

Mapping capacities of community leaders to adapt, be resilient and co-create locally

produced with

Federation leaders from six countries in Africa in the SDI network

Celine d’Cruz

In the last two decades, organisations of the urban poor in many countries in the global south have built their collective capacity to lead and improve the quality of their life in cities they live in. Community leaders continue to build capability to adapt and respond to existing challenges of evictions and confront new ones like climate disasters and the covid pandemic. Mapping the adaptive capacities of local communities by local leaders themselves can be a game changer to rebuild the leadership and organisation from within. In this paper, community leaders map their very own capacities in six SDI country federations in Africa. By focusing on the practice of community savings, they show how their individual and collective capacities in one context can be used for the benefit of communities in similar context elsewhere. This practice of ‘mapping local capacities’ motivates local leaders to do what they already do better and makes the case for why there is a need for increased investment for building leadership within informal communities.

BACKGROUND:

Working on the frontlines and experiencing informal communities in many different contexts over several years has shown me how power among development actors is unequally distributed. Funders continue to demand innovation, equity, efficiency and effectiveness with shrinking resources to achieve these goals. Government continues to push programs that are supply driven. Ngos come with a mandate from somewhere ‘outside’ based on ‘resources’ provided by people far away from the community, often with little relevance to what is possible on the ground. Ngo partners who start with the best intentions are forced to make compromises for the survival of their organisation and become very limited with time. The competing interests of these different actors leave local communities with little room to build from within.

A vast majority in development spend lots of financial and human resources focussing on the problems, needs and deficiencies of poor communities. Communities learn to become the recipients of services and stay in that mode to continue to benefit from the services. The “deficiency approach” becomes the only lens through which the external world relates to them. Local people become merely data sources. This path of development is based on finding out more about the “problem” for “helping” and lands up perpetuating more myths about what is lacking in these communities. The challenge with the ‘deficiency approach’ is one, that it leads to many missed opportunities and second the solutions most often come from somewhere else and are thus applied to the problem with little to no consideration about the capacities of the community, nor the relevance of the solutions imposed from the outside.

Communities are thus overwhelmed by development interventions that are well-intentioned, but not ultimately effective and are not accountable to them. Most communities address their social and economic problems with only a small amount of their

total capacity. Community capacity much needed, is often not used. The ones who have most at stake land up having least agency in determining how their development will take place¹.

This paper maps the capacities of local leaders in six urban poor federations in Africa. It focusses on 'community savings' as the most common tool practiced by the members of the six federations to mobilize communities and a clear commitment to link their collective capacities to their common aspiration to improve their life in the city and find security of tenure. The new challenges faced by the COVID 19 pandemic and Climate makes such a reflection very relevant at a time when there is need for more investment in building locally led processes.

All the historic evidence indicates that significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing in themselves and their resources. Community building starts with the process of locating the assets, skills and capacities of residents, and local institutions. This observation explains why communities are never built from the top down or from the outside. Kretzmann and McKnight, the pioneers of the 'Asset Based Community Development' (ABCD) methodology,² developed the Asset Based Community Development path to listing and mobilizing community capabilities based on the following [principles](#). This paper aims to examine the adaptive capacities developed by leaders in six SDI federations in Africa with these principles in mind.

- everyone has capacities which can be offered for the development of the community
- local communities are at the center of their own development
- relationships build a community
- leaders can utilize the relationships, by showing, sharing and building trust
- when people care about something they are motivated to act
- story telling and listening conversations are valued over top down decisions
- external organizations & institutions have reached their limit
- organized communities keep improving their collective capability to move towards their collective aspirations.

BUILDING COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP:

Urban poor communities face two challenges: evictions on one hand or a reliance on a service delivery model of development by well-intentioned ngos. Both these responses disempower local communities and rob them of their agency to influence and control their own development and curtail their decision making.

At SDI community leaders put together a variety of tools to speed up organization and leadership building. Community savings and Settlement mapping were the two main tools central to the mobilizing efforts for federation building. Women share their stories of migration and search for a decent house in the city while finding solutions to their everyday challenges at their regular savings meetings. The savings group has a larger function and goes beyond just meeting their economic needs. By listening to each others' stories they understand that their problems are also faced by many others in the city.

Today hundreds of slum dwellers; women, men, youth are connected to each other through their saving groups which builds new leaders and a building block for creating citywide and national federations with improved capacity to 'organize' and 'influence' change.

¹ Falzon, D. (2021) Expertise and Exclusivity in adaption decision making, Science Direct, Current opinion in Environment Sustainability, 2021.

² Kretzmann, J and McKnight, J. (1993) Building Communities from Inside Out: A path towards finding and mobilizing community's assets, ACTA Publications, USA

THE GLASS HALF FULL:

This paper maps the adaptive capacities of national leaders in six SDI country federations in Africa. Identifying and mapping these capacities was not only tangible and inclusive but allowed for each leader to take stock of what they bring to the table. It seeks to understand how individual leaders and their collective adapt and build capacity and engage with external capacities to leverage resources. Through a systematic engagement with new communities, federation leaders continue to strengthen their ability to build from within, while negotiating with local government, national governments and external institutions.

