market driven evictions' – with policy and community organisation making it increasingly difficult to carry out forced evictions, owners of slum land (usually irregularly acquired) enter into land sale deals with structure owners, who then remove their tenants and construct six to eight storey tenements, a practice that has led to a residential density in low income areas of Nairobi that outstrips the densest tenement districts of urban history (Huchzermeyer, 2007).

Figure 10. Six and seven storey tenements in Huruma

Source: Huchzermeyer, 2007.

There are disasters in waiting in Nairobi – Mathare, Huruma, Githarayi, Zimmerman. Have you seen those houses? They are buildings but they almost look bent. You'd rather even live in Korogocho [slum] than in a high rise that would soon be a disaster to you. We are waiting on time bombs when we are the people who have the knowledge to come out of them. If Kambi Moto was built in a [low] way… to the needs of the place, then I think Muungano is in the right place. How do we start challenging the process, because the youth will go to cheap – cheap and expensive – housing. If you go to something cheap and then your life is gone, it's expensive – Emmie Erondanga, Miss Koch.

Given this context, Muungano must continue exploring diversified upgrading financing that can deliver some social housing for the poorest families, a range of housing options for slum dwellers who can afford low interest mortgages, and opportunities for structure owners to investment in better quality low cost housing.

What strikes me about the Kenyan federation is that it fits into a fairly small category of federations in the SDI network. And that is that its internal roots, its contextual influences, are constantly as important as the external influences that it gets from being part of the network. They blend issues that are Kenya-specific in terms of community organising, in terms of organisational culture, with the instruments that they borrow from the SDI process. And that gives them I think a lot more adaptability, versatility, and hopefully potential to survive. – Joel Bolnick, SDI secretariat.

I think unity is the key, unity is the key for all people in the settlements. To be able to make a change you have to be united. Speak many, speak in one voice for it to be heard. If you are many [and] you speak with one voice, it will be heard – Nancy Njoki, Mathare.

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Acronyms

AMT	Akiba Mashinani Trust
KENSUP	Kenya National Slum Upgrading Programme
KISIP	Kenya Informal Settlements Infrastructure Project
NISCC	Nairobi Informal Settlements Coordination Committee
NWSC	Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company
RAP	Relocation Action Plan
SDI	Slum/Shack Dwellers International
SEC	Settlement Executive Committee
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements

Twenty years ago, the grassroots movement *Muungano wa Wanavijiji* emerged from Nairobi's many slums to resist evictions by the Kenyan government. It confronted the nexus of politicians, government administrators and the elite to acquire the lands that the slums occupied. In doing so, Muungano challenged antipathetic attitudes about informality. Joining global advocacy around slums, Muungano pushed locally for the recognition of slums as human settlements. And as the space for slums developed, Muungano graduated to designing models for upgrading living conditions. Throughout this evolution, the Kenyan state has been the single most prominent precipitant for the strategies that Muungano has employed. This paper describes the correlations between a social movement, its civil society partners, and the state. It gives an insight into how state, and indeed societal, attitudes change to achieve more inclusive cities.

Knowledge Products