The World Human Rights Cities Forum

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Human Rights Cities and Sustainable Development:
Historical Developments and Current Challenges in Building Inclusive, Healthy, Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Cities for the Future

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Introduction

Introduction

I write as the "native speaker" of English from among those who have had some editorial responsibility for this collection. The others with significant roles are Dr. SHIN Gyonggu, Executive Director of the Gwangju International Center and English Professor Emeritus of Chonnam National University, Alejandro FUENTES, Senior Researcher at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, KIM Yeonmin, Professor of English at Chonnam National University, KIM Seonghoon, also Professor of English at Chonnam National University, and HAN Younglee, a Coordinator at the Gwangju International Center. Our editorial responsibilities began in the summer of 2020 when we began to review paper proposals for presentation at the 10th World Human Rights Cities Forum in Gwangju from October 7-10, 2020. We finally selected fourteen papers with sixteen authors. The papers were then presented in four online sessions on October 8. Of those fourteen papers, nine have been revised and included in this collection.

In the spirit of the many calls for broad-based citizen participation in local governance, the editorial effort for this volume has emphasized inclusion. Some of the contributors are researchers and human rights activists with long experience; others are at the beginnings of what we hope will be long and productive careers. Some of the essays are lengthy; others are short and concise. Whatever the stage of development in their career or the state of development in an essay, we welcome the contributors' voices to this collection. Each of the essays provides ground on which to build further consideration.

We have chosen to organize the essays into three groups. The first section, "Localizing Human Rights and Sustainable Development," has three essays. In "Conceptualising Human Rights Cities: Legal Deliberations and Practical Proposals on the Pursuit of Human Rights and the SDGs at the Local Level," Markus Möstl considers Human Rights Cities in light of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda, exploring the ways in which and to what extent they can be mutually reinforcing. In "Human Rights Cities and SDGs – The Case of Gwangju," Joyce John discusses how the Gwangju Human Rights Charter and the city's most recent five-year plan coordinate with the Sustainable Development Goals to yield measurable progress in most human rights indicators. In "History's Impact on a Local Governance Model at the Urban Level: A Comparative Study of the Human Rights Cities of Gwangju, South Korea and Porto Alegre, Brazil," Dikshya Gautam and Cloé Marty embed the development of these two pioneering human rights cities in their particular historical contexts, showing that Porto Alegre's participatory budgeting and Gwangju's struggles for democracy and justice, while different, were both crucial paths to greater human rights at the local level.

The second section, "Diversity of Human Rights Challenges at the Local Level," also has three essays. In "Education in El Salvador: Reducing Inequality through Regional Strategies that Guarantee Local Development," Irma Marisol Hernández Garcia argues for coordination between regional and national levels, and then between national and local levels in Central America to improve educational opportunities with an awareness of local particularities. In "Right to the

City: A Case Study of Street Children of Pakistan," Shahnawaz likewise emphasizes education in considering the challenges facing Karachi, Pakistan in providing for its street children, identifying the ways in which NGOs have attempted to compensate for governmental failings. In "Changes in the Global Flow of Plastic Waste and Their Effects on Sustainable Development," Brandon Callegari considers the local human rights issues in sending plastics to developing countries, using Malaysia as a case study.

The third section, "Keeping Community Spirit in the Time of COVID-19," likewise has three essays. In "From Sanitation to Education: What Is Necessary to Overcome in Brazilian Slums," Ingrid Rafaele Rodrigues Leiria looks at the favelas of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo and argues that long-term plans to conquer poverty are more important than short-term cash infusions in combating the problems that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. In "The Re-Existences of the Inhabitants in the Time of Pandemic: Proposals and Struggles for Rebuilding Cities Grounded on Human Rights," Cesare Ottolini proposes a long-term solution to the housing crisis that has come to a head in the pandemic, vigorously arguing for a radical, even utopian, redistribution of resources. Finally, in "Redefined VUCA as the Urban Response to the Post-COVID Paradigm," Dominika Sadowska and Beata Faracik present the COVID-19 pandemic as a VUCA situation (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity), similar to the situation in an armed conflict, and propose an alternative VUCA Prime response: Vision, Understanding, Clarity, and Agility.

As the native English speaker, I have edited the essays, written by an international assemblage of researchers, for clarity and general adherence to the APA style sheet. My goal was not to recreate the essays in idiomatic academic American English. Rather, it was to recognize the efficacy of international Englishes as modes of communication across cultures and borders. Furthermore, we chose to honor the authors' choice of British or American conventions for spelling. Therefore, my editorial hand has been generally light and applied mostly in the interest of clarity rather than prescriptive grammaticality. The regard for personal stylistic choices and idiosyncrasies in English expression has been my general guiding principle.

I offer my deepest gratitude to those organizations that have sponsored and supported this collection and the paper presentations from which they have been developed: The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, The Education and Research Program for Fostering Cultural Memory Curators of Chonnam National University, Gwangju International Center. Thanks to all the contributors for offering an abundant variety of approaches to the issues facing human rights cities. Thanks to the colleagues (noted above) who participated in organizing and editing these essays. A very particular thanks goes to HAN Younglee, who kept us all organized and on task from the very beginning of the process, from the call for papers to the publication of this collection. The project would have been impossible without her professionalism and dedication.

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Papers I

Localizing Human Rights and Sustainable Development

Conceptualising Human Rights Cities: Legal Deliberations and Practical Proposals on the Pursuit of Human Rights and the SDGs at the Local Level

Markus Möstl*

Abstract

The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a transformative development framework based on human rights addressed to all government levels. There are thus operational opportunities for Human Rights Cities around the world to concurrently pursue the achievement of development goals and to strengthen the protection and fulfilment of human rights at the local level. Yet, the simultaneous implementation of both human rights and the 2030 Agenda gives rise to some important questions:

1. What are the conceptual commonalities and differences of human rights, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) when it comes to their implementation at the local level? What do local level governments have to consider from a legal and practical point of view?
2. To what extent may the implementation of the development agenda reinforce the realisation of human rights in a Human Rights City, and vice versa? Does progress towards the SDGs and the NUA automatically contribute to the enjoyment of human rights, and does the promotion and protection of human rights practically further the realisation of the SDGs and the NUA at the local level?
3. What do we learn from these deliberations on the commonalities and differences of human rights, the SDGs, and the NUA for the conceptualisation of Human Rights Cities? What significance should be assigned to SDGs in a Human Rights City, and what practical advice can be given to local authorities on the concurrent pursuit of human rights and the SDGs?

Keywords: human rights, sustainable development, SDGs, local level, integrated approach

Human Rights, the SDGs and the NUA: Key Commonalities and Differences

When adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2015) and the SDGs, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided that the development agenda is to be pursued not only in the poorest and least developed countries, but in all countries worldwide. This paradigm shift in the development policy was complemented by the adoption of the NUA (UN, 2017b), which sets out in more detail the contributions urban communities can make around the

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globe to implement the current development agenda. As a result, authorities at the local level find themselves in a situation in which commitments of a political nature (policy goals and targets of the SDGs and of the NUA) and legal obligations (human rights provisions) are to be followed and implemented concurrently. At first glance, many of the 2030 Agenda's commitments are somehow linked to the material human rights obligations enshrined in international or regional human rights treaties. But what are the conceptual commonalities and differences of human rights, the SDGs, and NUA? What do local level governments intending to follow an integrated approach have to take into consideration from a legal and practical point of view?

Commonalities

Universality. Universality is a common claim by the human rights framework and the development agenda. Human rights apply to all humans equally in all countries, as expressed by the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, and more recently at the 2005 World Summit (OHCHR, 1993, para. 1; UN, 2005, para. 120). The SDGs also claim to be universal and all the goals shall be implemented for all people in all countries. The 2030 Agenda makes this very clear by stating that it "[…] is accepted by all countries and is applicable to all, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. These are universal goals and targets which involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike" (UN, 2015, para. 5). While accepting that every relevant entity can adopt the priorities and actions agreed upon based on their needs, the NUA also claims to be universal applicability (UN, 2017b, para. 16).

Indivisibility. Indivisibility is a basic principle of the human rights framework enshrined, for instance, in the preambles of human rights Covenants.[1] This proclamation highlights that civil-political and socio-economic human rights are indivisible from a conceptual point of view. Likewise, the goals and targets of the SDGs are "integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental" (UN, 2015, para. 5). By consenting to the SDGs, states commit themselves to pursue them as a whole. The NUA explicitly aims to contribute to the implementation and localisation of the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner (UN, 2017b, para. 9).

Non-Discrimination. The conceptual starting point of human rights is the human being as such: The human rights framework automatically equips every individual with inalienable rights and freedoms as a main end in itself. The 2030 Agenda starts by articulating the overarching goal to "free the human race from the tyranny of poverty" and "to heal and secure our planet" (UN, 2015, p. 1). The 17 SDGs and 169 targets then more precisely define thematic areas in which the transformational vision of the Agenda are to be implemented. In order to bring in a people-centred approach, the SDGs add the plea to "leave no one behind" and the endeavour "to reach the furthest behind first" (UN, 2015, para. 4). This means that the SDGs and related targets shall be met for all people and for all segments of society. Thus, in contrast to human rights, the SDGs

1. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), for instance, both include in their preambles that the "[…] ideal of free human beings enjoying civil and political freedom and freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his civil and political rights, as well as his social, economic and cultural rights".

conceptually do not take the human being as the starting point, but add the human dimension in a second step by introducing the 'leave no one behind' approach to ensure equality and non-discrimination in the implementation. The NUA likewise adds the principle of 'leaving no one behind' in a second step. However, when compared to the SDGs, the NUA conceptually builds on a stronger people-centred approach. More concretely, the NUA puts the inhabitants of human settlements into the centre of the attention, e.g. through its

> vision of cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all

and the vision "to achieve cities and human settlements where all persons are able to enjoy equal rights and opportunities, as well as their fundamental freedoms" (UN, 2017, para. 11f).

Differences

Legal Obligation vs. Political Commitment. Human rights provisions are contained in various treaties, charters, conventions, covenants, etc. Entities that ratify such a document usually enter the legal obligation to respect, protect, and fulfil the rights contained therein. The international development agendas are not the result of a legislative process, but rather are commitments of a political nature. The SDGs were adopted as a United Nations Resolution by the Heads of State and Government on 25 September 2015 and have been in effect since 1 January 2016. The NUA was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016 and was then endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly on 23 December 2016. The Heads of State and Government committed themselves to these development goals, but in contrast to human rights commitments, they are not legally binding.

Scope of Objectives. The international and regional human rights framework aim to ensure the dignity of the human person and to guarantee their well-being in virtually any aspect of life.[2] By implementing the SDGs, states follow numerous goals, such as to "end poverty and hunger, […] to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment", to make sure that "all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives" and to contribute to "peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence" (UN, 2015, p. 2). The 17 SDGs and 169 targets then further define the quantitative objectives across the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The NUA primarily aims at sustainable urban development for social inclusion and for ending poverty, sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all, as well as environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development. Thus, human rights and the

2. Human rights include the right to equality and freedom from discrimination, the right to life, liberty and personal security, freedom from torture and degrading treatment, the right to equality before the law, the right to a fair trial, the right to privacy, the freedom of belief and religion, the freedom of opinion, the right of peaceful assembly and association, the right to participate in government, the right to social security, the right to work, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to education, the right to health, and the right to food and housing.

current development goals share the overall objective to enhance the quality of life of individuals. The human rights instruments are broader in scope as they seek to enhance the life of humans in virtually any aspect of life. The SDGs and the NUA are narrower in scope as they focus more on the development dimension. However, one should not disregard that by prominently focusing on sustainability, the NUA and the SDGs add an intergenerational perspective and also seek to enhance the life of individuals for generations to come.

Addressees of Commitments. From a legal perspective, the state is the human rights duty bearer. Research underlines that the human rights framework is "largely silent on how the state's sub-entities are to engage therein. It is just as indifferent towards constitutional or administrative preferences of state parties to human rights treaties" (Fischer & Oberleitner, 2020b, p. 5). The SDGs call for a joint effort by governments, regional and local authorities, sub-regional institutions, international institutions, academia, philanthropic organisations, volunteer groups, and others. With respect to the SDGs, the Heads of State and Government have agreed that "all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan" (UN, 2015, p. 1; see also para. 45). The SDGs were promulgated as an "Agenda of the people, by the people, and for the people" (UN, 2015, para. 52). The NUA also makes clear that the effective implementation of the urban development agenda requires the national, sub-national, and local levels (UN, 2017b, para. 81). This implies that cities and local governments, in addition to other non-government stakeholders, are the key addressees of the global development agenda right from the start.

Timeframe for Implementation. The implementation of human rights is an ongoing and permanent task. Once a government has ratified a human rights treaty, it is immediately and continuously obliged to prevent corresponding human rights violations, and to provide effective remedies for those whose rights were violated. For certain rights, such as those laid down in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, a progressive realisation is possible, which means that states are obliged to take immediate steps within their means to progressively achieve the full realisation of these rights, and thus may not take any regressive steps. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges that the "different national realities, capacities and levels of development" (UN, 2015, para. 21) have to be taken into account for the implementation. Thus, the development agendas also envisage an ongoing process of implementation, but set concrete timeframes for the achievement of the goals. Presumably, a new development agenda will be adopted for the time after 2030 and will replace the SDGs, just like the SDGs have replaced the Millenium Development Goals. Therefore, the political commitments of the development agenda, are not as 'open-ended' as human rights obligations when it comes to the timeframe for implementation.

Review of Achievement. Human rights can be monitored and enforced by state courts, administrative authorities, or other mechanisms such as, national human rights institutions or ombudsmen offices. Additionally, a wide range of political, judicial and expert bodies,[3] as well as

3. At the international level, the United Nations Human Rights Council is responsible for the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe. Various procedures and mechanisms, such as the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Complaint Procedures, and Special Procedures serve to review state practice

international[4] and regional[5] treaty bodies have been established to monitor the implementation of human rights. Even binding decisions can be taken by international human rights courts.[6] In practical terms, the human rights evaluation methodology based on human rights indicators has become the prime evaluation instrument. This methodology evaluates, first, the human rights structure, meaning the commitment taken by the entity responsible for human rights. Secondly, it measures the process, the instruments, institutions, resources, and activities taken in order to implement the commitments. Finally, the methodology evaluates the outcome, i.e. the concrete achievement of the commitments and their implementation. The prime instrument for measuring progress in meeting the SDG targets are 231 indicators developed by the UN Statistical Commission (for details, see UN, 2020). The Secretary-General has to submit an annual report on progress made towards the SDGs "[providing] a global overview of the current situation of the Goals, on the basis of the latest available data for indicators in the global indicator framework." The High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides strategic leadership for the SDG implementation process with respect to statistical monitoring and reporting (UN, 2017a). Voluntary national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews and thus aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences on the implementation of the SDGs.

So the indicator-based review process of the development agenda is clearly distinct from the judicial and quasi-judicial review and monitoring mechanisms established for human rights treaties. Moreover, human rights indicators differ significantly from SDG indicators.

Mutual Reinforcement between Human Rights and the Development Agenda: Theory and Practice

There are operational opportunities for Human Rights Cities around the world to concurrently pursue the achievement of SDGs and to strengthen the protection and fulfilment of human rights at the local level. Yet, to what extent may the implementation of the development agenda reinforce the realisation of human rights in a Human Rights City, and vice versa? Does progress towards the SDGs and the NUA (automatically) contribute to the enjoyment of human rights? These questions will be discussed by looking at the formal and material links between human rights standards and the SDGs/NUA, the relevance of SDG indicators for human rights at the local level and results from three case studies on the approach taken by Human Rights Cities to implement the SDGs.

4. Human Rights Committee (CCPR), Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Committee against Torture (CAT), Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW), Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Committee on Enforced Disappearance (CED).

5. For instance by the Council of Europe (European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; European Commission against Racism and Intolerance) or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (e.g., Representative on Freedom of the Media; High Commissioner on National Minorities).

6. So far, such courts have been established based on the three main regional human rights conventions in Europe (European Court of Human Rights), America (Inter-American Court of Human Rights), and Africa (African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights).

Formal and Material Links between Human Rights Standards and the SDGs/NUA

Human rights are explicitly and implicitly linked to the development agenda in various respects. The 2030 Agenda explicitly mentions human rights on several occasions and, for instance, affirms the importance of human rights instruments and the related responsibilities of all states to respect, protect, and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without any discrimination (UN, 2015, para. 19). The NUA contains commitments "to the realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, facilitating living together, ending all forms of discrimination and violence, and empowering all individuals and communities while enabling their full and meaningful participation" and to "[…] ensuring full respect for the human rights of refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of their migration status […]" (UN, 2017b, para. 26 & 28). The 2030 Agenda also describes human rights as a foundation of the SDGs by declaring that the SDGs are "[…] grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document" (UN, 2015, para. 10). The NUA also expresses that it is "grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome" (UN, 2017b, para. 12). By stating that the SDGs seek to "realize the human rights of all […]", human rights are defined as a prime goal in the Preamble. The NUA similarly aims "to achieve cities and human settlements where all persons are able to enjoy equal rights and opportunities, as well as their fundamental freedoms, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the UN, including full respect for international law" (UN, 2017b, para. 12). More generally, the 2030 Agenda regards human rights as a framework for the implementation of the SDGs by declaring that the Agenda is "to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the obligations of states under international law" (UN, 2015, para. 18). The implementation of the NUA literally requires "respect for human rights and solidarity, especially for those who are the poorest and most vulnerable" (UN, 2017b, para. 126). The Heads of State and Government further declared in the NUA that they will "promote capacity-development initiatives […] for promoting and protecting human rights and anti-discrimination, to ensure their effective participation in urban and territorial development decision-making" (UN, 2017b, para. 155).

Apart from these formal links, a considerable number of SDGs converge with human rights standards in terms of content. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provided a non-exhaustive list showing such relations between the SDGs and human rights (OHCHR, n.d.b). The Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) developed a searchable database, which comprehensively illustrates the material links between goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and the legal obligations enshrined in human rights treaties (DIHR, n.d.). Overall, the DIHR found that more than 90% of the SDG targets are linked to international human rights and labour standards. Another study explained that "human rights are part and parcel of every SDG. If SDG implementation fails to uphold human rights, then progress will ultimately prove illusory" (DIHR, 2017, p. 4).

Human rights may provide policy-makers with knowledge on how to implement the SDGs. Also international human rights treaty bodies already provided their expertise on how particular

human rights provisions relate to the SDGs (DIHR, 2018, p. 25).[7] Even when drawing up concluding observations, treaty bodies started referring to specific targets of the SDGs. However, there is no indication that the treaty bodies gave detailed guidance on the implementation of human rights in the context of the development agenda at the local level.