METHODOLOGY:

For the purpose of this paper, two countries each from three hubs in Africa, east, west and southern africa, within the SDI network were chosen; one with a 'mature' federation and one with a 'younger' or 'developing' federation. The "mature federation" reflects a leadership that is mature and capable of leading citywide and at a county level. A 'younger' or 'developing' federation as the name suggests are younger in age and often mentored by a mature federation.

Listing and mapping capacities of the national leaders was administered by support professionals and or by the leaders themselves. National federation leaders from all of the six countries responded to the six questions below. It is important to note that the formation of the leadership in each of the six countries is dynamic and changing and the local context, histories and the structures differ for each of the six countries.

Malawi is a mature federation presently going through a restructuring of its national and regional leadership. In Senegal, the national leadership is a single entity and in the process of creating federation structures based on their local municipal administrative boundaries. Uganda is a mature federation, works in over six cities to build and enhance institutional spaces to work more closely with local and national government. Tanzania is a mature federation and works very closely with its support NGO. Ghana is an established and mature federation and draws from its conventional leadership within the community and their tribe. Botswana is a young federation supported and mentored by the southern african leadership in South Africa and Zimbabwe. What they all have in common is that the main issue for mobilising is around evictions, housing and basic services.

SIX QUESTIONS OF ENQUIRY:

1. Individual capacities that you are blessed with
2. Capacities that improve with joining the savings network
3. Collective Capacities that improve when you engage with new members and new communities
4. Capacities that improve through engagement with local and national government
5. Capacities that improve through working with new types of associations and institutions
6. Capacity in action; leveraging external resources and responding to covid19

TABLE 1: NAME LIST OF SIX COUNTRY FEDERATION LEADERS IN AFRICA THAT PARTICIPATED IN MAPPING CAPACITIES

| THREE HUBS | NAME OF LEADERS | DISTRICT /REGION |
|------------|-----------------|------------------|
|------------|-----------------|------------------|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>EAST AFRICA NATIONAL SLUM DWELLERS FEDERATION OF UGANDA (NSDFU)</p> <p>22 leaders</p> | <p>Nadundu Sarah, Najjuko Daina, Lubega Edris, Nambozo Sarah, Wanda Richard, Katusabe Betty, Mudamba Umaru, Ssemanda Twaha, Kasende Michael, Balinda Edward, Onyango Goretti, Hassan Yasin, Ssebuguluse Francis, Beitunga Elijah, Kaddu Edirisa, Kato Justine, Kasalu Ronald, Sserunkuma Abdu, Mukasa Abdu, Amaku Ratibu</p> | <p>Jinja, Kampala Central region, Nakawa, Arua, Makindye, Kabale, Rubaga Kato Justine, Kasalu Ronald, Mukasa Abdu, Amaku Ratibu</p> |
| <p>EAST AFRICA TANZANIA URBAN POOR FEDERATION</p> <p>6 leaders</p> | <p>Jamila Bakari, Juliana John, Mahila Bakari Nguzo, Telesphol Mhina, Husna Seif Shechonge, Anthonia Lucas</p> | <p>Temeke, Dar es salam; Mtoni, Darajani, Arusha;</p> |
| <p>WEST AFRICA GHANA FEDERATION OF THE URBAN POOR</p> <p>15 leaders</p> | <p>Janet Adu, Haruna Abu, Kande Yussif, Margaret Naa Ayeley Arde-Acquah, Fuseini Baba Alhassan, Susana Yeboah, Baba Musa Pachaka, Hafsa Hassan, Emmanuel Zonyra, Nancy Birwaah, Hawabu Mohammed, Rashidatu Mahamudu, Rose Kuwornu, Hawa Dauda, Ussif Yakubu</p> | <p>Accra Metro, Ablekuma Central, Sagnarigu Municipal, Tamale Metro, Ashaiman Municipal, Tema Metro, Sekondi Takoradi Metro, Ayawaso East Municipal, Krowor Municipal, Ayawaso West Municipal, Ayawaso Central Municipal, Ayawaso North Municipal, Ablekuma West Municipal, Ga South Municipal, Ga West Municipal, Weija Gbawe Municipal, La Nkwantang Madina Municipal, Adentan Municipal, Ledzekuku Municipal, Kumasi</p> |
| <p>WEST AFRICA THE SENEGALESE FEDERATION OF INHABITANTS (FSH)</p> <p>33 leaders</p> | <p>Fatoumata Bousso, Astou Mbengue, Astou Mbengue, Maty Sarr, Fatou Sow, Fatou Gaye, Fatimata TALLA, Marie DIOUF DIONE, Aissatou DIARRA, Marie BAH, Moussou Traoré, Tening Dior Coumba Fall, Aissatou Ndiaye, Soukeynatou Ndaw, Marietou Faye, Tacko Biteye, Fatou Ngom, Mamadou Ndiaye, Khadiatou Faye, Mariama Ndiaye, Anta Ndiaye, Ndeye Amy LEYE, Arame Ciss SYLLA, Fatou ba SENE</p> | <p>Djihad Thiaroye Kao, Diamaguène Sicap Mbaou, Guinaw Rails Sud, Wakhinane NIMZATT, Thiès, Louga, Médina Gounass, Djihad Thiaroye Kao, Yeumbeul Nord, Tivaouane Peulh, Dahra Djolof, Rufisque, Tivaouane</p> |
| <p>SOUTHERN AFRICA MALAWI HOMELESS PEOPLE'S FEDERATION</p> <p>16 leaders</p> | <p>Ethel Chinomba, Patrick Sankhulani, Agnes Julius, Josephy Kamoto, Beauty Saka, Joyce Awadi, Loveness Chimatiro, Duwalen Kawamba, Steven Dimba, Jesse Mhango, Larona Kamanga, Maness Nambozi, Edna Manda, Nora Baziwelo, Ackim Jana</p> | <p>Chiradzulu, Mulanje, Thyolo, Phalombe, Chikwawa, Machinga, Blantyre, Dedza, Karonga, Rumphi, Nkhatabay, Kasungu, Mzuzu, Lilongwe, Ntcheu</p> |
| <p>SOUTHERN AFRICA BOTSWANA HOMELESS AND POOR PEOPLE'S FEDERATION</p> <p>5 leaders</p> | <p>Keletso Dambe, Masego Kgathola, Phildah Charuka, Tshabala, S.Maseko</p> | <p>Francis Town, North District (east), North District (west)</p> |

MAPPING CAPACITIES IN SIX FEDERATIONS:

The mapping exercise identified two central capabilities of the leadership building process within the federation, one related to **affiliation**, which allows members to build their capacities through their savings groups and second to **effectively participate** in the political choices that govern their quality of life.

“Although I was a leader since school and a class monitor and a head prefect, in the federation, I trained to be a leader, managing groups and people. By mobilizing saving groups, I supported my people to build capacity to save, take loans for children’s schools fees and for income generation. Through my savings group, I visited new communities and participated in profiling and mapping the settlements in my city. Government did not have data on population, number of households and household income. They now use our information for making development plans and understand the income levels of residents. I have supported government to address poverty”

(Jamila Bakari, Tanzania Urban Poor Federation member, Temeke Regional Coordination Committee, Dar es Salaam)

Tables

Table 1 **name list** of community leaders from six country federations that participated in the capacity mapping exercise.

Table 2 Individual leaders identify **personal abilities** they are blessed with and which improved in the federation.

Table 3 Leaders identify **capacities** that further improve through savings and community mobilising.

Table 3.1 **savings information** of six federations show capacity to save and manage savings.

Table 4 **collective capacities are further developed** through connecting with new leaders and communities.

Table 5 & 6 opportunities continue to expand through engagement with **local and national government** and **with external organisations and institutions**.

Table 6.1 and 6.2 identifies programs that show collective **‘capacity in action’** in new situations with new actors and new institutional arrangements to implement projects and respond to COVID19.

| TABLE 2 | PERSONAL CAPACITIES GET FURTHER IMPROVED IN THE SAVINGS GROUP |
|----------|---|
| TANZANIA | business skills, hair styling, theatre arts, knitting, lots of patience, natural influencer, good mediator in a conflict, can give advice on different issues |
| UGANDA | Advocacy and lobbying, mobilizing and sensitizing communities into savings groups, negotiation and advocacy, counseling, mentorship, public management partnership building with other stakeholders, community dialogue, leading others |
| BOTSWANA | mobilizing people, voluntarism, natural leader, business acumen, selling, compassionate, teaching, persuasive, hosting, culinary, cooking, public speaking |
| MALAWI | farming, teaching, mobilize people, business, public speaking counseling, communication, creative, serving other people |

| TABLE 2 | PERSONAL CAPACITIES GET FURTHER IMPROVED IN THE SAVINGS GROUP |
|---------|--|
| SENEGAL | excellent speaking, leadership, and mobilization skills, ward sponsors, city councilors, trained in the traditional tontine system, income-generating activities, trade, teaching, organization, financial management, self-employed entrepreneurs. |
| GHANA | Caring for others, morally upright, understanding quality, persuasive, empathetic, paying attention, good imitator, ability to develop a friendly, supportive and cooperative environment, ability to move and motivate others, ability to learn fast and teach fast, soft spoken but pays attention to details, capacity to follow, be calm, has a retentive memory |

Table 2: Everyone has capacities which can be useful. Individual leaders capacities get further developed through savings and community building. For most leaders, it was the first time to identify, acknowledge and articulate their very own capacity and other team members. The essence of the community building process aims to harness the individual capacities of its members to energize the whole community. This is an ongoing investment and cannot be achieved in the life of a project. When capacities of the individual and the collective are fully recognized and mobilized, they are empowered to act and fully and contribute to the decision making and community building process. This is what motivates individual leaders to becoming serious agents of change. The recognition of capacities is especially relevant to leaders in low income settlements who are often made to feel like a liability. The collective capacity along with the income of the women, men, youth, children and elderly empowers the community to participate in decision making processes with local actors who are more powerful. The truth is that real development can only begin from within.