The Relevance of SDG Indicators for Human Rights at the Local Level

Elsewhere, the author analysed the relevance of the SDG targets and indicators for human rights policy at the local level (Gomes & Möstl, 2020). For this purpose, the SDG targets and the related indicators were first examined to find out whether or not the local level has a relevant role in achieving the respective SDG target from a rights-holder perspective. In a second step, SDG targets and indicators were identified that explicitly address local level authorities. In a third and final step, the material correlation between SDG targets and indicators and core human rights provisions were examined. The interest of this analysis was to assess whether the SDG targets and indicators are congruent, convergent, or not related to human rights at all.[8] Since identifying material correlations required some degree of interpretation, the database provided by the DIHR (n.d.) and the related work by the OHCHR (n.d.a) have been consulted to make sure that the admittedly subjective choice was an informed one. A summary of the finding is presented in the table "SDGs and indicators and their relevance for and impact on human rights policy at the level of local authorities." The entire findings are provided in the "Annex" to Gomes and Möstl (2020).

Table: SDGs and indicators and their relevance for and impact on human rights policy at the level of local authorities

Sustainable Development Goals	The relation between SDGs and human rights			The human rights relevance of SDGs to the local level	
	Congruent with Human Rights	Convergent with Human Rights	Not related to Human Rights	Human-rights- relevant for local level authorities	Local level authorities are addressed explicitly by target /indicator
Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere (21 targets and indicators)	12	8	1	11 out of 21	3 out of 21

7. Prominent examples include the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW).

8. The focus here was core international human rights instruments (in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ICCPR, ICESCR, ICERD, CEDAW, CRPD, CAT, CRC, ICMW, CPED) and their Optional Protocols, but regional human rights treaties were also considered. Although some key environmental instruments have human rights dimensions, they were not considered for this table.

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture (21 targets and indicators)	6	12	3	3 out of 21	0 out of 21
Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (40 targets and indicators)	32	7	1	8 out of 40	0 out of 40
Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (21 targets and indicators)	17	4	0	17 out of 21	0 out of 21
Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (23 targets and indicators)	23	0	0	16 out of 23	1 out of 23
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (19 targets and indicators)	9	4	6	16 out of 19	2 out of 19
Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all (11 targets and indicators)	2	5	4	3 out of 11	0 out of 11
Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (29 targets and indicators)	10	6	13	9 out of 29	0 out of 29
Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation (20 targets and indicators)	6	4	10	1 out of 20	0 out of 20
Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries (21 targets and indicators)	10	1	10	7 out of 21	0 out of 21
Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (25 targets and indicators)	15	5	5	19 out of 25	11 out of 25
Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns (24 targets and indicators)	9	4	11	6 out of 24	0 out of 24
Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (13 targets and indicators)	4	4	5	3 out of 13	1 out of 13

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (20 targets and indicators)	0	3	17	0 out of 20	0 out of 20
Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (26 targets and indicators)	0	15	11	9 out of 26	1 out of 26
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (35 targets and indicators)	30	0	5	24 out of 35	1 out of 35
Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (44 targets and indicators)	2	9	33	0 out of 44	0 out of 44
TOTAL	**187**	**91**	**135**	**152 out of 413**	**20 out of 413**

Three main observations can be made after this analysis. First, very few goals and indicators explicitly address the local level. This is probably the case because most goals and indicators do not mention an addressee at all. Second, SDG goals and targets are never divergent from human rights provisions. If they are not congruent or convergent, they are unrelated and do not have any impact on human rights. Third and finally, it is striking that there are indeed many congruences and convergences between SDG goals and indicators on the one hand, and human rights on the other hand. However, it is important to note that the findings vary strongly across the SDG goals. While significant congruences and convergences between SDG targets/indicators and human rights provisions could be identified for at least Goals 1 (no poverty), 3 (good health and well-being), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), such congruences and convergences are significantly rarer or even non-existent for Goals 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 14 (life below water), 15 (life on land) and 17 (partnerships for the goals).

Human Rights Cities' Policies and Approaches: Selected Case Study Results

The author elsewhere reported about case studies that tried to find out, whether Human Rights Cities share common approaches in taking responsibility for the implementation of human rights and the sustainable development agenda at the local level (Gomes & Möstl, 2020). The three case studies covering the Human Rights Cities of Graz (Austria), York (United Kingdom)

and Montevideo (Uruguay) revealed that the sustainable development agenda is not explicitly combined with the Human Rights City process. However, Human Rights Cities do establish implicit connections with the 2030 Agenda – no matter whether they have a strong thematic focus (Montevideo with housing), or broader aspirations (to introduce a positive discourse about human rights in York; to establish a culture of human rights in Graz). The connections between the agendas remain implicit even for cities that became a Human Rights City after the SDGs and the NUA were adopted (York). The cases of York and Graz exemplify efforts to directly connect specific local policies to selected human rights as laid down in international agreements and/or national laws; while York has assessed its local policy alignment with SDG targets, awareness on the human rights relevance of the 2030 Agenda is still developing in Graz and there is no explicit committed (yet) to implementing the 2030 Agenda at the local level. In Montevideo, an explicit connection between the human rights-based approach, as framed through the right to the city concept, and the NUA exists, but only with a focus on a particular human right, namely the right to housing.

Lessons to Be Drawn for the Conceptualisation of Human Rights Cities

Despite manifold attemts to conceptualise Human Rights Cities, it can be observed that Human Rights Cities still do not follow a common framework, but implement a variety of approaches in practice. Their approaches seem to be pragmatic and not very systematised as each city develops its own identity based on local human rights needs. Yet, it was found that many Human Rights Cities share some key characteristics: a clear and official commitment, a dedicated budget that reflects this commitment, and the participation of civil society actors in public policy. Other characteristics include monitoring and reporting human rights mechanisms, the existence of local human rights institutions, and the participation in formal or informal networks of cities which prioritise human rights as a tool of governance (Starl, 2016, pp. 203 & 213). Human Rights Cities have been described as applying a human rights-based approach to planning, implementation, and evaluation, and as having specific structures and institutions for monitoring, accountability, and promotion (Benedek, et al., 2019, p. 146).

In practice, local level entities increasingly take responsibility for both, the implementation of human rights and the international development agenda. Undoubtly, "[n]orms and principles developed at the international level, e.g. the SDGs and human rights law, have found their way into the rhetorical repertoire of local politicians and civil society representatives" (Fischer & Oberleitner, 2020a, p.10). Human Rights Cities play a particular role in this process, as they put human rights at the centre of these efforts. But what role should the SDGs have in a Human Rights City? Should the pursuit of the SDGs be understood as core commitment of Human Rights Cities? In the following some lessons to be considered for the conceptualisation of Human Rights Cities will be presented.

An Integrated Implementation Is Possible in Principle

Given the intersections, linkages, and convergence of human rights and the sustainable development agenda, it might be safe to argue that an integrated implementation of both

agendas is possible in principle. The implementation of the development agenda at the local level may potentially drive the realisation of human rights, and vice versa. A study even concluded that "the SDGs and human rights go hand in hand with a great potential of being mutually reinforcing. […] The practical work at the very local level demonstrates daily the relevance of the link between the two: the SDGs without human rights run the risk of leaving someone behind although they declare the opposite, and human rights without the SDGs can be difficult to comprehend" (Kjaerum, et al., 2018, p. 17).

The 'leave no one behind' imperative introduced by the 2030 Agenda certainly brought the development agenda closer to human rights principles and paved the way for a concurrent pursuit of both agendas. The 2030 Agenda puts human rights more prominently on stage again at the local level as it calls for implementation at the national, sub-national and local level. Human rights implementation processes may thus gain momentum at the local level. The fact that human rights form a legal obligation and the 2030 Agenda constitutes a political commitment is not necessarily detrimental in this respect, in particular because the human rights framework itself is largely silent on the role and duty of sub-state level entities, such as cities.

Practical Experience Is Still in Its Infancy

The Human Rights City movement certainly plays an important role in shaping local policies and social practices along the lines of international human rights and sustainable development. Human Rights Cities seem to be more open to bundle the human rights and development agendas in practical ways, albeit driven by different incentives and with varying outcomes. In the three case studies on Graz, York and Montevideo mentioned above, a rights-based approach to policies and services is observable, but the 2030 Agenda has practically not found a joint implementation there. (At least these three) Human Rights Cities currently do not share a common approach in taking responsibility for the implementation of human rights and the development agenda. While there seems to be a common understanding that the human rights framework and the pursuit of the sustainable development agenda can be beneficial and mutually enforcing at the local level, Human Rights Cities currently still lack practical experience on how both agendas can be best pursued concurrently. Conceptualisations of Human Rights Cities should be aware of this finding from the field.

SDGs Are Not Necessarily a Core Component of a Human Rights City

Although each step in the implementation of human rights at the local level may potentially bring forward the realisation of the development agenda (and vice versa), the achievement of a SDG target does not automatically contribute to the implementation of human rights locally. Although many positive correlations have been identified between human rights and SDG Goals 1 (no poverty), 3 (good health and well-being), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), we should not forget that this was not the case for many other SDG targets. An all too euphoric attitude among human rights activists therefore has to be put into perspective: 'Doing the SDGs' does not necessarily mean 'doing human rights'. Instead, concrete human rights implications under

the development agenda must be analysed carefully in each city context. Since this assessment has to be done for each Human Rights City, conclusions on whether the SDGs should general be a core componend of a Human Rights City are not meaningful.

We Should Not Confuse Apples with Pears

Policy approaches following the objectives of the 2030 Agenda may go in the same direction as policies anchored in the human rights framework, but they do not necessarily do so. Given the indeed manifold convergences of human rights and SDGs, policy-makers might be inclined to differentiate too carelessly between the two agendas. They might even pick-and-choose from the agendas whatever seems easiest to implement, with the expectation that everything can be achieved by only following one of the two agendas. If a Human Rights City intents to follow an integrated approach, a conscious and informed decision to do so is required. Explicit references to the pursuit of SDG targets are indispensable, not least because the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and methodologies of the agendas differ conside rably. The SDG framework defines targets and indicators that measure development mainly by way of statistical data. These targets and indicators do not give information on respect, protection, or fulfilment of human rights. Local human rights policies, however, are best evaluated according to the human rights indicator scheme addressing the dimensions of equality, equal opportunities, participation, and equal treatment. As a consequence, neither human rights indicators nor the SDG indicator framework give a full picture on the achievements of the respective other agenda's implementation. Measuring impact and monitoring progress at the local level is yet important to understand and explain successes and failures of the particular approach taken, and to hold local authorities accountable.

Established Success Factors for Human Rights Policies Should Be Considered

Five success factors and conditions of policies relevant for the enjoyment of human rights have been identified for Human Rights Cities (Meier, et al, 2017). In essence, human rights policies have been found to be successful if they are supported by high-level politicians, are structurally embedded, and are implemented together with the participation of the target groups in the long-run (Meier, et al, 2017). These success factors may also guide cities in their efforts to pursue human rights and the SDGs concurrently. In fact they inform key guiding questions for (advocates/consultants of) Human Rights Cities, such as the following:

Success factor1 - Personal engagement and commitment of a high-level politician: Is there a high-level politician willing to commit to both, human rights and the SDGs, and is this person also aware of the differences of these agendas?

Success factor2 - Concreteness of policy objectives and their operability: Is a specific policy objective concrete enough and is it likely to still serve both, the SDGs and human rights after political negotiation processes that naturally require compromises?

Success factor3 - Structural institutionalisation for the sustainability of a policy's positive impacts: How can a structural institutionalisation be achieved to ensure that an idea how to implement human rights and a SDG in a Human Rights City does not become a stand-alone

project with limited impact?
Success factor4 - Duration of the measure: How to implement human rights and SDGs by way of long-term policies, in particular given the fact that the SDGs will likely be replaced by new development goals after 2030?
Success factor5 - Involvement and participation of the target group: How can the people who are directly concerned still participate? The target group might grow significantly, if a policy pursues human rights and the SDGs concurrently.

Conclusions

States traditionally have a prime responsibility for the implementation of the development agenda and human rights. The 2030 Agenda with its imperative to 'leave no one behind' complements and expands the legal human rights framework, allowing for the concurrent pursuit of both agendas. The SDGs and the NUA triggered higher awareness of the human rights agenda. Local level entities, such as Human Rights Cities, increasingly constitute an important layer for the implementation of an integrated approach. However, the synergies between the development agenda and human rights are still not fully explored at the local level. Human Rights Cities are well advised to recognize the manifold linkages between human rights standards and the SDGs/NUA and to investigate in detail the potential of an integrated approach in their specific context. Human rights research at the local level and the exchange of successful practices via established networks could inform and foster mutually reinforcing strategies. However, local level authorities should also take note of the conceptual and practical differences between the two agendas, which do make a particular difference in terms of measuring progress and ensuring accountability. Otherwise, an integrated approach could water down potentially successful human rights policies at the local level.

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Human Rights Cities and SDGs – The Case of Gwangju

Joyce John*

Abstract

The emerging development in the implementation of human rights has been the rise of human rights cities in the last decades. This research paper analyzes the role of human rights cities in implementing human rights at the local level, along with aiming to show the link between the human rights cities and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by examining the human rights trends and SDGs before and after the implementation of a human rights framework. Human rights cities can serve as a means of achieving SDGs while protecting human rights. The paper is an attempt to answer specifically: How can human rights-based policies of Gwangju city contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on gender equality? The study demonstrates that there has been steady improvement in many but not all areas of human rights, including most areas of gender equality, which suggests some progress in achieving SDGs.

Keywords: Human Rights City, Sustainable Development Goals, Gwangju, Gender Equality, Human Rights Indicators

The emerging development in human rights (HR) implementation has been the rise of human rights cities in the last decades (Oomen and Baumgärtel, 2014). The Human Rights City (HRC) is understood as "human rights governance at the local level" (Gwangju Declaration, 2011, para 4), where the responsibility of realizing human rights is shifting from the national government to more emphasis on the local governments along with residents, local NGOs, civil society, and other stakeholders through participation in "decision-making and policy implementation" to "improve the quality of life of all inhabitants" (Gwangju Declaration, 2011, para. 5 & 4). Cities are becoming the center of attention with ever growing urbanization and the potential to transform the phenomenon from one where people's rights were ignored and denied to a place where human rights are respected and promoted, and this phenomenon makes cities and the local governments all the more important. Cities are being viewed as "well-positioned to realize both sustainable development goals and human rights" (Kjaerum et.al., 2018, p. 4).

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Origin and Development of the Concept of Human Rights Cities

The initiative force behind the Human Right City movement is the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning (PDHRE), an NGO believing in "the power of learning about human rights as a way of life" to bring "economic and social transformation" (PDHRE, 2007, p. 3). To achieve this mission, the organization has facilitated the development of HRCs. PDHRE defines the HRC as "a city or a community where people of good will, in government, in organizations and in institutions, try and let a human rights framework guide the development of the life of the community" (PDHRE, 2007, p. 3).

The program initiated with Rosario, Argentina becoming the first HRC in 1997 with 35 institutions including human rights organizations, indigenous people, sexual diversity groups, academic bodies, development associations, and the women's movement to promote human rights culture and learning, gender equality, and the care of the environment, amongst others (PDHRE, 2007, p. 8). The organization strongly emphasized the bottom-up participatory approach by creating a steering committee representing society's different sectors that work on a community's critical issues and create a plan of action from collective participation (PDHRE, 2007, p. 6). Subsequently, many more cities followed suit and declared as Human Rights Cities in Europe, Asia, and Africa, as well the Americas. While many cities have followed PDHRE's approach in formulating a human rights framework, the concept is still evolving and has generated a wide variety of cities mobilizing resources to implement human rights values in both top-down and bottom-up mechanism (Oomen and Baumgärtel, 2014) to link human rights to their unique local culture, identity, and issues of their community.

Human Rights Cities and SDGs

Agenda 2030, the UN "Agenda for Sustainable Development" ("Transforming Our World," 2015), called for the collaborative and global partnership for sustainable development through 17 goals and 169 targets to shift the world to a sustainable resilient path with a pledge to leave no one behind and envisaged a world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity ("Transforming Our World," 2015).

While recognizing the crucial impacts of sustainable urban development and management on the quality of life, the Agenda seeks to work with local authorities and communities to renew and plan cities and human settlements to foster community cohesion ("Transforming Our World," 2015, para. 34). In order to make the SDGs productive and result-based, it is necessary that the Agenda be supported by the national, regional and subnational levels, and this is possible only when the SDGs are localized. Localization is the process of taking into account the subnational context in achievement of the 2030 Agenda, how the SDGs can provide a framework for local development policy, and, in the process, how local and regional governments can provide support through bottom-up actions (Global Taskforce, 2016, p.6). Localization also relates to not only awareness of the goals among the populations but also of understanding and taking ownership of the implementation process by making civil society and other stake holders part of the process through participation while also establishing the follow up processes through bottom-up monitoring and accountability mechanisms (Global Taskforce, 2016, p. 6). And to champion

the localization process, local and regional governments are carrying out a rights-based approach building on the "Right to the City" principles which also foster the premise of leaving no one behind (Global Taskforce, 2018, p. 9).

Since the goals are global in nature and broader in scope, "their achievement will depend on our ability to make them reality in our cities" (Global Taskforce, 2016, p. 6), whereas the essential role of cities has also been recognized in the Agenda 2030 with the understanding that "SDG 11, on sustainable cities and human settlements, is the lynchpin of the localizing process" (Global Taskforce, 2016, p. 6). The SDGs are about delivering basic needs and services like eradicating poverty and hunger, ensuring equality and dignity, sustainable housing, clean water and sanitation, and a healthy environment. All these are directly or indirectly related to responsibilities of local and regional governments, which makes them the crucial actors and "the level of government best-placed to link the global goals with local communities" (UCLG, 2015).

Ramcharan (2015) insists that the hard reality is that, though the SDGs are based in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent declarations and UN treaty instruments, there is "a profound disconnect between . . . the SDGs and the actual human rights strategies for their implementation," and that we should not consider sustainable development or improvements of the human condition when "gross violations of human rights" are still "pervasive" (p. 1). SDGs will only make sense when they are "grounded in the rule of law and respect for human rights" (p. 1), and this is where the HRCs can play their role to cope with "various socio-economic and political challenges through a human rights framework and a human rights-based approach" (Gwangju Declaration, 2011, para 2).

According to Smith (2017), "the notion of a human rights city offers residents a chance to reclaim and re-build community as they address deepening crises that are most keenly felt in local settings" (p. 354). That "notion" challenges the conventional political discourse of fostering capitalist-led economic growth and argues that the aim of the policies should be "protecting and realizing human rights rather than treating rights as a by-product of economic growth" (p. 354). It should also inspire residents to encourage the local governments to "prioritize human rights in [their] policies and practices" instead of waiting on "national governments to enforce human rights" (p. 351).