| TABLE 3 | COLLECTIVE CAPACITIES GET IMPROVED IN THE COMMUNITY SAVING GROUPS | | |
|----------|--|---|--|
| | MOBILISATION | LEADERSHIP | SKILLS |
| TANZANIA | mobilize/ revive community savings groups, mobilize youth around savings, learn to spend money appropriately, loan repayment, saving with a purpose, mobilize new communities through learning exchanges, build capacity of local leadership participatory learning | build relationship with leaders and other stakeholders, manage people, trained to be a leader, relationship with new stake holders, ability to influence, advocacy work, build confidence, speak in public, share experiences, listen, analyze, question, respond accordingly. Facilitate meetings and talk in front of a big group, | business management, project management, finance management, make business plans, make work/action plans, report writing, make presentations, record keeping/ financial records, community enumeration, GPS mapping, house numbering, data entry/ how to use a computer, construct toilets, construct house carpentry, house painting, entrepreneurship ideas and skills, make products like charcoal briquettes, soaps, potatoes and banana crisps, gardening skills, brick making, |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|---|--|
| UGANDA | <p>communication skills/community dialogue</p> <p>counseling skills/ understand human behavior,</p> <p>ability to approach and inspire new community members to the federation saving culture</p> <p>knowledge sharing,</p> <p>capacity to do a community assessment</p> <p>networking and planning,</p> <p>address large numbers of people,</p> | <p>Partnership building/ interpersonal and public relations,</p> <p>understanding different processes and merging it with federation processes,</p> <p>confidence of interacting with people at different levels,</p> <p>debate and dialogue/lobbying and advocacy skills,</p> <p>capacity to lead/self-confidence,</p> <p>accountability/ code of conduct,</p> | <p>Research skills/ data processing/mapping and profiling skills,</p> <p>financial management, record keeping, report writing, project planning and management</p> <p>reading and writing skills,</p> <p>construction of sanitation units/ new construction technologies/budgeting,</p> |
| BOTSWANA | <p>listening, mobilizing, communication and dialogue, understanding and addressing group dynamics, motivating others,</p> | <p>negotiation, conflict resolution, lead, advocacy, resource mobilization</p> | <p>financial literacy , teaching, dealing, documentation,</p> |
| MALAWI | <p>mobilization of communities,, active participation in community work, development conscious, community dialogue,</p> | <p>innovative ways to mobilize resources</p> <p>communication skills, conflict resolution,</p> <p>people management, public speaking, negotiating,</p> <p>mentoring, giving,</p> | <p>financial literacy,</p> <p>documentation</p> <p>business innovation,</p> <p>teaching,</p> |
| SENEGAL | <p>Popularization of the federation's activities, Integration of young people in the federation, collection of qualitative and quantitative data through the Know Your City campaigns, Exchange of experiences between different groups,</p> | <p>supervising groups, creation of new management tools, Management and maintenance of community structures at the street level/ Connecting with elected officials to facilitate the involvement of the population in the management of public affairs speak in public/ negotiation tools with local authorities,</p> | <p>Train young people in the neighborhoods to collect data, social networking tools, Diversification of income-generating activities at the group level, Standardization of administrative and financial management tools for group savings, Better knowledge of land procedures for access to property for vulnerable group Better management of the living environment in informal settlements/ Reclamation and re-qualification of public spaces,</p> |
| GHANA | <p>mobilizing community savings group.</p> <p>engagement with community active participation in community issues</p> | <p>effective communication/ community advocacy people/group management, conflict resolution, lead, group participation,</p> | <p>financial management, project management, financial literacy, data collection,</p> |

Table3: Local leaders are at the centre of their own development and improve their collective capacities through community saving processes. Women learn to save, repay loans, prioritize who gets a loan, manage poor repayments, support individuals

that have defaulted and also manage books. Individual members improve their ability to mobilize, lead and to undertake specific skills and expand their perspective from addressing individual needs to begin addressing their collective needs and see the value in doing so. Listening conversations are encouraged instead of top down decisions. Members share and listen to experiences of new members. Leading by example and doing and showing builds trust and proves to new members that there are mechanisms in place to protect their interests. Communities understand the advantages of becoming more credit worthy and learn to demonstrate their collective capacity to leverage external resources. Managing money has a way of exposing strengths and weakness of individuals and organisations and the community savings mechanism becomes a safe space for learning and building leadership and enhancing and multiplying the collective capacities.

| TABLE 3.1 | COMMUNITY SAVINGS FOR SIX COUNTRY FEDERATIONS 2021 | | | | |
|-----------|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| | NUMBER OF SETTLEMENTS SAVINGS | NUMBER OF CITY FEDERATIONS | TOTAL AMT OF SAVINGS IN USD | URBAN POOR FUNDS AMOUNT IN USD | TOTAL AMT OF SAVING IN COVID TIMES IN USD |
| TANZANIA | saving groups 714 savers 22,000 | 10 | 129,829,866\$ | 27,276, 79 | 71,531,38 |
| UGANDA | 476 | 6 | 84,000 | 680,217 | figures not available due to covid. Could be lower |
| BOTSWANA | 211 | 3 | 77867.36 | 6,732.00 | 11,617.13 |
| MALAWI | | 4 | 151,473.67 | 12,525.40 | |
| SENEGAL | 517 | one national federation | 158,068 | 9,800 | |
| GHANA | 306 | 41 | 148397 | 16885.641 | 3959.49 |