The local governments, if they practice a human rights-based approach in designing and prioritizing the polices, will be able to better address the needs of the citizens because the human rights-based approach requires the citizens to be heard and involved in the decision-making processes. This involvement will bring citizens to the discussion table, resulting in better understanding and identifying residents' needs (Kjaerum et.al., 2018).

Agenda 2030 dwells on "achieving sustainable development in its three dimension – economic, social and environmental" ("Transforming Our World," 2015, para. 2). However, sustainability cannot be achieved without the realization of human rights, and it is the human rights cities that bridge the gap between the two discourses. Both the human rights city concept and the SDGs concentrate on human development and work on the local level; therefore, it is safe to conclude that both are mutually reinforcing concepts and that human right cities can be used as a tool to achieve the SDGs.

Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study is to examine the convergence between the HRCs and the SDGs in order to promote and protect human rights along with attaining the SDG targets in the city of Gwangju as a case study. This integration will be analyzed through the impact (if there is any direct or indirect) of human rights frameworks of the Gwangju city in the achievement of the SDG targets. The findings of the study will allow us to understand the correlation between HRCs and SDGs.

Research Question

The research deals with the Human Rights Framework of the city of Gwangju and argues that a human rights framework can be used as a tool not only to promote human rights but to directly or indirectly solidify and attain SDGs. More specifically, this paper focuses on answering the following question: *How can human rights-based policies of Gwangju city contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on gender equality?*

Gwangju Human Rights Platforms and the SDGs

This section will elaborate the connection between the Gwangju human rights framework, including *Gwangju Human Rights Charter* (Gwangju City, 2012) and Gwangju Metropolitan city's second basic five years plan (2018-2022) through the convergence simulation developed below (table 1. for *Gwangju Human Rights Charter* and table 2. for Gwangju's five years plan). This convergence simulation shows the human rights platforms of the city are complementing the scope of SDGs in many aspects along with realizing the rights of the citizens.

Gwangju Human Rights Charter

The *Gwangju Human Rights Charter* was declared on the 47th Gwangju Citizen's Day on May 21st 2012. It was established after a long process of consultation including 30 institutions incorporating the diverse needs of civil society, academics, human rights experts, public officials, refugees, women, laborers among others (Gwangju City, 2019b). The charter provides the new model of mainstreaming human rights in the local administration with the goals of enhancing citizens' quality of life and capacity along with globalization as an HRC (Gwangju City, 2012). The 'city,' in this case municipal government, district offices, and municipal agencies under the jurisdiction of Gwangju City, pledged to establish norms, institutions and policies necessary for the implementation of the charter as well as to conduct surveys on human rights situations through Human Rights Indicators (Gwangju City, 2012, p. 18). The charter is based on five key areas or chapters with 18 articles and 100 indicators (table 1).

Table 1. Gwangju's Human Rights Charter linking the SDGs

Gwangju Human Rights Charter		SDGs
Chapter 1: Communication and Participation	Article 1: All citizens have the right of freedom of thought and expression	Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
		Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
	Article 2: All citizens have the right to access public information	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
	Article 3: All citizens have right to live in a culture of human rights and citizenship	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Chapter 2: Pursuit of Happiness	Article 4: All citizens have the right to work and labor rights	Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
		Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
	Article 5: All citizens have the right to health and be free from diseases and sanitation facilities	Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
		Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
	Article 6: All citizens have the right to decent housing and pleasant living environment	Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
	Article 7: All citizens have the right to be protected from abuse and violence	Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
		Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
		Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Chapter 3: Protection of Social Minorities	Article 8: All citizens have the right to live a minimum standard of sound living which guarantee a decent life	Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
		Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
	Article 9: Gender Equality and Women's Rights	Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
	Article 10: All citizens (Children, Youth and the Elderly) have the right to receive social care according to basic needs	Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
	Article 11: All citizens have the right to live in city without discrimination on the grounds of disability where personal dignity is respected (rights of persons with disabilities)	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
		Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
		Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
	Article 12: All citizens have the right to enjoy their cultures, practice their religions and use their languages regardless of their skin color, religion, language, place of origin, nationality and sexual orientation	Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
		Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Chapter 4: Environment and Safety	Article13: All citizens have the right to have a pleasant environment and leisure time and facilities	Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
		Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
		Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
		Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Chapter 4: Environment and Safety	Article 14: All citizens have the right to access public facilities	Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
	Article 15: All the citizens have the right to be protected from any harm or danger and the right to live in a safer environment (Public Safety and Human Security)	Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
		Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
		Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
		Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
		Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Chapter 5: Culture and Solidarity	Article 16: All citizens have the right to proper education and learning	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
	Article 17: All citizens have the right to freely create and enjoy culture and art	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
		Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
	Article 18: All citizens, civil society cooperate with other regions in the city and international community for the peaceful unification of the Korean peninsula, world peace and the improvement of human rights and democracy and protect victims of human rights violations by state's violence and colonization in accordance with the May 18 spirit of Gwangju (International Solidarity and Cooperation)	Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Note: Data for Gwangju Human Right Charter is taken from Gwangju City- Human Rights Office and the data from SDGs is from UN General Assembly, 2015 (A/RES/70/1)

The convergence mentioned in table 1 shows a significant correlation between the elements of the charter and the SDGs. The 18 articles provide relevant complementarities to the SDGs by emphasizing civil and political rights, public safety, and human security. These articles or indicators focus on promotion of human rights in citizens' daily lives, covering every group of society, and associating with many of the SDGs.

Gwangju City's Second Basic Five Year Plan (2018-2022)

The city of Gwangju is now implementing its Second Five Year Basic Plan (2018-2022) which was also the product of a lengthy process of consultation, human rights survey analysis, reporting sessions and meeting with different stake holders including socially underprivileged and the citizens committee for human rights. The second five year plan expands from the First Human Rights City Basic Plan which emphasized the institutionalization of human rights such as norms, systems and mechanisms (Gwangju City, n.d., p.13). It sets on the principles of human rights with a purpose to create a local-level human rights protection system by expanding and improving human rights policies to promote citizens' rights and pledges to continuously develop and promote Gwangju's status as an HRC. The Plan (2018-2022) consists of 123 policy tasks in five key areas (mentioned in table 2) which are to be monitored by relevant organizations.

Table 2. Gwangju Metropolitan City's Second Basic Five Year Plan(2018-2022) linking the SDGs

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Gwangju Human Rights Charter</th><th>SDGs</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="9">Key Area 1: Improving rights of the socially underprivileged</td><td rowspan="4">Abolishing discrimination and human rights violence against the disabled</td><td>Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Human Rights with the elderly at the core</td><td>Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="12">Key Area 1: Improving rights of the socially underprivileged</td><td rowspan="5">Expand participation of women, safe environment</td><td>Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Eliminate human right blind spots for migrants</td><td>Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Enhance civic power and participation of children and youth</td><td>Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td></tr>
<tr><td>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Key Area 2: Strengthening Human Rights institutions and human right governance</td><td>Introduce human rights influence assessment system</td><td rowspan="4">Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td></tr>
<tr><td>Enhance efficiency of HR index</td></tr>
<tr><td>Elevate status of HR departments</td></tr>
<tr><td>Expand public release of administrative information</td></tr>
</table>

Key Area 3: Creating Human Rights community culture	Create a roadmap for HR village project	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
	Vitalize citizen participatory human rights projects	
	Create local human rights-oriented business management culture	
	Establish human rights education cooperation system	
	Strengthen human rights education of public officials and specific groups	
Key Area 4: Establishing cooperative governance in Human Rights	Fortify human rights governance cooperation system	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
	Support human rights research and action societies	Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
	Establish an online citizens platform for human rights policy	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
	Establish a support institution for human rights governance	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Key Area 5: Elevating the status of Gwangju as Human Rights City	Operate domestic human rights cities solidarity network	Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
	Domestic / overseas human rights cities policy workshops	
	Promote international discussion on human rights cities	
	Memorialize May 18th historic sites and records	

Note: Data for City Plan (2018-2-22) is taken from 2018-2022 Gwangju Metropolitan City – Basic Plan for Enhancing Human Rights and Human Rights City – City Government Office and the data from SDGs is from UN General Assembly, 2015 (A/RES/70/1)

Gwangju city's second basic five-year plan builds upon the idea of "leaving no one behind" where it focuses specifically on improving the rights of socially underprivileged groups including elderly, disabled, women, migrants, children and youth. The plan sets on providing dignity to those groups through human rights education and training that helps them recognize their own worth and self-awareness of their own rights together with inviting them into the policy decision-making processes, hence conceptualizing several if not all SDG goals (mentioned in table 2) and also making them active agents of society.

The Plan also builds upon strengthening of human rights governance and institutions, creating a human rights community, establishing cooperative human rights governance, and globalizing the human rights city concept, which is also cohesive to SDG targets 16.10 and 16.6 and SDG 17. The city government operates horizontally to cooperate with the domestic HR city network. For instance, cooperation mechanisms within the city includes the Citizens Commission to Improve Human Rights, Human Rights Policy Meeting, and Human Rights Policy Round Table (Gwangju City, n.d., p.119). The city government also collaborates internationally to expand and share experiences and information on institutions and policy development, of which the World Human Rights Cities Forum is a great example.

Both the Human Rights Charter and the Gwangju City Plan (2018-2022) address the critical needs of the vulnerable groups, enhance participation in decision-making processes, work on equality and equity, non-discrimination and ameliorating the rights of the citizens which are also the principles mentioned in Agenda 2030 and many of the SDGs, hence signifying a mutually enforcing relationship.

Progress So Far

This part of the paper shows the progress the city of Gwangju has made so far. This is based on yearly reports on Human rights indicators analysis - an action tool for the Gwangju Human Rights Charter from the years 2014 to 2019.

The first part of this section indicates the overall human rights indicators assessment statistics for those six years (table 3) and then elaborates on gender equality and women's rights, article 09 of the *Gwangju Human Rights Charter*, to examine the progress after implementation of the charter.

Table 3 shows the general picture for the five key areas, and 18 articles (mentioned in table 1), with 100 indicators. For the beginning years (2013 and 2014), the analysis was conducted for 100 indicators, but from 2015 the indicators were merged or reduced to 50 with 72 sub-indicators, which was increased to 51 indicators and 73 sub-indicators in 2019. Table 3 shows the evaluation results with number of sub-indicators assessed in respective years.

Table 3. Human Rights Indicators Analysis/Assessment, 2014-2019 (Gwangju City, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019a, 2020a)

5 areas of 50 indicators & 72 sub-indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total no. of indicators assessed	**98**	**90**	**50**	**50**	**72**	**73**
Percentage of indicators showing progress	74%	82.2%	82.0%	78.0%	80.6%	83.6%
No. of indicators with progress	73	74	41	39	58	61
No. of indicators with no or negative progress	25	16	9	11	14	12

Note: This table is based on the data taken from the annual Human Rights Indicators Evaluation and Analysis Results reports of Gwangju City – Democratic Human Rights Division (2014-2019)

The recent assessment report for the year 2019 shows that out of 73 sub-indicators assessed, 61 (83.6%) show progress while the number of indicators falling was 12 (16.4%). The progress has been observed in all five key areas of the Gwangju Human Rights Charter. For instance, civil participation in human rights education has increased due to various government projects including creation of human rights villages and cooperation projects for human rights organizations, increasing welfare support for socially disadvantaged groups, falling stress levels, and raising the percentage of women at high ranking positions. The fallen indicators include the increase in suicide rate among teenagers and senior citizens and decrease in health checkup rate for those most vulnerable groups (Gwangju City, 2019a).

Gender Analysis

According to the World Economic Forum, Korea ranks 108th of 153 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index. The country also ranks 108th in parliamentary representation by women at only 16.7% (World Economic Forum, 2020). Furthermore, the country stands last of the 37 OECD member countries with the widest gender wage gap of 34.1% (OECD, 2020). However, both the central and local governments are enacting policies to narrow that gap. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family has adopted the "Second Basic Plan for Gender Equality Policy 2018-2022" under six key areas with 22 implementation strategies to promote awareness of gender equality, eradicate violence against women, and improve women representation and participation in policy-making processes to tackle the substantially low decision making power of women ("Gender Equality Policy," n.d.).

The City of Gwangju is actively working on promoting gender equality and has a dedicated department, the Women and Family Bureau (영성가족국), that handles child rearing, family welfare, low birthrate and child support (Gwangju City, 2020b).

Table 4. Gender Equality & Women's Rights (Human Rights Indicator, Article 09 with sub-indicators [Gwangju City, 2012, p. 29])

Gender equality measures	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ratio of the female elected politician (district and municipal)	29.40%	29.40%	29.70%	30.40%	29.80%
Ratio of female public servants of high ranks	13.10%	13.76%	18.05	20.88%	21.78%
Ration of female principals in elementary, middle and high school	50.21%	57.74%	62%	60.34%	62.76%
Employment rate of women over 15 years of age	48.30%	48.12%	50.40%	50.70%	50.30%
Female unemployment rate compared to female economically active population	3.00%	2.96%	2.40%	3.70%	3.40%
Installation of child care facilities	54.54%	81.80%	100%	100%	100%

Note: This table based on the data taken from the annual Human Rights Indicators Evaluation and Analysis Results reports of Gwangju City – Democratic Human Rights Division (Gwangju City, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019a, 2020a)

The Human Rights Indicator 09, on Gender Equality and Women's Rights, calls for the improvement of women's social and economic status with the assurance of opportunities for political participation. It also pledges to pursue gender sensitive policies for the realization of gender equality (Gwangju City, 2012, p. 29). The measures used to assess the progress include female representation in the city council, female representation in high ranking positions, and the female employment rate, among others.

The assessment (table 4) shows a slow yet steady and continuous upward progress with an exception of a slight downward curve in few of the indicators. The most progress is seen in the ratio of female principals in elementary, middle and high school from 50.21% in 2015 to 62.76% in 2019. Childcare facilities have been installed in all 14 public institutions of Gwangju City. However a slight downward curve has been seen in female representation in the public offices as well in the employment rate. The post-COVID-19 numbers may or may not show a further downward movement.

A gradual progress has been observed in women representation in the city council, which indicates progression in SDG 5 (Gender Equality) over the last five years, yet there is still a pressing need for greater involvement of women in the policy making sectors to empower them and encourage their further involvement.

Conclusion

This research reviewed Gwangju's human rights framework including Gwangju Human Rights Charter and Gwangju Second Basic Five-year plan (2018-2022) in the context of SDGs. The human rights-based approach of Gwangju City is well aligned with the SDGs and is effective in facilitating the environment to realize the SDGs. The study finds that both the human rights

policies and SDGs are in unison and can be mutually reinforcing. If the 2030 Agenda is to be realized in the true sense of "leaving no one behind," then human rights obligations and commitments must be applied, and there is no better way than to use a human rights city as a tool to achieve the Agenda. The study of Gwangju demonstrates that there has been steady improvement in many but not all areas of human rights, which suggests a direct or indirect progress in achieving SDGs. The current Five-Year plan (2018-2022) of the city government prioritizes the rights of the most vulnerable groups of the city, which shows that the city is trying to ensure that no one is left behind and that it is committed to take everyone on the journey of realizing the rights of all the citizens. Although this paper focuses on only one human rights city, namely Gwangju, the researcher believes inclusion of more human rights cities will provide a better understanding and wider perspective of the integration of the human rights cities and the SDGs at different levels.

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History's Impact on a Local Governance Model at the Urban Level A Comparative Study of the Human Rights Cities of Gwangju, South Korea and Porto Alegre, Brazil

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Chloé Marty*

Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine to what extent the historical legacies of municipalities have shaped their human rights policies. To do so, we will rely on a comparative analysis of the Human Rights Cities (HRCs) of Porto Alegre, Brazil and Gwangju, South Korea. This choice is determined by the population of the two, as both cities average 1.4 million inhabitants and as they both represent important urban centers in their regions. Porto Alegre's legacy of instituting participatory budgeting led to its development as an HRC, while Gwangju's legacy of struggle for justice and democracy established its background as an HRC. Previous studies have been successfully conducted with a similar methodology (e.g. Jensen, 2019) and have yielded impactful results.

Keywords: Human Rights, Human Rights Cities, Amartya Sen, Public Budgeting, Gwangju, Porto Alegre

The rise of Human Rights Cities (HRCs) has enhanced the virtue of human rights to a great extent. By definition, an HRC comprises the urban settlement whose legal policies completely or partially verify the issues of international human rights (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014). According to the People's Movement for Human Rights Learning (PDHRE), the HRC initiative was first coined in the late 1990s to ensure civil societies composed of local committees representing local stakeholders (Marks, et al., 2008 as cited by Viborg Jensen, 2019). However, the present concept of HRC validates the World Human Rights Cities Forum (WHRCF) and charters its guiding principle (Viborg Jensen, 2019).

Building on the above-mentioned concept, this study concentrates on the social and political discourse of the HRC in the aspect of revolutionizing the idea of human right into the local level. The study focuses on HRCs' virtue of protecting local needs through an institutionalization of a more inclusive and participatory governance system. For this purpose, we will focus on HRCs' "prospects of fostering an enabling environment for a rights-based approaches to local

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realisations of the Sustainable Development Goals" (Viborg Jensen, 2019, p.13)

Globally, there are forty-two cities that have been substantiated as HRCs, yet they are part of twenty-six countries. This clearly shows a great global scarcity in comprehending the basic concept of the HRC. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has once again divided the world into two categories, i.e., the countries that could bounce back and take charge of their citizens and the countries that have surrendered to the pandemic and are still imposing lock-downs. In such conditions, it is impossible to ignore the better position of HRCs compared to normal cities. So, we firmly believe that it is crucial to reduce the knowledge gap between HRCs and their contribution to the wellbeing of their residents.

We believe a successful advocacy of HRC can be done by presenting how two countries belonging on different geographical locations with contrasting social, cultural, economic and historical backgrounds have successfully adapted HRCs. Hence, this study will present an analysis of the HRCs of Porto Alegre, Brazil and Gwangju, South Korea by noting their historical legacies and analyzing their human rights policy. In this sense, the study's objective is to contribute to the understanding of HRC by investigating and diffusing the historical legacies of Brazil and South Korea in terms of the scope and nature of their incentives. In doing so, the research question guiding this study is: *To what extent have the historical legacies of the municipalities shaped their human rights policies?*

While answering the main research question, the following secondary question might also be answered: *How did the notion of HRC surface in Porto Alegre and Gwangju?*

Theoretical Framework

Our theoretical framework for this study is simple, yet straightforward. Our study takes from the typology of HRCs established by Oomen and Baumgärtel (2014), the concept of governance within an urban context and the theory of capabilities shaped by Amartya Sen in relation to agency theory. We will treat HRCs as sociological objects rather than as a conceptual paradox. The why of this follows in this section.

From Human Rights to Human Rights Cities

"Human right begins close to home, and if they lack meaning there they lack meaning everywhere" - Eleanor Roosevelt, 1948

According to the literature, the first movement that shifted the attention of human rights to demographics and urban identities is the above statement from Eleanor Roosevelt (Marks, et al., 2008). In spite of this, the actual implementation of human rights took place after the World Conference of Human Rights by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action in the 1990s (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014). With the budding emphasis on human rights by the Vienna Conference, the help of civil society organizations, and the global establishment of human rights institutes, the use of human rights was formally put into practice at the local level (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014). Still, the major contribution was received after supranational bodies started prioritizing human rights policies by monitoring and evaluating the records of all UN member states (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014).

In the 1980's, the theories of good governance, pluralism, public management, and local autonomy resulted in the shift of governance structures from centralization to decentralization (Otto & Frerks, 1996). This shift resulted in the global trend of the Human Rights Cities as the majority of the liberal nations transferred their power from the central government to the local authorities (Oomen & Baumgärtel 2014).

Similarly, the global demography also created another shift in governance structure. As more than half of the world's population is living in cities, the demands on the urban areas are rapidly increasing (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014). This has made cities a focal point for human rights institutions because they hold potential in solving social and environmental problems by empowering their inhabitants (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014). However, the challenges of social cohesion persist in the cities as people of multiple backgrounds and ethnicity inhabit the place. Hence, finding a balance by setting a discourse that ties together urban residents by framing their expectations by regulating notions of human rights is a crucial feature of HRCs (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014).

As more cities are engaging their policy around human rights law, they are being associated with following single or multiple themes together. The emphasis is not limited to the top-down or bottom-up approach, but it denotes the overall ways to which the cities associate themselves with human rights. According to Oomen & Baumgärtel (2014), the "Rights to the City" movement invoked the surge among the people to direct the process of urbanization in a holistic way by raising the voice of social justice in public spaces. It also created "a new social ethics" which empowers residents to make decisions for their city through local participation (Dike & Gilbert, 2002). The participatory decision-making is to take place by following the essence of transparency in local governance and participatory budgeting (Mayer, 2009, p.368).

All that being said, the question arises: *What is a Human Rights Cities?*

There is not a particular definition of HRC but PDHRE describes it as an approach of community development based on human rights learning (Viborg Jensen, 2019). The virtue of HRC as discovered by PDHRE was largely based on the establishment of local stakeholders for decision making (Viborg Jensen, 2019). Nonetheless, this old concept has been modified by following the guiding principles of WHRCF (2012 and 2014). According to the new concept, HRC is defined as a framework used for developing local governance by engaging local actors such as youths, women groups, ethnic and religious minorities, local government, academics (Viborg Jensen, 2018). Similarly, Grigolo defines HRC as "a city which is organized around norms and principles of human rights" (2016, p.277).

Sen, Capabilities, and Agency

In the well-known Development as Freedom, Amartya Sen (1999) developed an interesting framework of analysis to discuss the notion of development of one's individual self by establishing a list of capabilities that anyone should have. Bush (2001) explains them in this way:

(1) political freedoms (opportunities for people to determine who governs them);

(2) economic facilities (opportunities to use economic resources for the purposes of consumption, production, or exchange);

(3) social opportunities (for such resources as health care and education);
(4) transparency guarantees (the freedom for people to deal with each other under conditions of disclosure and lucidity); and
(5) protective security (including safety net provisions for the unemployed and indigent).

As this theory was a breakthrough in academics when it was published, it is a classic in social sciences today. Contested by some, validated by others, this theory has influenced the way we embody other classic concepts and theories such as development, empowerment, but also human rights. We believe it allows more space to heterodox theories and thinking currents in the public debate worldwide. After all, Sen is a Nobel winner and - whether or not the Nobel institution can be criticized nowadays - it does influence us in our daily life as researchers. The Sustainable Development Goals, huge components of HRC policies, are interestingly formulated with a looking alike capability-enhancement dimension.

In this essay, we decided to use Sen's theory, but with a twist. Sen's capabilities approach is, for us, interlinked with the concept of agency. As we are assessing how the governance model of Gwangju and Porto Alegre is influenced by their historicity, we will treat them as sociological objects of inquiry. And agency is an adequate concept with which to build our research.

As Bargout (2014, p. 13) highlighted it "the idea of agency [initially] explains how 'individuals behave in the ways that they do because, otherwise, they would be contradicting their personal sense of being' (Lois, 2000)." Further analysis of the concept demonstrates that

> the notion of agency has come to cover a very broad spectrum, ranging from the capacity to influence human social agency, to affect the construction of social systems, on to shaping human consciousness and identity, as well as informing the structure of the brain. (Dalmasso, 2020, p. 161)

Dalmasso further stated that this "actually succeeds in moving away from the dualism it aims to overcome (subjects/objects, nature/culture, activity/passivity, etc.)" (2020, p. 161)

Most scholars treated HRC as a concept. Viborg Jensen (2019), in her comparative study of two HRCs in Indonesia, went in this direction and embodied HRC as a "social and political practice, a new idea and a discourse that has the potential to enhance local protection and promotion of human rights through an institutionalisation of a more inclusive and participatory local governance system" (p. 13). As we have adopted a different perspective on the nature of HRC, we agree on her definition of the intention of a HRC, being that they have "the prospects of fostering an enabling environment for a rights-based approach to local realisations of the sustainable development goals" (Viborg Jensen, 2019, p. 13).

Underlying Assumptions

Our main assumptions for this research project are the following:
(1) The label "Human Rights City" has a huge impact on the governance of the cities that adopted it and translated itself in the making of local policies;
(2) The Human Rights Cities are, of course, keen to follow the national directions from their central government but modify it to be in accordance with the values of the label;

(3) Different governance models in urban contexts are linked to several factors, the most important one being the historicity of the city

However, we are aware that the scope of this essay does not allow us to give a generalized response to our research question. The aim of this study is not to give a determinist framework of analysis about the making of urban policies in HRC but to open reflexions and discussions.

General Characteristics of the Theory

It will be observed thanks to this study, that HRC policies at the urban level are implemented and influenced by the local historical legacies of the territories in which they are located. Two city cases examples will be brought up to assess the observation, but also to give counter arguments. The first one is the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, well known for its participatory approach in budgeting, and the second one is Gwangju, South Korea, whose policies have a more symbolic approach in regard to the safeguarding of Human Rights. The consistency of the theory will be proved through the empirical analysis. The next section of the essay will be dedicated to that task. The presentation of the results is inspired from Viborg Jensen's methodology (2019). We will present the two cases independently before concluding on the common points and differences of our two units of analysis. A discussion on the challenges and the limits of such comparison will be included as well.

Ethical Considerations

As two students currently conducting a master's degree in a European University while producing this work, we are aware that our validity and eligibility to conduct and produce such study can be discussed at some point. We also take into consideration during this research project that the presentation of the results might be influenced by endogenous and exogenous biases.

From an internal perspective, Chambers (2008) listed six biases: spatial (the choice of location for one's project), project (the inner nature of the project), person (our positionality as researcher), seasonal (the reluctance of researchers to conduct field work during a specific season), diplomatic (how an international project is influenced by diplomatic relations between the countries and universities it comprises) and professional (on the behaviour of the staff during the project), to which we can relate to some extent. We don't think we're affected by them formerly. However, research on urban governance models is mainstream in academics, especially in Geography and Political Sciences. We are aware of our positionality and agency as postgraduate students conducting research remotely. Conducting this research during summertime when half of academia is on vacation is quite challenging when trying to reach out to professionals, and get structured and consistent in the data collection.

From an external perspective, the Covid-19 pandemic killed any hope to conduct any forms of fieldwork we may have desired. It hammers the academic society but most and foremost, the governance model of urban centres worldwide. Even if this last element should not impact our data collection (mainly textual documents) as we focus on historical trajectories, we took the current situation in consideration while sorting the collected material.

Finally, as said before, we do not intend to revolutionise the global perspective on urban governance for HRCs, we simply want to refresh and add to an existing conversation.

Empirical Analysis

Until the end of the twentieth century, both South Korea and Brazil were middle-income countries emphasizing industrialization (Kohli, 2004). Nonetheless, the industrial outcomes of the twenty-first century made South Korea an economic giant whereas Brazil's period of stagnation has limited its economic independence (Kohli, 2004).

Porto Alegre is globally known for being the first city to start participatory budgeting (Allegretti, 2013). Participatory process is well known for its deliberate democratic nature, so Porto Alegre's take on HRC is based on the attempt to reach a common conclusion that brings positive sum outcomes to all (Friant, 2019). As an HRC it becomes crucial for Porto Alegre to consider the social, environmental and ecological outcomes while formulating a participatory budget (Friant, 2019).

Different from Porto Alegre, the city of Gwangju, South Korea) is the starting point of the HRC movement as it was the theater of several contestation movements for democracy and justice in 1929 and May 1980 (Kingston, 2014). During the well-known Gwangju Uprising of May 1980, hundreds of civilians died in the name of a will to change for democracy. The Gwangju Uprising is a staple in South Korea's history and inspired similar movements in the rest of Asia at the time (Kingston, 2014). As an HRC, Gwangju can be considered as a worldwide guardian of Human Rights (UCLG, 2020).

Both cities were labelled as HRC but a previous study established a typology of HRC cities based on their activities and policies related to their label. Indeed, "some cities emphasize a specific subset of rights, whilst others base their policies on human rights in general" (Oomen & Baumgärtel, 2014). According to this typology, the city of Porto Alegre is therefore a s*ubset of rights city* and Gwangju a *general city.*

	Porto Alegre (Brazil)	Gwangju (South Korea)
Population	~ 1,4 millions	
Population density	3,030 hab./km2	2 870 hab./km²
Political regime (nation level)	Federal presidential constitutional republic	Unitary presidential constitutional republic
Labelled as HRC (year)	1994	2003
Mode of governance prior to HRC labellisation	top-down	top-down
Mode of governance after HRC labellisation	Bottom up	top-down

FIGURE 1: Porto Alegra and Gwangju compared.

Porto Alegre

Porto Alegre is the twelfth most populous city of Brazil with a population of 1,481,019 inhabitants. After the return of democracy in 1988, it went through the process of total political and social transformation as Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT; Workers Party) was elected to office for the first time (Friant, 2019). In response to the 1988 return to democracy, a new constitution was drafted which favored decentralized government by distributing the power to local authorities, i.e. municipal government (Friant, 2019). Similarly, various social movements were being launched which advocated for direct public participation. By critically analyzing the local demand and following the mandates of the inclusive constitution, PT decided to practice local democracy at an extreme level by formulating participatory budgeting (Friant, 2019). During its time in office, the PT's practice of public budgeting was considered to be of the best quality, as it resulted in the positive environmental outcomes (Marquetti et al., 2012; Melgar, 2014). Porto Alegre is still following the formal rules and procedures of public budgeting even after PT left the office in 2004, (Marquetti et al., 2012; Melgar, 2014)

The process of implementing participatory budgeting in the city with a 1.4 million population can be quite challenging, but Porto Alegre follows its tactic by subdividing the city into 17 small districts (Friant, 2019). Also, five sectoral assemblies were introduced from 1994 to support the yearly three-phase cycle of public budgeting (Friant, 2019):

Phase 1: It extends from March to June and has two rounds of meetings where citizens can review, monitor, and structure the previous year's budget. The first round starts from March, where citizens are asked to review the previous year's Investment and Service Plan (PIS). PIS is an annual plan that contains the project details of the previous year. The citizens judge and rank the project based on the priority. Likely, delegates are elected from the plenary assemblies, who create the bridge between citizens and the government. The second round starts from June, and here councilors are elected from the delegates and the citizens cast the final vote to decide the projects they want to prioritize. (Friant, 2019)

Phase 2: It starts after June. Two major organs are responsible for this stage, the Sectoral and District Forums of Delegates and the Participatory Budgeting Council (COP). The delegates from the organs are assisted by municipal authorities while continuously visiting different civil societies and neighborhoods. After visiting the respective sites, the delegates form need-based analysis and later present the municipal legislative with the final list and rank of the projects to be funded. (Friant, 2019)

Phase 3: Finally, the last stage is dedicated to the implementation, monitoring, and review of public budgeting projects. Here, once the mayor and the city council approve the PIS, the local government starts work in early January. The monitoring and evaluating of the ongoing project will start when the next council and delegates are appointed and then the cycle continues. (Friant, 2019)

Gwangju

The city of Gwangju is one of the major regional urban centres known as municipal cities in

South Korea. It counts an average of 1.4 millions inhabitants (Gwangju municipality's website, 2020). As was noted above, the city is the starting point of the HRC movement and can be considered as a worldwide guardian of Human Rights as the host of the annual World Human Rights Cities Forum since 2011 (UCLG, 2020).

The organization chart of the municipality is worthy of being considered as a perfect illustration of the Weberian bureaucracy, but at the local level. Every inch of the urban habitus (from Health to Gender Equality, AI in society) has been encompassed by the municipality, and an office has been attributed to treat each concern. This is partly due to the interlinkage of the historical trajectory of the municipality in relation to the country's one (Gwangju Municipality website, 2020).

According to our research, it is established that Gwangju has always been a strategic hub for the South Korean government and the previous ruling forces prior to the independence of the country (Lee K., 2007). Prior to its independence, South Korea has been ruled by its neighbours, notably Japan, a country well-known for its bureaucracy and sense of hierarchy. This plays a role as well and we don't deny it. However, the turning point came during the Park's regime. As General Park imposed aggressive national policies for economic and industrial development, several major cities including Gwangju were under the direct authority of the central government to ensure the achievement of the objectives settled (Kohli, 2004).

Under this drastic turnover, Gwangju became an industrial hub that gradually opened up to the international market thanks to its strategic position on the territory and the subsequent development of infrastructures (Lee, 2007). However, as the Park Chung-hee regime started to erode, partly because of the underdevelopment of its welfare system, strikes and revolts allowed the municipality to gain more independence. But the system put in by Park – relying on a strong bureaucratic system – remains, and the governance system remained mainly top-down. In 1979, after Park's assassination and the threat of another dictatorship, revolt sparked in Gwangju (Lee, 2007; Kingston, 2014).

The Uprising and its consequences locally, nationally, and internationally lad to a new influence in terms of political leadership and policy making at the local level. Katsiaficas defined it as follows: "Gwangju's historical significance, he argued, has three dimensions: that of 'the capacity of self-government,' of 'the organic solidarity of the citizens,' and of 'the international significance of the uprising'" (Katsiaficas, 2000a, 2000b in Lee, 2007). This, in addition to the previous arguments presented, confirms our initial assumptions towards the style of the governance in Gwangju in relation to its historical heritage. The labelling of Gwangju as a Human Rights City in 2003 institutionalised the history of the community as a pillar to increase democratic deliberation and fueled more argument to renew an existing capability-oriented framework for policy building.

Conclusion

To conclude, our study pointed to the potentiality of inquiry of historical trajectories in order to understand contemporary policy-making mechanisms in the context of Human Rights Cities. Our hypothesis for this study were the following:

(1) The label "Human Rights City" has a huge impact on the governance of the cities that

adopted it and translated itself in the making of local policies;

(2) The Human Rights Cities are, of course, keen to follow the national directions from their central government but modify it to be in accordance with the values of the label;

(3) Different governance models in urban contexts are linked to several factors, the most important one being the historicity of the city.

The first and second assumptions are validated for both urban entities, as the Human Rights City label offers a new level of action for municipality capacities building. The second assumption was evidently agreed on, based on the nature of the political regime of the two countries. It appears that all those assumptions tend to be accurate for our two urban units despite their differences in terms of history, governance, and their opposed situation on the spectrum of Human Rights Cities elaborated by Oomen & Baumgärtel (2014).

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Papers II

Diversity of Human Rights Challenges at the Local Level

Education in El Salvador: Reducing Inequality through Regional Strategies that Guarantee Local Development

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Abstract

For years, Latin America has tried to reduce the levels of inequality, but it remains one of the most unequal regions in the world. The Central America region faces some specific challenges, as it includes two of the most violent countries in the world, Honduras and El Salvador. Yet, it also includes a member of the OECD, Costa Rica. On the UN Human Development Index, the countries range from Panam at 67 to Honduras at 132 (of 189 countries worldwide). A key for further development lies in education investment, but the COVID-19 pandemic has put pressure on that investment in the face of more immediate social crises. Restrictions on mobility forced school closures, so the Ministries of Education had to create new mechanisms for remote and virtual education. These included internet as well as more traditional technologies of television and radio. This essay proposes two phases for improving education in less-developed Central American countries and El Salvador in particular. The first phase is to coordinate regional with national efforts through structural strengthening, updating education plans to incorporate digital and traditional tools, and the development of an inclusive, continuous, strategic educational plan. The second phase requires coordination between the national and local levels, emphasizing structural strengthening, internet access in safe spaces, and actions for sustainable development. Ultimately, the region needs effective investment in education with a social focus. Following the example of Costa Rica, such investment will be the most powerful way to combat inequality in Central America.

Keywords: inequality, education, Central America, El Salvador, Central American Integration System

For years, Latin America has tried to reduce the levels of inequality by various methods: creation of proposals for development, cooperation plans to fight corruption or reduction of wage gaps. Nevertheless, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Latin America, remains the most unequal region in the world.

To overcome this situation of extreme inequality, Central American governments must consider the different social factors that produce it and seek sustainable and enduring solutions. Instead,

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governments of the region seek quick answers with an average duration of 5 years, the periods of alternation in democratic governments. In Central America, each country responds to a group of factors such as natural resources, weather, cultural and historical aspects. Considering these points, the development of these societies should be very similar

Instead, in the same region we find three of the most violent and poor countries in Latin American region, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador (IMF, 2020), and a country that is a partner of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Costa Rica. In addition, we find that significant differences exist on many levels, according to the Human Development Report 2019 of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). On the Human Development Index, four of the eight countries in the Central American Integration System, which includes the seven countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic (SICA, 2020a & 2020b), are categorized as "High Human Development" nations: Panam , ranked 67 of 189 countries; Costa Rica, 68; Dominican Republi, 89; and Belize, 103. The other four are all in the "Medium Human Development" category: El Salvador, 124; Guatemala and Nicaragua, tied for 126; Honduras, 132 (UNDP, 2019, pp. 300-301).