(Table 3.1) Community savings in six countries. The savings routine was disrupted on account of the lock down and the collectors were not able to go for collection and records for this period not available. There were also significant withdrawals during this time.

| TABLE 4 | COLLECTIVE CAPACITIES IMPROVE THROUGH ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW COMMUNITIES | | |
|---------|---|------------|--------|
| | MOBILISATION | LEADERSHIP | SKILLS |

| TABLE 4 | COLLECTIVE CAPACITIES IMPROVE THROUGH ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW COMMUNITIES | | |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| TANZANIA | <p>mobilize community savings locally and nationally /advocate spirit of savings, train new members to save and to train others- resulting in increased federation membership,</p> <p>Introduce youth to the federation, mobilize youth into savings groups- teaches them new skills, gives them direction and addresses poverty.</p> <p>loans and loan repayments/loans for immediate needs and income generation,</p> <p>include new members in exchanges so they can learn by seeing and practicing.</p> <p>enumeration, mapping and profiling,</p> <p>train communities to keep their environment clean through cleanliness campaigns and changing behavior, Sanitation and hygiene promotion,</p> | <p>Train groups to make personal changes as well as changes within savings groups and communities</p> <p>Project management, public speaking,</p> <p>Questioning local leaders about any important issues or their savings money when there is a need,</p> <p>Building relationship with government and other stakeholders, advocacy skills. training and building leadership skills, confidence building,</p> | <p>Report writing, Record keeping</p> <p>new technical and construction skills, low-cost toilet technologies, low cost housing technology, house construction,</p> <p>business management, Start income generation projects.</p> |
| UGANDA | <p>communications skills, how to dialogue and address the community, social interaction skills, community awareness, sensitization skills</p> <p>create a sense of belonging, eliminating social gaps</p> | <p>building partnerships,</p> <p>advocacy and lobbying,</p> <p>self expression, self confidence, capacity to lead,</p> <p>mentoring</p> | |
| BOTSWANA | <p>listening, dialogue, communication skills,</p> | <p>negotiations,</p> | <p>teaching , business acumen, financial literacy, selling</p> |
| MALAWI | <p>mobilizing, mentoring, communication skills, dialogue, active participation in development,</p> | <p>innovative resource mobilization,</p> <p>conflict resolution, advocacy, negotiation,</p> <p>build social capital, people management, public speaking, giving,</p> | <p>financial literacy and documentation</p> <p>business acumen</p> |
| SENEGAL | <p>train communities about the federation, its philosophy, values, membership, objectives, approach, is what makes them eventually join the federation,</p> <p>Foster the process of individual and community ownership for developing leadership skills</p> <p>Community project management</p> | <p>correct handling of the problems they face.</p> <p>understand the difference between leadership and power</p> <p>Negotiations with local authorities</p> <p>good mastery of communication processes /Advocacy</p> <p>develop new skills and attitudes in leadership for an effective involvement in the management and animation of the FSH and member groups</p> <p>public affairs management</p> | <p>support to develop new skills or strengthen existing ones.</p> <p>Administrative and financial management</p> |

| TABLE 4 | COLLECTIVE CAPACITIES IMPROVE THROUGH ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW COMMUNITIES | | |
|---------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| GHANA | trust, loyalty, active participation in development, communication skills, active group work effective participation | advocacy skills, negotiation, how to dialogue, conflict resolution, effective listening, morale and self-determination, mentoring, people management, | financial literacy, documentation, |

Table 4: Relationships build a community. Community leaders utilize the relationships by showing, caring, building trust and improve their collective capacities through engaging with new communities. Leaders build capacity to mentor, teach, guide, learn, problem solve and find alternative solutions to build a trusting relationship. No external actor can replace an internal member from within the community who can tell their story of action and inspire new communities. As saving groups expand, the range of capacities within the federation also expand. Communities link their savings processes to citywide enumerations, city upgrading funds and evolve into citywide and national federations. Federations build the momentum to embark on a journey to advance their capability to affiliate and lead, to influence and control their environment and achieve well being for themselves, their families and communities.

| TABLE 5 | COLLECTIVE CAPABILITIES IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT | | |
|---------|---|------------|--------|
| | MOBILISATION | LEADERSHIP | SKILLS |