Many studies suggest that Education investment could be the key for development and consequently the reduction of inequality levels. According to the World Bank, in Central America, the highest amount of GDP invested in education is Costa Rica, at 7.4%, and the lowest is Guatemala, at 2.8% (IMF, 2020). As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, this investment might be reduced in the next few years in favor of reinvestment in response to the humanitarian crisis, unemployment, and public and external debt.

Governments in Central America implemented restrictive mobility measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including closing of schools. As a result, Ministries of Education had to create new mechanisms for remote and virtual education modalities, but this is a solution just for the limited portion of the population that has access to technology. All countries in Central America except Nicaragua enabled the classical mechanisms of television and radio to guarantee that the population in most of the affected areas had access to educational programs. These mechanisms have been effective in the emergency context, but this educational delivery method requires a second review given the situation of the prolongation of the measures, re-emergence of the disease in countries that have taken measures to prevent re-entry to educational centers, the lack of a widely available cure for COVID-19, and the fragile situation of health systems in Latin American but specifically in the Central American region.

Therefore, this proposal consists in two phases. First phase: Adaptation of the regional strategy to the national education systems so that all communication products are shared. It could contain include traditional subjects such as math, science, and social science for regular students. It also has to include essential subjects for development of the population such as early childhood education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. Actually, these subjects are not yet included in the national education curricula in the countries with the lowest investment in education or those that are in the medium category of the human development index.

Second phase: To renew the national education system, which could mean integrating all

technologies already established during the pandemic. This could be permanent so it could create a common standard that could be improved by local governments and guarantee future investment in education.

Phase One: Regional to National

Digital education is considered an essential tool for strengthening the right to education of millions of children around the world. For years, Central America has created strategies for digital development. For instance, the General Secretariat of SICA has proposed a "Regional Strategy for developing the Information Society and Knowledge in SICA" (SICA, 2014). It could contribute to facilitating digital access across the countries in the region. Actually, SICA is an administrator of technologic resource. Nowadays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SICA has reconsidered its position to provide technologic service, create new alternatives to exchange knowledge and make agreements regarding education of each member state to guarantee implementation in each country and consequently in cities through public policies.

El Salvador is one of the countries in the region that has a low development index relative to some other Central American countries, and it displays conditions that require immediate attention, conditions such as high birth rates, high levels of poverty, high levels of violence, and an annual reduction in public investment, with emphasis on a decrease of the education budget. To make these suggested changes and transform the situation, it must to take a regional strategy in the educational system, using measures like the following:

Structural Strengthening

Access to drinking water and health services within public educational institutions, in the face of a pandemic, ceased to be an option and became an essential need. Therefore, an increase in the budget for adequate infrastructure is mandatory when returning to schools by 2021. If the structural conditions cannot be guaranteed, the Ministry of Education must create conditions for remote education through use of technology or through traditional means.

Updating the Education Plan to Incorporate Digital and Traditional Tools

El Salvador, like the rest of the countries in the region, was forced to update its methodology and rebuild the educational curriculum with a remote format and providing information on traditional subjects by accessing internet, radio, and television. In addition, teaching staff required remote training for the use of new technologies. It should be considered that it is the first time in El Salvador that the public sector has been trained in the use of technology for a virtual teaching environment. The knowledge acquired represents a public investment in human capital so that they acquire essential competencies, and it should be expanded to unreached public-school faculties.

Inclusive, Continuous, and Strategic Educational Plan

El Salvador must incorporate, in digital and traditional media, issues related to social

development, such as early childhood, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. The related issues would be palliative *measures whose results can be seen in the long term. For example, according to data from the* Transparency Portal of the National Hospital for Women "Dra. María Isabel Rodríguez," in the first quarter of 2020, 17,451 pregnancies were registered in the network of health facilities of the Ministry of Health. Of these, 144 are girls between 10 and 14 years old, and 3,835 are teenagers and young women between 15 and 19 years old (Rosa, 2020). This is just a sample of conditions related to girls and women because, in part of this period, El Salvador was under mobility restrictions. In this situation, we can assume first, that some considerable percentages of these girls were or are under sexual abuse, and they live with their abuser; second, a considerable percentage does not return to school; and, last, many of these girls will be forced to become mothers without knowledge of how to care for a child and what are the mechanisms to report situations of violence or recognize situations of gender inequality. The educational proposal of El Salvador has to be integrated in accordance with the standards of the region and will allow setting the minimum issues for local development. Regional standards include gender equality in access to the education system and knowledge of the functions of public actors for the guarantee of human rights.

Phase Two: National to Local

El Salvador, despite being a country with a relatively small territory, has difficulties with the control of security based on the problems of social inequality. The violence is of such magnitude that, despite the fact that we are a democratic country without armed conflict, according to the report of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2019), El Salvador has been identified as the most violent country in the Central American region. According to the percentage number of murders in relation to the number of inhabitants, El Salvador ranks as one of the most violent in the last decade. The situation of violence warrants taking measures that guarantee the development of some of its cities, avoiding the replication of repressive security plans that have not yielded results. The changes that must be made in the areas are feasible and eventually sustainable in the long term. Among the changes are:

Structural Strengthening

In 2019, improvements were made in infrastructure with the investment in public spaces in order to avoid the expansion of gang territories. This investment has been concentrated in the most populated urban areas, but due to the high public investment it represents, an improvement has been made in coordination with international cooperation and private companies. When carrying out this type of initiative, the improvement of public spaces in the most populated rural areas could be considered, which will represent a smaller investment. This change has to be made with a perspective to include changes in weather shielding (Blindaje Climático, 2010), sewage management, smart urbanism and environmental urbanism. Planning a logical and structural order will be a plus for public safety that would facilitate fewer opportunities for illicit activities. These structural spaces have to be functional and include leisure spaces and sports development.

Internet Access in Safe Spaces

Most of the population has some access to mobile devices such as cell phones, but the majority have access to the internet in only a restricted way or not at all. By creating user-friendly educational content through electronic means, the Ministry of Education has partially guaranteed access to education, leaving limited options for students in rural areas who do not have virtual access to information either due to cost or inaccessibility of connection. The partial response of the Ministry should be complemented with the adaptation of public spaces and the guarantee of access to the internet by municipal governments.

Actions for Sustainable Development

Rural municipalities have the opportunity to be able to promote local projects that require support from the communities by making a change in their actions and linking them to environmental changes, as, for instance, with smart gardens (self-sustaining), which require access to small green areas for implementation. This practice can be encouraged in rural areas of El Salvador that are traditionally agricultural, incorporating, among other issues, the culture of reuse. Non-governmental organizations have taken up these issues in targeted communities, but there is still a lack of momentum from local governments for sectored support to expand throughout rural areas.

Municipal governments in El Salvador were linked to these initiatives prior to the pandemic. Issues such as environmental shielding, a budget increase for investment in public spaces, and training in self-sustaining issues have been linked for more than a decade. As a country, we lack a controller's office to determine the scope of the objectives. The central government, as well as the municipal governments, has signed a set of documents to guarantee compliance with obligations to the international community as well as obligations to our communities to guarantee development.

Effective Investment in Education with a Social Focus

San José, the capital city of Costa Rica, is an example of a city of the future for our region. In 1959 this country made three big changes to guarantee the access to quality education. First, education was considered integral, and that eventually created conditions for a plan in permanent education. Second, general budget spending on public security was reduced when abolishing the armed forces. Third, the country unified and implemented the Central America proposal of education for development of regions.

In this way, during the administration of Mr. Mario Echandi Jiménez, in 1959, some educational agreements were produced at the Central American isthmus level. From one of these agreements emanates the creation of the Central American Higher University Council whose purpose was to unify common criteria of higher education centers in Central America. Shortly after, in 1962, the Organization of Central American States (ODECA), which became SICA, was established. Based in San Salvador, ODECA promoted a series of educational programs for the region (Martínez Gutié rrez, 2016). The selection of actions in favor of education in an emergency situation not only

favored the short-term response for the well-being of the population, but history shows us that it provided a long-term response, as well. It created in Costa Rica an advantageous situation of social development and a reduction of social problems, compared to the rest of the region.

Costa Rica undoubtedly has a much higher level of education that contributes greatly to the reduction of social inequality with which the entire region must struggle. Due to its quality in education, it is emerging as a model country not only in the Central American region, but also competing with the best in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially when we consider that the vast majority of South American countries outperform Costa Rica in territory, economy, and raw materials. Costa Rica made a decision sixty-one years ago to abolish the armed forces and invest in public spending, especially in education, the results of this decision appeared in the middle and the long term as the most effective way to reduce social struggles and improve the life quality of its population.

Currently, public management policies in each municipality depend Primarily on the central government in coordination with the implementation in the municipalities. Thus, the Central Government must ensure that the implementation of the strategic design keep as close to the reality of the country as possible and that funds are available for the respective budget. On the other hand, the municipal governments have the responsibility to see that public policies can be adapted in their territories, and also that the assigned public spending is executed as requested.

Nowadays, El Salvador has adequate conditions to reduce the inequality gap but year after year, public investment in El Salvador has been reduced, especially in relation to public education at all levels. Therefore, to a large extent, non-governmental organizations meet the needs of the population, but the areas of coverage are still limited. The handling of the situations and commitment of the central government as well as local governments can generate conditions for improvement, reaching a higher number of the population.

The conditions prior to the pandemic indicated that the social development of El Salvador was stagnant; in the face of the post-pandemic situation, taking appropriate measures could reduce the impact of the economic, food, and educational crises that have been predicted in a country that was already submerged in crisis prior to the COVID-19 emergency.

Under current conditions, measures that represent a landing of public policies for the benefit of the population submerged in inequality must be taken.

An assurance of investment in education, at this time and under these conditions, will give a medium-term response. For example: investment in sex education could reduce a high number of births in conditions of extreme poverty, as well as the reduction of STD infections, as this type of disease is curable and mostly preventable. Both of these situations have a direct impact on public health spending. It should be considered that the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic would overload the fragile health systems in Central America, so spending on public health probably will be reduced in the coming months, and investment in any disease prevention issue that decongests the health system will be useful for both local and central governments.

On the other hand, an investment assurance in the municipalities would be directly and obligatorily linked to the improvement in urban planning. It will create adequate spaces that will eventually require a reduction in investment in public safety. It should also be taken into account

that an urbanism with adequate planning will be a lasting measure. Therefore, structural planning provides a different alternative to the creation of repressive public policies and the deployment of police security forces and armed forces, which have not had a favorable result in the last 28 years, despite the fact that each government in turn has implemented more restrictive policies period after period.

It is necessary to adapt a regional strategy through a national plan that is later readjusted in local governments in order to consider the particular variables of each area, variables such as the population to be impacted, situation of violence and insecurity, disadvantageous conditions based on gender, condition of the development of the pandemic in the localities. An overdetermined national plan could represent that the funds reached do not fulfill their role for implementation, causing a short-term and medium-term impact on their populations.

The worst case scenario would be that if there is a national plan that complies with regional standards and that an effective investment is not achieved, it affects the public service systems, such as education and health, and that the recovery takes years for which there would be a local setback leaving local needs unanswered. This not only represents a short-term setback, but it would represent a gradual setback and the further growth of social inequality in the Central American region.

In conclusion, El Salvador, as well as many of the countries in the region, is facing a difficult outlook for the scope of development, which has been aggravated by the COVID-19 situation. Therefore, the actions taken in response to the pandemic will be decisive to ensure the advancement of the countries or, otherwise, widen the inequality gap guaranteeing underdevelopment. Therefore, the creation of plans at the central level that takes responsibility for reality and is adapted to the regions of each country is the only effective response that guarantees the development of cities.

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Right to the City: A Case Study of Street Children of Pakistan

Shahnawaz*

Abstract

The phenomenon of street children is rapidly escalating in developing countries all across the world. According to the United Nations figures, these are approximately 150 million street children in the world, 1.2 million of whom live in Pakistan. The empirical studies show that the reasons for street children are extreme poverty, unequal distribution of wealth, high inflation, abuse by family, and large families living in poverty. In order to survive, most of the street children engage in hazardous labour such as begging, trash collection, prostitution, criminal activities, and drug addiction. Most of the street children in Pakistan live in major cities. The emergence of the right to the city is a holistic approach for improving the quality of everyday life of urban inhabitants.

This study focuses on exploring the substantial role of the local government of the metropolitan city of Karachi in Pakistan in addressing the challenges faced by street children. It also considers how the Non-Government Organization (NGOs) contribute to easing the situation of street children in the metropolitan city of Karachi. This study uses qualitative research, and it employs the case study methodology. The study concludes that the local government does not have any tangible education policy to address the street children issues in Karachi, and there is no existing inclusive child protection policy for the street children of Karachi.

Keywords: Street children, right to the city, child education, protection, Pakistan

Street children are a global social phenomenon and a challenge for the future of the world. The United Nations (UN) estimates that 100 to 150 million children are living and working on the streets globally (SPARC, 2015). The street children issue was initially noticed in the Latin American countries, especially in Brazil, Mexico, and Colombia, due to an alarming upsurge in the population of street children. Every child has their reasons, issues and rationalities to be a street child. Some of them run away from their homes in excitement to enjoy and earn their freedom (Aptekar & Stoecklin, 2014). However, the significant causes pushing children to the street are severe poverty, political unrest, the turbulent socio-economic situation of the families, urban migration, violence, abuse by families, and lack of an inclusive metropolitan city policy for marginalized groups (Haydar, 2017). Pakistan is the sixth most populated country in the world. It is facing severe challenges in the shape of abject poverty, prevalent terrorism, the weak rule of

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law, bad governance, power struggles between institutions, political unrest, human rights abuse, and child rights violation. The country is leading its war on terror; therefore, the security concerns coupled with the poor law and order situation pushes away foreign investment from Pakistan.

Consequently, the country is deeply mired in severe poverty, where 30% of the population is living below the poverty line. Thus, these issues make the majority of the street children population invisible to the state. Therefore, they are deprived of their essential needs and rights. According to the estimation of the national Non-Government Organization (NGO) Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) around 1.2 million street children are present in Pakistan (SPARC, 2015). Most of these children are living in noisy, dirty, and unsafe streets in slum areas situated in the metropolitan cities of Pakistan. The street children issue is a highly complex social phenomenon, and these children are mostly invisible in all significant institutional and state policies. These children do not have robust forums and platforms to claim their rights and have no awareness of their fundamental rights.

Research Objectives

Below are the research objectives of this study:

1: To explore the substantial role of the local government of Karachi in Pakistan in addressing the challenges faced by street children.

2: To consider how the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) contribute to easing the situation of street children in the metropolitan city Karachi in Pakistan.

3: To assess the quality of non-formal education for street children in NGO drop-in centers of Karachi-Pakistan

Literature Review

Characteristics and definition of the street children

The street children issue is a very complex social phenomenon. It is rapidly increasing and it is connected with unplanned urbanization, rapid industrialization, socio-economic inequalities, and poverty in developing countries. The majority of the public is unaware of the root causes of such issues and considers these children as young, spoiled vermin who live in filthy places, collect trash, beg for their livelihood, and work on the street. These street children are given different names globally as per their characteristics, work and physical appearance. In Brazil, most of the street children belong to the Afro-Brazilian class and the common public call them “Beicola” (Big lips), “Barriga” (Belly), “Verruga” (wart), and “Pivets” (Filho & Neder, 2001). In Colombia, the street children are known as “Gamines” (street urchin) and in Peru street children are known as “Pajaro-frutero” meaning fruit bird (Behura & Mohanty, 2005 p.3). In Pakistan, these children do not have any specific local name, but are known through their occupation. Generally, the public call these children rag pickers, locally known as “Kachra Wala” boys (rubbish-picker children).

United Nations Definition of the Street Children

UNICEF defined street children as “Any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, and so on,

has become his or her habitual abode and source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, directed, and supervised by responsible adults" (UNODC, n.d.).

Behura and Mohanty (2005) have identified two categories of street children, "children on the street" and "children of the street." Children on the street live with their families. They work on streets but return to their families. In this group, a few children also attend school, work, return to their families, and remained in contact with their families. Children *of* the street are commonly known as homeless children. They sleep, eat, work, and face all risks on the streets, footpaths, and public parks. These children have no contact or only sporadic contact with their families.

A New Way Forward: A Notion of the Human Rights City and the Street Children

According to the Gwangju Declaration on Human Rights Cities, a Human Rights City "is defined as a local government of any size: regions, urban agglomerations, metropolises, municipalities and other local authorities freely governed according to the Global Charter-Agenda for Human Rights in the City" (WHRCF, 2011). The designation of human rights city also means that all inhabitants, especially vulnerable groups like street children should be a centre of focus, have equal sustainable access to essential services like education, health and protection, and enjoy fundamental rights. Besides, the city government is the principal agency that could protect the rights of inhabitants and develop sustainable concrete policy focusing especially cases like street children. Therefore, the human rights city could provide a new pathway to establish a dedicated agency and policy to overcome such chaotic issues in the metropolitan city Karachi.

Most of the street children prefer to live in metropolitan cities due to enormous livelihood resources, availability of labour jobs, entertainment, and presence of peer groups on the street. Thus, these children are easily pulled by the metropolitan cities in developing countries and could easily be observed collecting garbage, playing music to earn a livelihood, sleeping on the street in transitive shelters, working on streets, taking drugs in public places and deserted locations of metropolitan cities.

Methodology

Overall, this research is qualitative in nature and uses the case study format. A case study is the qualitative format of research and is based on the bounded system, which mainly focuses on one case or an issue that is illustrated by the case. A case study provides a full in-depth study of this system, based on a different and diverse data collection material (Creswell, 2013). This cases study methodology is more focused on using a holistic approach, and, further, it will use a data collection spiral (Creswell, 2013). Moreover, data are also collected through in-depth interviews from related actors.

Research Findings

Education Interventions for the Street Children

In-universe every child has the right to education, including the street children in Karachi and Pakistan. Street children show some characteristics that closely correlate with illegal activities, but these children still have the right to education. Pakistan formed its first National Education

Policy (NEP) in 1998 and again in 2010. Both failed to achieve inclusiveness of disadvantaged group of children in the formal or non-formal educational system. This study found that metropolitan city Karachi does not have any child protection agency or child policy for protecting street children. Therefore, most of these children are overlooked and left behind on the streets.

Overview of NGOs Interventions for Street Children in Karachi

Over the years, NGOs have played a vibrant role in social change, poverty elimination, and protection of human rights, including in the provision of the formal and informal education in Karachi. Presently, there are limited NGOs in Karachi that provide free primary informal education to street children. This study selected two of those NGO schools for this research: the Footpath School supported by Ocean Welfare Organization and the Street Children School operated by Hassan and Shireen.