| TABLE 5 | COLLECTIVE CAPABILITIES IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENT | | |
|-----------------|---|--|---|
| TANZANIA | <p>mapping and enumeration/ identify community challenges,</p> <p>develop action plan/ cleanliness campaign to remove garbage and unblock water ways with involvement of local counselor and leaders/ hygiene promotion in areas affected by cholera outbreak/ support government by collecting information about informal settlements for making development plans.</p> <p>data entry for the National Electoral Committee and Dar City Council.</p> | <p>advise government on how to work with informal settlements/</p> <p>preparing report to explain how to support low-income people to improve their sanitary facilities, Train Community Development officers for online registration of groups. project management and share community experiences and how you do it. Develop and present action plan to address challenges identified during enumerations and mapping.</p> | <p>work with different government institutions to improve toilet facilities in schools, hospitals and informal settlements in local wards as part of a government hygiene program.</p> <p>Sent by government to informal settlements to train communities in toilet construction, change hygiene behavior</p> |
| UGANDA | precedent setting, using facts in ground to engage with government, partnerships, | | |
| BOTSWANA | dialogue and communication | | business |
| MALAWI | | | financial literacy, documentation, |
| SENEGAL | The federation accompanies local and central governments in their projects (with accompaniment of the Ministry of Urban Planning in the mass communication concerning the 100,000-housing project, with the accompaniment of the national sanitation office for the change of behavior of the inhabitants towards the works, signature of MOUs with town halls, etc.). | | |
| GHANA | Data from profiling, mapping and enumeration, partnership, community presence, representation | advocacy skills, negotiation, how to dialogue, conflict resolution, effective listening, | Community Mobilization, communication skills, negotiation and lobbying skills |

Table5: When people care about something they are motivated to act and engage with outside leaders and institutions.

Leaders improve their capability to engage with local and national government. Local government is a trustee for many resources that are vital to the community and are responsible for the provision of land, housing, water, health and education. However, very often these resources are provided in a way that misdirects their efforts to respond to local communities. It will take a long time for government to make a shift from their present role of defining needs and providing solutions to including communities and listening to them. Examples from Uganda show how the land services and citizenship program created new institutional arrangements that allowed the urban poor, especially women to participate. Communities have invested in developing their collective capability to negotiate, mediate, engage and work with government to realize their aspirations and participate effectively in the political choices that govern their lives.

Leaders have demonstrated capability to influence government decisions. Over the years the impact is visible; number of evictions have gone down, communities participate in citywide slum-profiling and included in the cities spatial map, they improve their ability to work in joint upgrading projects, manage upgrading funds, get contracts to construct toilets and sanitation facilities, implement resettlement projects and influence policy and practice. Organised communities acting together develop the capability to access and leverage resources and government support that would normally not be possible to do individually.

| TABLE 6 | COLLECTIVE CAPABILITIES IMPROVE ENGAGEMENT WITH NEW ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|
| | MOBILISATION | LEADERSHIP | SKILLS |
| TANZANIA | mobilizing youth groups and building capacity | influencing skills | data entry to the Ifakara health institute, support new groups learn about federation savings systems and the differences with other savings systems used by other organisations , construct toilets and hand washing facilities in local schools, health centers and construction of incinerators in hospitals in Dar es salam ad Morogoro regions to support local NGO sanitation and water action (SAWA) in collaboration with UNICEF. training people from Uganda and Kenya how to construct different types of toilet technologies – supported an International NGO WaterAid, Gardening skills |
| UGANDA | public relations, networking, partnership building , advocacy and lobbying | Led the community driven processes in the land services and citizenship program | mapping settlements city wide, managing community development funds, technical knowledge gained through implementing community toilets, writing reports. |
| BOTSWANA | motivation, | advocacy, resource mobilization | financial literacy, teaching |
| MALAWI | development conscious | | financial literacy, business innovation, |
| SENEGAL | active participation in events organized by other associations | | |
| GHANA | Community mobilization and group formation, community-led development initiatives, leveraging resources with stakeholders | dialogue, advocacy, communication, negotiation | Community mobilization, communication and dialoguing |

Table 6: Organizations and institutions on the outside are limited in how they can respond to local needs. Collective capabilities improve with engagement with outside organizations and institutions. The nature, type, and number of associations/organisations in every settlement differs. For example in Dharavi, Mumbai there are thousands of local associations and organizations. Leaders are often surprised to see how many groups they know or do not know. The slum-profile questionnaire includes formal and informal organisations and institutions, charities, trusts, foundations, health clinics, sports club, women’s groups, political party office, youth groups, community centers, churches, temples, masjid and others. Making an inventory of these local associations and organizations is a way for the community to understand the internal assets and power to come together

for a common cause. Mature federations improve the ability to partner and foster relationships with new organisations who have resources to offer.

The more mature the leadership, the better their ability to mediate and influence decisions made for them by influential and powerful external organisations. The Uganda Federation was able to continue to work with the World Bank Infrastructure project. This is only possible when local community organizations are allowed to build their stakes into process and included from the start. They become an asset and not a liability.