The Footpath School was established under an overpass in Karachi. The school has 130 enrolled street children from ages 7 to 14 years old. The other school, operated by Hassan and Shireen, has 70 street children. Both NGO centers provide free education to street children. The NGO schools provide free basic literacy and skills training to street children. The curriculum of these schools consists of awareness materials about various social issues of particular concern to these children, like how to prevent HIV AIDS. These drop-in centers provide 20 to 30 Pakistani Rupees (16-19 cents American) per day and free lunch to all enrolled street children.

Overview of the Relationship of Karachi Metropolitan Government and NGOs

The research revealed that the education department of the metropolitan government does not fully know about such NGOs that provide education to street children. Besides, the federal government of Pakistan is controlling and coordinating with NGOs in the education sector. Most of these NGO schools run without the support of the government of Pakistan and have no proper support from the metropolitan government of Karachi, either. Besides, NGO school officials shared that most of the government officials consider these schools on footpaths and other dirty places as disgracing the country nationally and internationally. Therefore, the government should provide the children with proper buildings and teachers. However, the government has failed to provide such facilities, but it is continually forcing and issuing statements to close such schools that are providing education to street children in Karachi. Furthermore, the study also found that the metropolitan government of Karachi remains unconcerned and overlooks such issues between the national government and NGOs in Karachi. However, NGOs staff were worried that after taking over these schools, the government would shut them down, and the children could be pushed back on the streets, and the NGO school's objectives and efforts will be lost. Therefore, it is significant that the metropolitan government of Karachi should come forward and support such NGOs that are providing informal education to these children and working for their inclusion and betterment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study discovered that the metropolitan government of Karachi has no

intervention plans and no specific policy for the education and protection of street children. The metropolitan government of Karachi and NEP are failing to provide the formal or informal right to education to street children in Karachi. This abysmal situation is violating the human right to education of street children in Karachi and driving them towards several serious risks such as, drug addiction, petty crimes, begging, prostitution, and HIV-AIDs. However, in this situation, the local NGOs interventions are noticeable in the provision of informal education to the street children in Karachi. The school attendance records and observations reveal that the school's enrollments of children are steady, and the dropout rate is low. Moreover, this study also reveals that NGOs schools have extreme challenges in terms of funding, proper school buildings, a lack of professional teachers, and inadequate theoretical knowledge about informal education of street children. Thus, the metropolitan government of Karachi must step forward and develop a policy mechanism under the right to the city approach to protect the rights of their marginalized and deprived groups of inhabitants like street children and to provide sustainable access to services for street children in Karachi.

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Changes in the Global Flow of Plastic Waste and Their Effects on Sustainable Development

Brandon Callegari*

Abstract

This paper looks into how the increase in mixed plastic waste imports negatively impacts communities within developing countries, as well as the response that these countries have taken. Using Malaysia as a case study, this paper finds that local governments are often the first to respond to the negative effects caused by mixed plastic recycling, due to prompting by community members or advocacy groups. These local constituencies enforce mixed plastic import bans or recycling factory regulations, which then flow up to state and national governments. To address the issues caused by mixed plastic recycling in other developing countries, this paper recommends that the UNEP have member states convene to set regulations on the types of plastic waste exported to developing countries. As well as this, in the long-term, countries need to adopt a sustainable replacement for single-use plastics. This can be achieved using international collaboration and a multilateral platform, similar to the replacement of CFCs through the Montreal Protocol.

Keywords: plastic, globalization, development, cities, United Nations

Green recycling bins, once lining the streets of Deltona, Florida every Tuesday evening, are strewn on the sides of houses, unused. For decades, the United States and many other parts of the world believed that recycling was necessary to reduce the amount of waste and bring in economic benefits while doing so. If recycling is seen as so beneficial, why is it that cities like Deltona in many countries are forced to make the difficult decision of curbing or halting their recycling programs? And why is it that some municipalities which have continued recycling programs, such as Los Angeles county (the most populous county in the United States), are sending their mixed plastics to landfills and incinerators, unknown to many county residents (McCormick et al., 2019)?

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The answer is that recycling is more nuanced than simply putting used metals and plastics in a bin and watching them disappear, and that recycling can have negative environmental implications, unknown to many. It is true that recycling helps to reduce carbon emissions, conserve natural resources, and reduce the amount of waste that is burnt or buried, which is beneficial to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), specifically SDG 12 which ensures sustainable consumption and production ("The Truth about Recycling," 2007). Extracting metals from ore can be extremely energy intensive, and recycling metals such as aluminum can reduce energy consumption by up to 95% ("The Truth about Recycling," 2007). For other materials, energy consumption savings are still significant, with a 70% reduction for plastics, 60% for steel, 40% for paper, and 30% for glass ("The Truth about Recycling," 2007). Recycling factories also hire local workers in their regions and can take in recyclable waste from other countries, which will bring in foreign currency and help fund development (working toward SDG 8). However, these factories can leach hazardous materials into communal water supplies and release harmful toxins into the air that can negatively impact the health of people living in these communities (Massola & Rosa, 2018). This, as well as the smog being emitted from these factories, not only lowers the quality of life for people in these areas but also devastates the environment, working against SDG 3 (good health) and SDG 15 (life on land).

The United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), a subsection of the UN devoted to tackling environmental issues around the globe, announced in its Medium Term Strategy report that it is adopting more results-focused, longer-term outcomes to curb environmental impacts for the 2030 UN agenda (Balke, 2018). The UNEP has made efforts beyond providing reports and resources about the importance of waste management to promote environmental sustainability, including starting the Clean Seas campaign in 2017, which pushes for the elimination of single-use plastics and supports the implementation of integrated waste management systems internationally (UNEP, 2019). As well as this, the UNEP has created the One Planet Network, a multi-stakeholder partnership aimed at generating collective impact around the world in achieving sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12), mainly through decoupling economic growth from resource use and other impacts on the environment (UNEP, 2017). One Planet Network is made up of hundreds of organizations across all regions of the world and has wide-ranging initiatives connected to waste and recycling management, including the Nordic Cooperation of collection & recycling of plastic waste and the UK Plastics Pact (UNEP, 2017). One Planet Network provides a platform for these organizations and many others to come together and share sustainable ideas and policies with other NGOs and organizations around the world.

That being said, there are still many issues in regard to global plastic waste. The world produces around 300 million tons of plastic waste each year; however, only 9% of the plastic waste ever generated has been recycled, and only 14% of current plastic waste is being recycled today (UNEP, 2019). All of the plastic that is not recycled ends up in landfills, scattered across the land, or in the oceans. These plastics can take thousands of years to break down, and if they end up in the ocean, marine species can ingest them and get poisoned from the toxins present or die from choking (Madaan, 2017). Microplastics are small plastic pieces less than five millimeters long that come from the partial breakdown of plastic or cosmetic products and easily pass through

water filtration systems, toxifying groundwater sources that humans drink from (National Ocean Service, 2020). They also end up in rivers or oceans, where small species such as plankton ingest them and are harmed (National Ocean Service, 2020). Other plastics end up in landfills, which use up valuable waste storage space. These landfills are already overflowing and encroaching on major cities, leaching toxins into municipal water supplies. If mishandled plastic continues to end up in landfills, it is estimated that by 2050 landfills will contain 12 billion metric tons of plastic (Parker, 2018).

Countries implement recycling, usually beginning at the local level, to stop the destruction that plastics can have on the environment and to profit on the cheaper prices recycled plastics have compared to originally manufactured plastics. In the United States, the introduction of single-stream recycling (where recyclables are all put together in the same household bin) in the past fifty years is partially responsible for a surge in domestic recycling rates (UNEP, 2019). However, Waste Management, one of the largest residential recycling processors in North America, states that about one in every four items put in recycling bins are not recyclable (UNEP, 2019). Part of this is due to consumers placing items in recycling bins that are not recyclable at all – such as pizza boxes, ceramics, and light bulbs (Champa, 2017). Other items are recyclable, but are not usually recycled within the United States due to difficulties in sorting and the labor required to recycle these materials.

The six most common types of plastics – the types that are found in most households – are Polystyrene (PS), found in plastic cutlery and containers; Polypropylene (PP), found in take-out food containers; Low-density polyethylene (LDPE), found in garbage bins and bags; Plastic polyvinyl chloride (PVC), found in juice bottles; High-density polyethylene (HDPE), found in shampoo containers or milk bottles; and Polyethylene terephthalate (PET), found in fruit juice and soft drink bottles (LeBlanc, 2019). Recycling factories in the United States and in many developed countries are regulated to only recycle PET, HDPE, and PVC plastics, as these products do not get stuck in sorting equipment and thus make them economically feasible to recycle through sorting processes (LeBlanc, 2019). Since PS, PP, and LDPE plastics get stuck in sorting equipment, they do not get recycled in recycling plants that follow these regulations (LeBlanc, 2019). If PS, PP, and LDPE plastics are found dispersed in plastic piles, these piles get labelled as "mixed plastics" and are sold off to countries that will accept these contaminated plastic piles to recycle (LeBlanc, 2019). The problem lies in the method to recycle these mixed plastics, which involves melting down the entire mixed plastic pile at very high temperatures to create plastic microbeads, releasing harmful toxins into the air and leaching volatile chemicals into groundwater supplies and local communities (Massola & Rosa, 2018). Recycling factories that do not follow regulations on what types of plastics to recycle and melt down mixed plastics are considered "illegal" recycling factories in this paper.

While plastic recycling is relatively new, the process of converting waste materials into new products is not. Recycling has been dated to before the advent of modern industrial societies; even in pre-industrial times, evidence shows that metals such as scrap bronze were being collected in Europe and melted down for reuse. ("The Truth about Recycling," 2007). The environmental movement in the 1960's and 1970's in the United States led to the spread of

curbside recycling programs, which mobilized nations to recycle as a societal norm (Waxman, 2016). Before this movement, most recycling was limited in scale and scope, reserved for materials that were difficult to extract or create (such as metals) and pursued mainly by manufacturers for economic means (Waxman, 2016). What changed during this time was that the public's perception of their role in the environment shifted. People began to learn about the negative impacts that their household goods were having on the environment, and wanted to take active steps to curtail these effects (Waxman, 2016).

Other Western countries have also prioritized recycling waste products, and many recycle or compost waste at higher percentages than the U.S. Germany is leading OECD countries with 65% of recycled or composted waste as a share of total municipal waste in 2013, compared to the U.S. which only has 35% of total waste being recycled or composted (McCarthy, 2016). This begs the question: where does the recyclable material that cannot be processed domestically go? For decades, the cheapest option for many Western countries was to export their waste to China, the world's leading importer of recyclable materials.

China's History of Recycling Imports

China began importing solid waste as a raw material source in the 1980's, and has imported a cumulative of 45% of the global plastic waste since 1992 (Brooks et al., 2018). In the 1990's, Chinese party leaders began to discuss sustainable development in China (see Figure 1), their responses largely due to previous scandals or poor practices within the recycling sector, including generally unenforced regulations (Gregson & Crang, 2019). As China became increasingly aware of the severity of pollution and energy consumption stemming from its economic progress over the decades, it began to push for more official environmental policy in its national agenda ("CPC Advocates," 2012). For the first time in an official report, President Hu Jintao, at the 17th Party National Congress in 2007, advocated for ecological progress as an official policy (see Figure 1), declaring that "unbalanced, uncoordinated, and unsustainable development remain[ed] a big problem" in China ("CPC Advocates," 2012). Following this, in 2008 China elevated the State Environmental Protection Administration to an official ministry ("CPC Advocates," 2012).

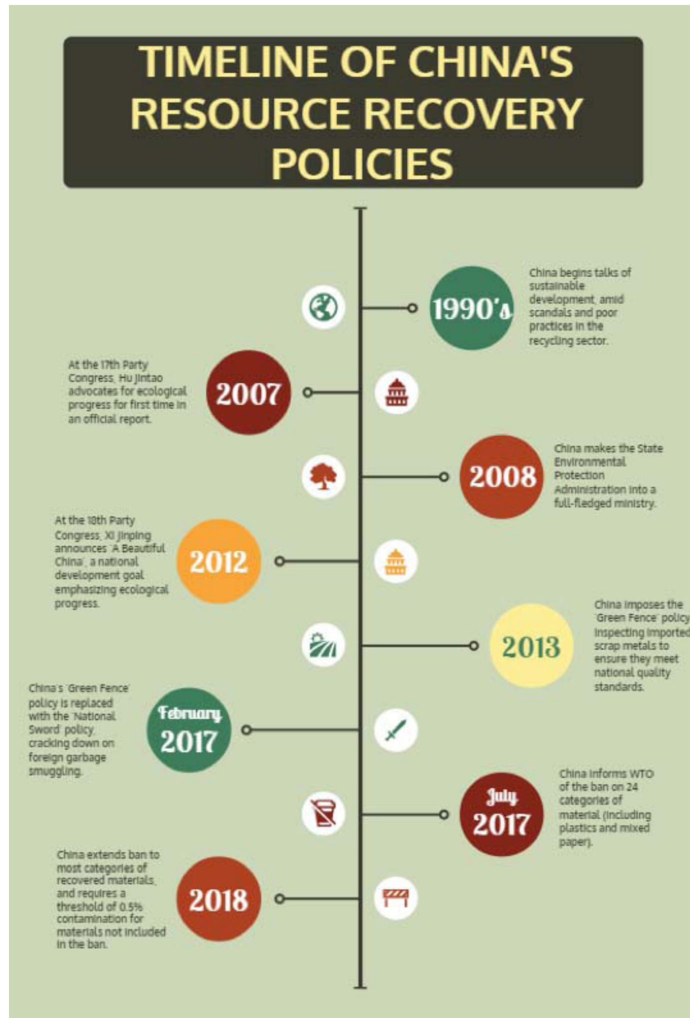

FIGURE 1: TIMELINE OF CHINA'S RESOURCE RECOVERY POLICIES. (CREATED USING VENNGAGE INFOGRAPHIC MAKER)

The environmental conscientiousness of policy within the CCP continued, and by the 18th Party Congress in 2012, newly sworn-in General Secretary Xi Jinping announced, 'Building a Beautiful China' (see Figure 1), a goal that called for prioritizing ecological progress in its development plan ("CPC Advocates," 2012). Following this, in February 2013 China imposed the 'Green Fence' policy, which included inspections of imported scrap metals to see whether these imports met national quality standards (see Figure 1). In the first year of the 'Green Fence' policy, 70% of scrap container imports were inspected, causing difficulties for countries trying to sell recovered materials in the global commodity market (Gregson & Crang, 2019). China then created the 'National Sword' policy in 2017, which banned most plastic waste imports into China. With this new policy, implemented fully in 2018, it is estimated that 111 million metric tons of plastic waste will be displaced by 2030 (Brooks et al., 2018). China's ban on imports had suddenly catapulted the world into a global waste flow crisis (Gregson & Crang, 2019).

After China banned recycling imports with its National Sword policy in 2018, many Southeast Asian countries began to increase their plastic waste imports to fill in the gap left by China.

Malaysia, in particular, became the world's largest importer of plastic waste, increasing from 128,000 to 461,000 tons of plastic waste imported from 2017 to 2018 alone (Hook & Reed, 2018). This was due in large part to the lack of environmental regulations that Malaysia had for the import of mixed plastic waste products and a large labor force that was willing to cash in the economic incentives of taking in this waste. This created the ideal circumstances for developed countries to dump their mixed plastic waste onto Malaysia. For these reasons, I will use Malaysia as a case study to assess the impact of increasing recycling imports on a developing country and the response within the country in light of sustainable development.

Case Study: Malaysia

Malaysia is a developing country in Southeast Asia that is inhabited by over 30 million people on its over 800 islands. Historically, Malaysia has had difficulties managing its own domestic waste, even before handling waste and recycling imports from other countries (Hassan et al., 2000). Domestic solid waste management is considered one of the three major environmental problems faced in Malaysia, according to a 1993 World Bank report (Hassan et al., 2000). Malaysia began to focus on waste management and waste imports in the 1970's, when the Malaysian government introduced a series of acts that aimed to minimize pollution and improve waste management and municipal disposal, especially among households (Razali et al., 2019). However, there is a lot of discrepancy in the recycling rate of Malaysia today, and while some estimates place Malaysia's recycling rate at up to half of the United States' recycling rate (around 30%), others place it at a far lower level ("Less than 1% ," 2019). According to the Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation, Malaysia had a solid waste accumulation of 3 million tons of waste in 2018 but faced a domestic recycling rate of about 0.06%, or about 1,800 tons recycled ("Less than 1% ," 2019). With this extremely low level of recycling, much of Malaysia's waste (including recyclable materials) ends up in landfills, overloading waste dumping locations and putting a heavy strain on the country's waste management systems.

Malaysia has historically had very weak regulations on what imports its country could accept, with import regulations being liberal compared to other Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states and most goods having the ability to be freely imported under General Open License ("Regulations and Customs," 2020). Due to this, immediately after China's ban on imports, the Malaysian government had little power to stop individuals within the country from accepting the mixed plastic waste being pushed onto them from developed countries. Malaysia was already lacking in domestic recycling infrastructure, so the influx of recycling imports that the country received after the National Sword policy went into effect put a heavy burden on existing domestic recycling manufactures. The result of these increased imports was a sudden growth of illegal recycling factories across Malaysia, started by individuals looking to cash in on the profits that the recycling these cheap mixed plastic imports can have.

On one hand, these illegal factories created economic opportunities for the owners of these factories and the workers that they hire, helping to stimulate development within their community by bringing in currency and job opportunities, working towards SDG 1 (reducing poverty) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth). However, these illegal plastic recycling

factories had much larger negative implications for the communities that they were located in. To recycle the mixed plastics, these illegal factories were forced to use rudimentary methods that did not follow recycling regulations ("Govt to Ban Import," 2018). The most common method is to burn them, which releases harmful chemicals into the atmosphere and water supply, causing negative health effects and environmental pollution ("Govt to Ban Import," 2018).

According to a resident located in Jenjarom, a city of 30,000 near a major shipping port in Malaysia which saw a huge growth in illegal recycling factories after China's ban, she became sick due to the incessant plastic burning from the dozens of factories in her neighborhood (Massola & Rosa, 2018). "I had no energy, fatigue, I felt weak all day, I couldn't figure out why" (Massola & Rosa, 2018, p.2). The resident soon found out that the toxic fumes being released from melted plastic in a factory near her house was causing her illness (Massola & Rosa, 2018). These fumes (made up of dioxins, furans, mercury, halogens, polychlorinated biphenyls, and other compounds) from mixed plastic burning have been cited to cause heart disease, damage to the nervous system, rashes, headaches, nausea, and certain types of cancer (Verma et al., 2016).