| TABLE 6.1 | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| CAPACITY IN ACTION - ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS | | | |
| | INSTITUTION | PROJECT | OUTCOME |
| TANZANIA | 1. Global Dry Toilet Association of Finland, Homeless International/ DIFD, Temeke City Council 2. Dar es Salam Water Supply and sanitation authority (DAWASA). Ilala City Council 3. SDI/SHARE/Cambridge Development Initiative | Solid waste management project at 1.Keko Machungwa 2. Miburani ward 3. Vingunguti simplified sewerage system | 1. 51 toilets, 969 benefitted 2. 72 sanitary facilities for 1233 people in Ila la City 3. Mwanza Water Supply & Sanitation Authority replicated the project in Mwanza City |
| UGANDA | Dlaraphte Foundation | Makindye Sanitation project | Sanitation unit for 1000 people |
| BOTSWANA | City of Francistown Council, Department of Town and Regional Planning the Department of Community Development under the ministry of Local Government. | Revitalization of Boikhutso (Somerset Bokowe) Participatory Slum Upgrading Project in partnership with know Your city Campaign, profiled 3 communities in different cities. | 1.Street lights installed in Boikhutso, currently in negotiations to install 2.water and sanitation for 5 members of the community. 3. engaged city council to improve the living conditions of those that were renting their houses. |
| MALAWI | DESWOS- German Development Assistance Association for social housing + BMZ | Sanitation and Hygiene project / sanitation/ waste management/ income generation/ toilet construction | 47, 000 direct beneficiaries and 220,000 indirect |
| SENEGAL | Financed by Geneva Federation of Cooperation, Abbe Pierre Foundation, Fedevaco, etc. in partnership with local authorities, ministry of habitat, etc. | Housing reconstruction project of 800 houses in areas affected by flooding | 800 families |
| GHANA | SDI, OXFAM, WaterAid, Water & Sanitation for the Urban Poor, UNICEF, UN HABITAT, Cities Alliance, Ministry of local government and rural development through ACCRA Metropolitan Assembly, Ablekuma Central, Klottey Korle, Ashaiman, Okaikoi North and Ayawaso Central Municipal Assemblies, World Bank, Works and Housing, Zongo Development | Community led response and management of COVID19 in Zongos, Rapid assessment if Zongos, inner city slums and markets capacity to respond and manage COVID19 pandemic using online tools such as KOBO collect, ODK and community focussed discussions | Market women, youth and local community leaders trained to collect data using Kobo collect and ODK tools for Covid-19 hotspots Established 6 Covid -19 community campaign centres and structures to respond to the spread of Covid-19. Distributed over 500 veronica buckets and other PPEs in selected Zongos, Inner-Cities and Slums across the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) Installed 195 Innovative In-Yard Mechanical Foot Paddled Handwashing facilities for enhanced Hygiene practice in Ashaiman, Sabon Zongo and Ga Mashie |

Table 6.1 Organized communities keep improving their collective capabilities and move towards reaching their aspiration for a better life Federation leadership improve their engagements with different types of organizations and institutions to leverage external assets and resources for the benefit of the communities.

| TABLE 6.2 | CAPACITY IN ACTION - COVID RESPONSE |
|-----------|---|
| | |
| TANZANIA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilizing and awareness creation in community about COVID preventive action like wearing masks, washing hand with soap and social distancing. Engage health officers in awareness creation and visit different communities to provide protective gears including sanitizers, masks and provision of bed sheets and as well providing education to community. • Training in schools and community regarding protection measures for COVID19 and explaining scope of the problem. Importance of wearing masks, cleaning hands by using soap and water or using sanitizers, maintaining safe distance and not to touch eyes, nose and mouth. • Encourage groups to continue savings despite the challenges. We made follow up in groups to understand how savings were affected and also advising groups to allow their members to make withdrawals or give them loans. Organized federation savings group members contribute money to buy food and fruits to send to our colleagues who were admitted at hospital. • Advice and support people who started to feel sick to go to hospital. Used the confidence built in the federation go out and talk about COVID although the situation was very scary. Prepare home-made medicines for usual small health problems. • Evaluation of COVID 19 activities after the situation returned to somewhat normal. We went back to check how federation groups were impacted, challenges that groups have experienced during the outbreak. |
| UGANDA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate implementation during amidst Covid-19. Revive savings especially because savings were used-up in the 1st phase of COVID-19. Encourage fellow federation members to save the little they have for the next dark days. Encourage communities to share the little they have so as to ensure all survive this pandemic. Coordinate regular online meetings with federation leaders so they can effectively support federation members and keep the fire burning. Plan and prepare federation programs that would benefit people. • Support and empower NSDFU trained youth to sensitize communities to prevent and manage COVID-19 through washing hands, proper use of masks, immunization, social distancing and good nutrition among others. Distribution of hand washing liquid soap using door to door strategy. Monitor the usage of hand washing containers distributed by NSDFU and ensure they are clean and have sufficient water. • Lobby potential service providers to give food and other valuable support to federation members. Work with Red Cross to distribute Covid-19 IEC materials. Coordinate with community health centers to ensure that the slum dwellers access adequate health care. Encourage slum dwellers to test and immunize against Covid-19 • Share information between communities and the city council. Work with city task team against COVID-19 to ensure information from the slum settlements reach government and services from government effectively reach people. Gather community stories and prepare them for the required support. Coordinate with government to identify and extend support like food, liquid soap to the vulnerable communities. |

| TABLE 6.2 | CAPACITY IN ACTION - COVID RESPONSE |
|-----------|--|
| BOTSWANA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilizing and sharing information • Negotiation and Conflict resolution • Volunteerism, distributed meals during lockdowns • Business acumen skills • Communication • Resource Mobilization • Advocacy |
| MALAWI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with savings groups and mobilization of community to follow Covid-19 preventive measures to stay safe. • Engagement with health officials responsible for training federation leaders to train groups in Covid-19 preventive measures and proper usage and disposal of Covid-19 preventive kits. • Engagement with City Councils and other stake holders in supporting communities • The financial literacy trainings were combined with skills for livelihood improvement trainings in which Federation members supported new and old groups through the savings process. |
| SENEGAL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of information and the production of communication tools for the proper management of covid in the intervention zones. • Engaged with central government through health structures. • Federation leaders raise awareness and help people cope. People listened to the leaders in their commune as they already know them. Mobilized federation to raise awareness, vaccination and the distribution of food and financial aid to support vulnerable communities. |
| GHANA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Unity with Purpose’ - Initiated community coordinating committees. • Networked with other CSOs, NGOs, CBOs and local community leaders to coordinate efforts. • Community led response to Covid. Educate and sensitize communities. Built hand washing facilities. • Past relationship with municipalities was useful. Supported Information centers in 3 municipalities. • Existing data on informal settlements helped leaders reach out more systematically to other leaders. • Above all the federations collective experience in responding to humanitarian crisis through peer-to-peer learning exchanges to Liberia and Sierra Leon during the Ebola crisis was useful. |

Table 6.2 shows Capacity in Action and how the leadership harness their existing knowledge and capacity to respond to the local down during CoVID19. There is growing evidence to show that external institutions and ngos on their own are limited and unable to address the scale and needs of communities. When they connect to the capacities of local communities they are able to respond better. The ongoing COVID crisis geared the existing capacities of the savings groups to respond to the needs of its members and communities. The track record of working consistently through their savings groups and citywide on past projects earned both the trust of communities, government and external institutions much needed during this time of crisis. The history of relationship developed with local and national government allowed the federation leaders to better connect available resources to the communities in need. This allowed the federations to intervene as honest brokers through existing health structures and municipal administrations further strengthening their relationship with local actors.

The settlement profiling and mapping process allowed the federation leadership to identify communities and access information on the status of the pandemic in different pockets in the city. The information collected through settlement profiling was seen as an asset to mobilize communities and raise awareness and deliver food and aid to the most vulnerable.

CONCLUSION:

Mapping the capacities of the federation leadership in six countries in Africa is a prelude to understanding what communities are capable of doing on their own, what can improve and how external resources and capacities can be leveraged to support

communities to do what they already do, better. What we are learning is that when communities begin with a clear commitment to invest in themselves, the nature and quality of their relationship with the outside changes.

Seeing the glass half full is the first step for community leaders to acknowledging their collective capability. Seeing the glass half full and understanding why it is half empty is not to deny the problems but to focus on the energy of how each community member has contributed and can continue to contribute in their community development. Breaking out of the existing patterns of relationships with well intentioned local and global actors continue to be a challenge for community leaders who are eager to build their capacity.

This exercise of 'mapping capacity' allows community leaders to examine how their local organizational efforts improve their collective capability to affiliate and influence change in their community and their city. The federation building process uses the practice of savings in combination with other practices of slum profiling and upgrading projects to strengthen their ability to move towards reaching their aspiration for a decent life in the city. Communities first learn to build community based processes from within. Communities that build from within simply adapt better to new situations.

Through their organizational achievements, community leaders in the last two decades have proved to themselves that they are best positioned to locate and connect with each other and tap local (often unrecognized) assets and capacities to multiply and enhance their power and effectiveness. Mature federations now have the ability to take necessary steps, engage outside actors and create new forms of institutional relationships with local and national government.

The lesson from COVID19 shows that investment and preparedness does not start during a crisis. When communities invest in building their organizational capacity, they are capable of developing local self delivery systems that benefit the more vulnerable among them. Mobilizing locally through savings groups over time ensured that federations could intervene and respond to local needs in their communities faster and had the ability to leverage outside resources more effectively. The federation experiences from managing past disasters, human made and natural enhanced and supported local community action during COVID.

Efforts to build communities is a never ending struggle. It is not uncommon for communities to have barriers local and external that stop inclusion and stifle participation. By supporting local structures and local visions and investing in the capacities of communities, development actors can open the space to support local leadership to build their organisations from within. It is not enough to engage local people through existing structures. Instead, it is crucial that the structures themselves are transformed and power redistributed among the local actors, such that communities stay at the centre of their own development.

PARTICIPATING FEDERATIONS/ SUPPORT NGOS :

SLUM DWELLERS INTERNATIONAL (SDI) sdinet.org

TANZANIA URBAN POOR FEDERATION (TUPF) <https://ccitanzania.org>

NATIONAL SLUM DWELLERS FEDERATION OF UGANDA (NSDFU) <https://www.actogetherug.org>

GHANA FEDERATION OF THE URBAN POOR (GHAFUP) <https://www.pdghana.org>

THE SENEGALESE FEDERATION OF INHABITANTS (FSH). <https://urbasen.org>

MALAWI HOMELESS PEOPLE'S FEDERATION <https://ccodemalawi.org>

BOTSWANA HOMELESS AND POOR PEOPLE'S FEDERATION (BHPPF) <https://borgenproject.org/homelessness-in-botswana/>

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