This resident, along with many other residents, were outraged by the damage caused by these illegal factories and joined the NGO Persatuan Tindakan Alam Sekitar Kuala Langat (Environmental Act of Kuala Langat) to attempt to shut down the factories in Jenjarom and surrounding areas (Massola & Rosa, 2018). This civil society organization's attempts have partially worked: in July 2018, the Jenjarom government announced the shutting down of 34 illegal factories, and this sparked a national outcry that resulted in a three-month pause in new imports of plastic waste (Bengali, 2019). After other cities in Malaysia followed similar patterns in the following months, in October the Malaysian government took a bold step and announced the restrictions on what types of plastic can enter the country and enacted a partial ban on mixed plastic waste imports to further stifle illegal recycling factories ("Govt to Ban Import," 2018).

Today, Malaysia has continued to increase restrictions on plastic waste, in a manner similar to China. While at first limited to local governments such as Jenjarom, recently, the national government has been even more stringent on the types and quality of waste they accept. In May 2019, expressing a sentiment of discontent, Malaysia's environment minister Yeo Bee Yin announced that "Malaysia will not be the dumping ground of the world…we will fight back. Even though we are a small country, we can't be bullied by developed countries" (Zhou, 2019). He then announced that 3,000 tons of waste that were sent from around the world would be returned because they were either contaminated or falsely labelled and smuggled in (Zhou, 2019). As for the country's future, the Malaysian government has pledged that by 2030 they will eliminate the use of all single-use plastics (Bengali, 2019). However, Malaysia has still not eliminated all mixed plastic waste imports, although they plan to soon. As mentioned previously, Malaysia has very low domestic recycling rate and due to this, Malaysia is now dependent on imports to fuel its $7 billion domestic plastic recycling industry (Bengali, 2019). Malaysia plans to phase out imports of all types of plastic by 2021 to give these plastic industries time to either move their industries or to focus their efforts on domestic recycling (Lee & Sipalan, 2018). The implication of this is that the over 400,000 tons of mixed plastic waste that Malaysia accepts annually will be pushed onto other economically-starved, developing countries by the same developed countries

that previously sold their mixed plastic waste to Malaysia in the first place. They will likely face the same issues as Malaysia – massive environmental damage, an influx in greenhouse gases, and health issues in multiple communities. Although the players may change, without systemic intervention at a global level, the game remains the same.

Conclusions

We can see from Malaysia a general trajectory of what a developing country will do when it begins importing copious amounts of mixed plastic waste that overwhelm their current waste management system. Illegal factories begin to spring up to derive economic benefit from these plastic materials that legal factories cannot or will not handle. These illegal factories do not practice best methods in their recycling methods, resulting in excess pollution that negatively impacts the local environment and the health of the surrounding community. Although these illegal factories bring in some economic benefits, the community members adversely affected by the pollution these factories give off set off waves of dissent, usually by starting or joining a civil society organization dedicated to community and environmental health. These civil society groups appeal to local government officials until the illegal factories are forced to shut down within the municipality. After many cities follow in a similar pattern, the national government then begins to address this issue with prompting from these local governments, limiting the amount of recycling imports that it takes in country-wide.

Globally, 79% of plastic waste accumulated in landfills, 12% was incinerated, while only 9% was recycled in 2015 (Geyer et al., 2017). As well as this, plastic production is expected to increase by 40% in the next decade alone (Selby, 2020). These facts are important in the broader context of the global flow of plastic waste. Currently, a large amount of plastic waste flows from developed countries into developing countries, and many of these countries, such as Malaysia, are ill-equipped to handle this plastic waste with their current infrastructure. Rather than forcing mixed plastics onto developing countries who have weak environmental regulations and may feel forced to import hazardous mixed plastics due to economic opportunity, a more sustainable alternative needs to be created. There are two paths that can be taken to address this, and one is less desirable than the other.

In one scenario, international organizations continue to tacitly consent in allowing developing countries that decide to take in these increasing plastic imports, and promote investment to increase the plastic recycling capacity in these countries in a sustainable way, which will bring in economic benefits and promoting development in the respective countries that perform these actions. While this scenario could work, it would be extremely difficult to provide the funds necessary for every developing country that takes in mixed plastics to make their current and new recycling factories more sustainable. It is also unfair, from a moral standpoint, for developed countries, which are better off economically, to push their harmful mixed plastics onto developing countries and let them deal with the environmental and health consequences that these plastics bring.

The other scenario is that the international community and individual cities enhance regulations on mixed plastics exports and helps guide developing countries on halting mixed plastics imports.

Since developed countries have relied historically on China and now on Southeast Asian countries to handle their mixed plastic waste, they currently do not have the infrastructure to maintain and recycle these materials. But since developed countries export their mixed plastic waste still, local municipalities in the United States and other developed countries still believe that mixed plastic waste can be recycled, such as clamshell-style food packaging, take-out containers, and drink cups, when in reality they are not easily recyclable for domestic manufacturers due to sorting issues and violations of factory regulations (McCormick et al., 2019). By keeping mixed plastic waste within developed countries, this will break this cycle and ensure that developing countries are not overburdened with plastic imports that they cannot handle, which will reduce negative environmental and health effects in these developing countries. It will also force developed countries to deal with their own mixed plastic waste, which will incentivize plastics manufacturers to come up with alternatives for the types of hard-to-recycle plastics to reduce the costs that dealing with these plastics in a sustainable way would bring. The UNEP has the ability to ensure that this second scenario occurs. As well as this, all of this needs to occur at the same time that civil societies within cities in developing countries, particularly Southeast Asia where plastic imports are high, continue to fight for protecting the health of the community by pushing for the closure of illegal recycling factories. Not every city will be as fortunate as Jenjarom in the organic creation of an effective civil society organization. Therefore, it is important to facilitate this framework within cities that have issues with illegal plastic recycling factories, through various means which are outlined later in this paper.

Recommendations for the UNEP

To reduce the global flow of mixed plastics into developing countries, the UNEP should implement two policies. It is essential that the UNEP have member states convene to set regulations (specifically developed countries) in what types of plastic waste they are allowed to export to developing countries, since developed countries generally have a higher capacity to create infrastructure to handle plastic waste than developing countries. It is a developed country's responsibility to deal with contaminated plastic waste that cannot be recycled within their own borders, rather than dumping it onto other, poorer, less regulated countries that may feel pressured to accept this waste to garner economic benefit at the cost of sustainability, which negatively impact the SDG's.

For the first policy, the UNEP should create a multilateral trade treaty, similar to the over 560 already created by various UN departments, to have signatory states ban exports of mixed plastic waste (specifically polystyrene (PS), polypropylene (PP), and low-density polyethylene (LDPE)) and limit other forms of plastic waste that are exported to maximum contamination levels (United Nations, 2015). One platform that the UNEP could do this through is the Basel Convention. This convention was first held in 1989 and prohibits the export of hazardous wastes to protect vulnerable countries, among other protocols (Basel Convention, 1989). While there are some protocols within the Basel Convention to help regulate the trade of plastic waste and its disposal, these parts of the convention are yet to be very effective. For instance, the Basel Convention was initiated in 2012, yet the contaminated imports that Malaysia received were in

direct violation of the Basal Convention and were not reprimanded (Lee & Sipalan, 2018). The Basel Convention needs to reconvene in its Open-ended Working Group and amend its treaty to add mixed plastic waste to its prohibition of exports, while ensuring better effectiveness through the Implementation & Alliance Committee of the convention (Basel Convention, 1989). This way, countries will be responsible for their own contaminated waste, and this will provide incentive for them to reduce the production of these mixed plastics. Another added benefit is that the ban on mixed plastic exports will inevitably reduce the amount of illegal recycling factories in developing countries, because they will have no mixed plastic to recycle.

In the long-term, drastic changes are needed in the global production of plastics to promote sustainable development. As long as plastic continues to be produced, it is inevitable that some of this plastic will end up in landfills, in the oceans, or mismanaged in processing facilities which will lead to environmental and health damage. Thus, the second policy and the long-term solution that the world needs to aim for is a reduction in the use of plastics – specifically single-use plastics because they are cheap, ubiquitous, and used often by consumers for products that are easily replaceable, such as grocery bags and utensils. To do this, both developed and developing countries need to adopt a sustainable replacement for single-use plastics. Currently, there are already viable alternatives that exist.

One alternative to many single-use plastic products, such as cups, utensils, and toys, is a plastic alternative created with organic limestone. ReEarthable is a company that has created a limestone-based copolymer substrate material that has the ability to be manufactured as a replacement for any plastic product (ReEarthable, 2020). This product maintains the same tensile strength as plastic and has naturally fire retardant properties, all while being able to organically break down in in aerobic and anaerobic environments in 90-120 days (the same length as a banana peel) (ReEarthable, 2020). For packaging and plastic-based Styrofoam, a mushroom-based material provides a sustainable alternative. The company Ecovative has created a mushroom packaging from live mycelium that are fed agricultural waste and grown under optimal conditions (Gunther, 2013). This material is not only renewable and biodegradable but made from crop waste, which can provide income to farmers who sell their crop waste to produce this product (Gunther, 2013).

Both of these companies have already started production on their products, but as of the writing of this paper, only focus their production on a small scale. An organization like the UN could be the platform for these companies to gain worldwide attention and bring these innovations onto the global stage. A long-term recommendation for the UNEP would involve promoting these or other economically viable plastic alternatives at their international environmental forums, as well as within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The UNEP could also influence member states within these forums to provide incentives to adopt plastic alternatives. Economic incentives include working with international banks to promote tax subsidies for countries creating and distributing plastic alternative products globally or influencing international banks to reduce interest rates on loans that are taken out by countries that are investing in the production and distribution of plastic alternatives.

The UNEP has already successfully influenced producers in member states to switch from a

less sustainable product to a more sustainable product. One example of a successful intervention of this nature was to replace chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), an ozone-depleting chemical used in refrigerants, with a more environmentally sustainable alternative: in this case hydrocarbon sprays and pump atomizers (G. Terrefe, personal communication, 2020). In the 1980's, the CFC industry was worth $30 billion, with only a small number of producers holding the market share, making CFC's an easy target to market an alternative (G. Terrefe, personal communication, 2020). The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (i.e. the Montreal Protocol) was a treaty in 1987 that held signatory states to a timeline to reduce the consumption of certain ozone-depleting controlled substances classified in Group I of Annex A of the treaty by 50%, including CFCs (United Nations, 1987). Along with this, an international collaborative technology assessment gave rise to sustainable alternatives to CFCs that were economically feasible, and these blueprints were given to the CFC producers (G. Terrefe, personal communication, 2020). The treaty was accepted by 198 member parties and was soon ratified to completely eliminate the production of most ozone-depleting chemicals (United Nations, 1987). The treaty has been regarded as a massive success, and currently the ozone hole that opens annually near Antarctica is shrinking every year (G. Terrefe, personal communication, 2020).

Although the Montreal Protocol was able to work in the case of CFCs, a similar protocol to replace single-use plastics would be more difficult, but not impossible. The global plastics market, as of 2019, is worth $568 billion dollars, reaching virtually every country and having products that reach many parts of the economy in a market almost 20 times as large as the market for CFCs (Grand View Research, 2020). It is highly doubtful that producers in such a profitable industry with a product that has so many uses will completely switch to a more sustainable product unless it is cost effective and there is considerable incentive to do so.

The solution then, is multi-faceted. The focus should be on replacing single-use plastics, since they are both causing massive amounts of pollution due to being made up of mostly PS, PP, and LDPE, while also being cheap and easily replaceable, compared to other plastic products. The UNEP should have the Open-ended Working Group for the Basel Convention reconvene and propose an amendment to reduce the use of single-use plastics by 50% by the reassessment of SDG's in 2030, and aim in the years after to eliminate their use completely. The member parties of the convention need to work with international scientists and innovators to come up with and decide which single-use plastic alternative is the most sustainable while still being economically feasible. Then, the convention needs to give the blueprints of this alternative technology to the World Plastic Council, who will distribute these blueprints to plastic producers that can modify their industries, with the help of subsidies by signatory states to create these alternative products. After the treaty outlining this is signed by member states and is internally ratified by each signatory, the Implementation & Compliance Committee within the Basel Convention needs to ensure that these policies are followed.

It is important to mention that these recommendations do have disadvantages, which need to be addressed. For one, while illegal plastic recycling factories in developing countries are contributing to massive pollution, environmental damage, and health issues in their respective communities, they do provide jobs for community members and bring in important income that

feed into their local economy. By halting exports of mixed plastic and starving these factories, it will inevitably get rid of many jobs and reduce the amount of money entering into the economies of these communities. To address this, governments of these developing countries need to work together on all levels (local, regional, and national) with the guidance of the UNEP to ensure that these factories are not simply destroyed, but instead renovated to meet legality standards or replaced with more sustainable factories so that jobs and cash inflow can be maintained.

Another, more obvious consequence of implementing these recommendations is that getting plastic producers to switch to an alternative to single-use plastic will be very costly, specifically with the initial fixed costs associated with creating the infrastructure to produce single-use plastic alternatives on a global scale. Local municipalities, as well as national governments, will likely not have the funds to influence these producers to make these changes. The solution here is to look to international financers, such as the IMF and World Bank, rather than relying on national governments, to provide these funds for plastic recycling infrastructure changes. This has an added advantage of allowing the funds to be conditional: states will only receive adequate funding if they follow the recommendations and guidelines created within the plastic alternatives treaty of the Basel Convention. Since these international financers already work closely with the UN, both bodies can work together to ensure that states are following recommendations and if not, withhold the funds.

Recommendations for Cities

As in the case study with Malaysia, change is first enacted by civil society organizations in cities, which eventually leads to state and national governments. The power of people is not to be underestimated, especially at the local level. Civil society organizations are so powerful in cities because they are local, not in spite of being local. Local civil society organizations consist of constituents that likely live in the same municipality that the organization is based in. Therefore, these constituents are knowledgeable on the specific nuances of the city that make their situation unique. For example, in Jenjarom, it is likely that many of the members of the NGO Persatuan Tindakan Alam Sekitar Kuala Langat were locals who knew the people who ran the illegal recycling factories, and may have even personally known their local government officials. This gives an added advantage when it comes to successful policy change in these situations, as civil society organizations can more effectively convince local government officials of the harmful effects from illegal recycling factories when it is connected to them personally.

However, for a civil society organization to create change in a city with illegal plastic recycling factories, there needs to be a strong civil society in the first place; this comes with awareness. If people within a city are unsure of the effects that plastic burning is having on their lungs, they will be less likely to advocate to stop plastic burning. This same idea applies with each detrimental effect that the illegal processing of mixed plastic waste can have. People wanting to focus on bringing effective change to plastic management in their cities should first focus on awareness of the detrimental effects of plastic mismanagement among the city's constitutions. This knowledge will evoke constituents to act, enabling effective civil society organizations to form and attain their goals of ridding the city of illegal plastic recycling factories and implementing sustainable

practices in regard to plastic use and management.

As stated in the recommendations for the UNEP, it is important in the long-term that a sustainable and practical alternative to single-use plastics is utilized on the global market. Many cities around the world can take the first step in making this happen, by adopting a single-use plastic alternative within their municipality or banning some forms of single-use plastics. An example of this already occurring would be in Dhaka, Bangladesh, where in 2002 they became one of the first cities in the world to ban single-use plastic bags, due to the negative environmental effects of plastic bags, specifically sewage clogging (Mourshed et al., 2017). To maintain this ban and promote awareness for sustainable waste management, a civil society organization within Dhaka, the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), performs a range of tasks, including organizing student campaigns/rallies, arranging meetings and training programs, and distributing newsletters to inform people of current environmental issues in regards to waste (Mourshed et al., 2017). Waste collection efficiency has increased from 42% in 2005 to 75.98% in 2015, and the plastic bag ban was maintained (Mourshed et al., 2017). To replace these plastic bags, Bangladesh has created an alternative made out of jute, a local plant fiber that is used to create low-cost biodegradable bags which degrade after three months when buried in the soil (Islam, 2019).

As with the aforementioned example, it is important for cities to take the initiative themselves to ban single-use plastic products, and find sustainable alternatives for these products, ideally with locally-sourced materials. International organizations, such as the UNEP, can work alongside cities that are taking steps to replace single-use plastic products, giving them resources that may not be available at the national level.

The state of the world's global plastic waste flow is in disarray, and is unsustainable. Using Malaysia as a case study, I have found in this instance that a developing country with poor domestic environmental and import regulation and inadequate recycling infrastructure will likely take in low-quality mixed plastic from developed countries due to the economic incentive that it brings. Factories that recycle this mixed plastic will create pollution and harm local communities, and community members may protest these factories until they are halted by local governments. In Malaysia's scenario, the national government introduced policy to limit the imports on mixed plastics and eventually will ban them altogether. Other developing countries, when faced with these mixed plastics, may not ban imports due to wanting to maintain economic incentives, harming progress towards the SDG's. I propose that the UNEP reconvenes the Basel Convention to have member states create a treaty to limit the export of mixed plastic waste, and to influence plastic companies to take up a more sustainable and economically viable plastic alternative, such as a limestone or mushroom-based material. As well as this, I propose that civil society organizations focused on community health within countries spread awareness of the detrimental effects of plastic waste mismanagement. With this information, these civil society organizations can invigorate the city's constituents to rid countries of illegal plastic recycling factories, helping reduce rates of cancer, asthma, and other detrimental health effects that these factories can bring, along with reducing negative environmental effects. Alongside this, these organizations can eventually work with local governments to promote single-use plastic

alternatives, which could eventually be utilized in other cities throughout the country and beyond.

Actions need to be taken to reduce the negative impact of recycling imports in developing countries and to reduce the use of plastics around the world. The United Nations, as one of the most powerful international entities, needs to use its power to positively influence its member nations. Alongside this, cities in countries where illegal plastic recycling is taking place can do their part by banning these illegal factories and reducing their use of single-use plastics. Only if international organizations, local cities, and national governments work together, can the global flow of plastic waste become sustainable, ensuring the health and safety of affected populations and the environment.

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Papers III

Keeping Community Spirit in the Time of COVID-19

From Sanitation to Education:
What Is Necessary to Overcome in Brazilian Slums

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Abstract

This paper analyzes the effects of sanitation and access to education in slums, also known as favelas, from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, bringing insights about the importance of regional development policy. Whether or not people have the right to have access to sanitation is one of the factors that ensures greater or lesser protection against the COVID-19. Residents of peripheries and favelas, as well as homeless people, are those who suffer most from such inequality. Some of the measures to fight the COVID-19 depend on the local, state, and federal government policies to help the population's needs. It is significant to call attention to each locality's distinct necessities, which end up requiring different governmental efforts. The municipalities and local governments are more properly able to identify, according to the citizens' living conditions, what lead these people into poverty. Some may need cooperatives, training programs, labor intermediation, or credit. Thus, to be able to overcome poverty, the Brazilian government will have to go beyond cash transfers to lift millions out of poverty. For a well-defined social policy, Brazil needs to guarantee access to basic services and help with the inclusion of the poor population into the labor market. More than mitigating the country's current poverty situation with money from social programs, Brazil's main challenge is to overcome medium and long-term poverty.

Keywords: Urbanization, Sanitation, Brazil, COVID-19, Favelas

The year of 2020 had barely started, and countries worldwide were surprised by the existence of a new virus, the SARS-CoV-2, known as COVID-19. By the first half of 2020, the virus had led to the infection of millions of people and the death of thousands worldwide. Since the COVID-19 is easily transmitted, there is a need for high prevention, frequent hand hygiene, and the use of facial masks by the population (WHO, 2020). Though, when we look into the Brazilian case, there is a lot of social-economic difficulties that may limit virus prevention and allow it to scatter among people even more quickly. The lack of access to water and sanitation increases the risk of disease transmission, making even more evident the effects of economic inequality in fighting a pandemic.

Given the important recognition of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6, which

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looks to guarantee availability and sustainable controlling of water and sanitation, for all in the last few decades, the progress toward improving access to handwashing has been developed ("Proportion," 2020). In 2019, 26.1 percent of the global population did not have access to handwashing with available soap and clean water (Brauer et al., 2020). In 2018, around 68 percent of Brazilian households had access to basic sanitation treatment, and 6.8 percent of the population from 15-years-old and up were illiterate. In urban areas of Brazil, due to a faster and not well-implemented urbanization platform, slums also known as "favelas" spread around Brazilian cities. These small districts are described as a reflection of inequality from the rapid urbanization, which led to a lack of infrastructure arrangement to receive citizens coming from more isolated areas in search of job opportunities in major urban centers, as is the case of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

In this article, two favelas are discussed, the Paraisópolis of São Paulo and Rocinha of Rio de Janeiro. These favelas have a high concentration of citizens living in them, with a Human Development Index (HDI) below 0.70 and with a significantly elevated number of deaths from COVID-19, 123 in Paraisópolis – Vila Andrade as of August 31 (SMS-SP, 2020), and 62 in Rocinha as of September 18 ("Painel Unificador," 2020). Due to the emergence of COVID-19, the vulnerability of social groups that already suffered from urban inequality has increased. Whether or not people have the right to have access to sanitation is one of the factors that ensures greater or lesser protection against the COVID-19. Residents of peripheries and slums, as well as homeless people, are those who suffer most from such inequality. The objective of this article is to analyze the effects of sanitation and access to education in slums from Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in a way to bring insights about the importance of regional development policy. The idea is not to focus the discussion only on times of a pandemic but to highlight the need for social-economic inclusion for a city's sustainable development.

The Process of Urbanization and Sanitation

When considering the regions in Brazil, the more socio-economic critical ones are in the North and Northeast areas of the country and in small municipalities, inherited from the historical process that prioritized service in cities around metropolitan regions and left aside the rural areas. In that sense, low-income citizens living in precarious urban settlements and the rural population generally are most affected by the absence of essential services. Precarious conditions imply a greater possibility of virus contagion. The favelas are full of small households very close to each other, which makes social isolation difficult, and water shortages can occur. These conditions end up favouring disease contagion.

According to the IAS (Instituto Água e Saneamento) report (2020), since 1940, Brazil underwent major social, economic, and political transformations resulting in large and lasting effects on basic needs such as sanitation. The services and housing infrastructure were strongly impacted by the Brazilian cities' growth with the arrival of immigrants and the migration of the rural population to urban areas. The propagation of sanitation service as being considered significant gained more attention from the urbanization process of cities throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Ignoring the political and administrative limits of the municipalities, the urban cities

started to expand. In parallel with legislative alterations, the process of disorderly urbanization of cities has created a more complex provision of sanitation services and originated in a greater disorganization of municipal services.

During the former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso's government (1995-2002), the Concessions Law (1995) created new rules for the concession and permission of how public services could be operated. Thus, the provision of services such as sanitation started to allow the employment of third parties, private and public actors, through program and concession contracts. After the beginning of the 2000s under former President Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, the water and sanitation governance sectors were encouraged by the creation of new laws, ministries, agencies, and programs. The 'Pact for Basic Sanitation: More health, quality of life and citizenship' (Brasil, 2008) was created in 2008, and in 2014 generated the Federative Pact to universalize access to basic sanitation services by 2033.

The initial goals of the Pact predicted that 100 percent of the country supplied with drinking water by 2023 and 92 percent would have sewage treated by 2033. The United Nations Convention that recognizes basic sanitation as a human right separate from the right to drinking water brought important legal and institutional reinforcement to the sewage-related agenda in 2015. These laws are important and seem somewhat perfect; the problem is to put them into practice. Most of the sanitation plans were created between 2011 and 2013 when there was a vision to universalize the water supply and sanitation within 20 years. However, with the political and fiscal crisis of the local states and federal government after 2016, these proposals were put on hold. Between 2003 and 2017, R$184,6 billion (US$36 billion) were invested in sanitation. Considering the structural measures necessary for sanitation, it is estimated that US$ 122 billion of investments will be required in the period from 2019 to 2033 to reach universal sanitation in the country, 40 percent from federal agents and the rest from state and municipal budgets and the private sector (IAS, 2020).

Education and Discrimination

According to The United Nations International Children's Fund, in Brazil, over 18 million children and adolescents (34.3 of the total percentage) live in households with insufficient per capita income to have a proper meal (UNICEF, 2018). However, when it is examined beyond income and analysed whether these children and teenagers, whatever their genders, have their fundamental rights guaranteed, 61 percent of these Brazilian males and females live in poverty. They are monetarily poor and/or disadvantaged of one or more rights, such as the access to education, information, protection anti child labour, access to clean water, and sanitation. Youth poverty has multiple dimensions that go beyond money. It is the consequence from interrelation between deprivations, exclusions and different vulnerabilities that children and adolescents are exposed to and that impact their well-being.

According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, when considering the education of the employed population, workers with complete higher education had an average monthly salary of R$ 5,189, about three times more than those with only complete high school (R$ 1,716), and it is about six times over those without the minimum level of education (R$ 884)

(IBGE, 2016). With the Law No. 11.096 (Brasil, 2005), the University for All Program (PROUNI) was developed by the Federal Government of Brazil with the goal of granting full and partial scholarships for undergraduate students in private institutions of higher education to low incomes families. This program allowed students who could not afford the tuition fee of private universities to have the opportunity to keep pursuing their studies.

Another program aiming for the reduction of education inequality was the Bolsa Escola (BE), implemented in 1995 during the government of former president Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The program was an important step as a social assistantship allowing children from Brazil's poor income families to go to school and pursue education. The BE allowed money transfers, which was associated with school attendance. The government led by former President Luiz In cio Lula da Silva (2003–2010) from the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) (Workers' Party) had as its main welfare policy the Bolsa Familia, which was an improvement of Bolsa Escola. In 2006, Bolsa Familia had already beneficiated around 11 million families with money transfers, and the fulfilment of school attendance, maternal health care, and childhood immunizations (Rocha, 2011). Bolsa Familia is considered a significant player in reducing income disparity in Brazil.

Another rising problem caused by the lack of education is the informal employment, which is more widespread among black or brown people, with 47.3 percent of them in this condition, against 34.6 percent of whites. This group includes employees from the private sector and domestic workers without a formal contract; non-contractual employees and employers who do not subsidize social security; and auxiliary family labours. In 2018, white people earned an average percentage of 73.9 more than black or brown people. Also, inequality still remains when the wage for hours worked is compared. The hourly income of the white color employed (R$ 17.0) was 68.3 percent higher than the black or brown population (R$ 10.10). The biggest difference in this hourly wage was between workers with a college degree: R$ 32.8 (US$ 6.56) for whites and R$ 22.7 (US$ 4.54) for people of color.

The issue is beyond income, as, for instance, in education. In 1997, only 1.8 percent of young people aged 18 to 24 who declared themselves black had attended a higher education course. Public policies around the universal right of access to education, especially higher education, began to be demanded, then, by the black rights movement. One of the biggest social inclusion efforts that is possible to be seen in Brazil is the existence of Racial Quota, which had allowed that more black and brown people could attend the higher education system and get more educated. Another progression towards racial equality was Law No. 12.288 (Brasil, 2010) that establishes the Racial Equality Statute, which aims to ensure the black community the recognition of equal opportunities, the protection of the individual, ethnic rights, and the fight against discrimination and other forms of racism.

According to *Época* (Soares et al., 2020), 61 percent of those who had already died from COVID-19 in Brazil were brown and black, but brown and black populations represent only 54 percent of the Brazilian population. Black and brown victims accounted for 86 percent in the North region and 82 percent in the Northeast region, also these areas are already known to be more economically precarious in the country. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the government has had to take drastic measures to ensure the safety of its citizens. To try to

prevent the spread of the virus among students, some of the actions were the suspension of classes, which led the Children to lose their routine and access to food offered in public schools.

The challenge of having online classes for children and teenagers is that not all of these groups have access to the internet and the equipment to properly attend online classes. It was estimated that, in 2019, 1 in 4 people in Brazil did not have access to the internet, and from this amount, 6 million (11.8 percent) had no money to buy tablets, smartphones, or computers. Also, about 4.8 million children and adolescents, aged 9 to 17, did not have access to the internet at home. This amount is represented by 17 percent of all Brazilians in this age group. Looking to the socioeconomic and sociodemographic reasons, the virus has killed more poor and brown people, more men than women, and more younger people than in other countries where the pandemic made health systems work to the extreme. When the most vulnerable parts of the population do not have access to public health and medication, when they cannot stay home due to the needed income to support their families, the virus is discriminatory, and it reveals the vulnerabilities of the state's programs and the need of new planning for social inclusion and sustainable development.

The Case of São Paulo and Rio De Janeiro

Since the beginning of the coronavirus spread in Brazil, a lot has been debated about the impacts on different territories and social segments of the society. Discussions around fundamental planning to find the best methods to prevent the spread of the disease and to protect those who are considered the most vulnerable. However, the way that information and data have been made available does not help in the analysis of the territorial impacts and the spatial spread of the pandemic, which makes it difficult to fight the virus effectively.

The HDI (Human Development Index) of São Paulo was 0.805 and Rio de Janeiro was 0.799 (IBGE, 2010). Households with access to basic sanitation treatment represented 93 percent in São Paulo and 94 percent in Rio de Janeiro. And the index of childhood literacy between 6 and 14-year-old was 96 percent in São Paulo and 96.9 percent in Rio de Janeiro. The two cities do not represent a big variation when comparing their indicators, and they are also known for being home to some of Brazil's largest favelas. The National Sanitation Information System reported that more than 100 million Brazilians do not have sewage collection and 35 million do not even have access to clean drinking water (SNIS, 2019). That is a matter of great concern since there are many diseases and environmental impacts caused by the lack of basic sanitation.

Focusing on the impacts of COVID-19 in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, by July 1st there were 57,879 confirmed cases in Rio de Janeiro ("Painel Rio," 2020) and 129,328 in São Paulo (SEADE, 2020). The pandemic crisis made even more visible the enormous inequality that marks the urban space of these cities, fractured in neighbourhoods that support all the infrastructure and well-being of their citizens, while poor slums and peripheries experience the lack of water and basic sanitation, with precarious homes, without ventilation, and many people living in small spaces. The second dimension of the crisis is the huge population of informal workers who lost their income stream during quarantine and will be in a condition of food insecurity, in addition to those who were already unemployed or in a situation of vulnerability.

Table 1

Quantity of Households that are in subnormal agglomerations in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro

	Estimated population (2019)	Total of Households	Households in subnormal agglomerations	Percentage of households in subnormal agglomerations
São Paulo (state)	45.919,049	15.056,590	1.066,813	7.09
São Paulo (city)	12.252,023	4.104,611	529,921	12.91
Rio de Janeiro (state)	17.264,943	5.677,989	717,326	12.63
Rio de Janeiro (city)	6.718,903	2.352,594	453,571	19.28

Source: Data from the IBGE 2020, Census 2019 under development. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic the information is expected to be released in 2021.

According to IBGE (2019), in São Paulo, 1,066,813 (7.09 percent) of households are located in favelas. The most populous state in the country, however, has just over a million homes in subnormal clusters. As shown in Table 1, in Rio de Janeiro, even with the total quantity being lower compared to São Paulo, the percentage of households living in favelas represents 12.63 percent, which is higher than in São Paulo. The cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are important as state capitals in Brazil, but they are also home to big favelas such as the Paraisópolis and Rocinha. These favelas are known as the reflection of active inequality existing in the country since its citizens live in houses with a lack of proper sanitation and with a considerable number of people living below the poverty line. Thus, it is essential that the government look for welfare state policies to generate socio-economic inclusion for these favelas.

São Paulo – Paraisópolis (Vila Andrade)

The Paraisópolis Favela is located in the South Zone of the city of São Paulo, it has more than 21 thousand households in an area of 10 km². It is considered one of the biggest favelas in São Paulo (Araújo, 2019), with an HDI-Municipality of 0.639 (Atlas Brasil, 2015). Also, it is estimated that 96 percent of the households have access to a private toilet and filtered water, and 29 percent of the population is in a situation of poverty with an average monthly income below US$100.

In a preventive way to fight COVID-19, the Justice of São Paulo granted in April an injunction determining that the Basic Sanitation Company of the State of São Paulo had to fund water to all the favelas in the city served by the supply company (Agência Brasil, 2020). Some measures were taken by the company to benefit low-income families, such as the 90-day exemption from paying the bills for more than 2 million registered customers, and the distribution of more than 1,900 water tanks (out of a total of 2,400) to residents who are unable to buy them.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the favela's community organization has launched social actions with the civil society to contain the spread of the pandemic inside the favela. Some initiatives are the street president and volunteer rescuers. The first is represented by the 652 volunteers who are designated to take care of 50 households each, helping with the distribution of foodstuffs and hygiene products, checking the health status of the families, and sending them to the health authorities when necessary. The second is about the training of the volunteer rescuers, who can help to support the 60 emergency bases inside the favela (Junior, 2020).

According to Marino et al. (2020a), in the city of São Paulo, the pandemic analysis scale is still around districts, which corresponds to huge portions of territory and with a larger population than many medium-sized cities. However, this simplifyied view ends up ignoring the heterogeneities and territorial inequalities that exist within the city. Also, the territorial dimension is not properly considered, with simplified and even stigmatized thinking like "where there is a favela there is a pandemic."

Rio de Janeiro - Rocinha

Rocinha is located on the South Zone of the city of Rio de Janeiro and is known as one of the biggest favelas in Rio de Janeiro and according to the last IBGE (2020) census, there were about 25,742 households there, with an HDI-Municipality of 0.662 (Atlas Brasil, 2015). Thus, it is estimated that 98 percent of the households have access to a private toilet and filtered water, and 29 percent of the population was in a situation of poverty with an average monthly income of US$100. According to a study conducted by Casa Fluminense (2019), an organization that analyses official data from the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro, more than 2,200 hospitalizations due to diseases caused by the deficiency of basic sanitation were registered in 2018. The study also showed that, if the nine main sewage treatment plants were to function fully, it could be possible to avoid the dumping of around 276 Olympic sewage pools in Guanabara Bay daily.

In an action to avoid public agglomerations of people, by the end of March, drug dealers and militias in Rio de Janeiro started ordering a curfew to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 in the favelas. In several communities, posters scattered on the streets and alleys and sound cars circulate with the order. In Rocinha, in the South Zone, residents received a message from via WhatsApp not to leave the house after 8 pm in a measure to fight the spread of the virus ("Coronavírus: Tráfico," 2020).

The Ministry of Health published a decree in June ("Portaria N. 1444," 2020), allowing the creation of *Centros Comunitários de Referência* to fight COVID-19 in Brazilian favelas. The proposal intended to adapt existing spaces such as medical units, residents' associations, and social facilities in these territories. According to *Portaria* No. 1444, the Centers will be structured by municipal or district management in areas of peripheries and slums to organize actions for the early identification of cases of COVID-19, and for monitoring the suspected or confirmed cases. Another point addressed in the decree is the necessity to establish partnerships with residents' associations, educational institutions, and other bodies or entities that operate in these locations and guide the population on hygiene measures to be adopted during social isolation.

Challenges to Overcoming Social Problems While Fighting COVID-19

When analysing the local communities' development, it is necessary to have a coordination of the local Chamber to define the goals of the expansion of basic needs and its sources of financing. The city halls' administration needs to take a leading role in municipal planning and examination of contracts, acting to monitor and request fulfilment of the established goals. Another important component is the establishment of regulation, defining the standards for providing services. In this sense, the entire process must guarantee information transparency, stipulating that citizens could also inspect the goals, deadlines, and efficiency. All this planning and coordination is not an easy task, but there is no shortcut to progress into the basic sanitation agenda and towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The future post-pandemic is still uncertain in the world, in Brazil, and in its cities. Some of the methods to fight COVID-19 rely on the local, state, and federal government policies to support the population's needs. It is significant to call attention to each locality's distinct necessities which ends up requiring variable attention and effort from the government. Nonetheless, there are public policies that ought to be highlighted as the effect of the Unified Health System (SUS). The state together with private institutions has the responsibility in times of a crisis to ensure clear and efficient answers to the people as a whole.

According to the '*Health at a Glance: Latin America and the Caribbean*' (OECD, 2020) the total health expenditure across Latin American Countries in 2017 was 6.6 percent of GDP, which is less than the OECD countries (8.8 percent). In Brazil, the health spending per capita was US$ 1280, which is more than the average of Latin American Countries (US$ 1026) but much less compared with OECD countries (US$ 3994). The health systems in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) have scarcer assets and less competence than more developed nations to fight the COVID-19 crisis. Latin America has an average of two doctors per 1,000 population, with Brazil below the OECD average of 3.5. Another factor of concern when discussing the prevention of COVID-19 is the population that is overweight, since obesity raises the chance of chronic disease, and could also lead to problems and the death of infected patients.

Another important agent is civil society, with initiatives led by NGOs, community organizations, philanthropic institutions, and other agents that emerged with the objective of minimizing the impacts of the crisis, especially with actions such as the distribution of basic food baskets and hygiene kits to reduce the contamination. During the pandemic, community actors, NGOs, and social leaders who know the reality of these favelas can articulate and continue to plan actions to solve local problems and construct initiatives with the state for the water supply, basic sanitation, health, and education. However, despite their evident importance for community life, these organizations have various difficulties in maintaining their activities. Therefore, supporting and establishing the effort of community organizations is a necessary task, during and after the crisis.

Final Considerations

This paper analysed the effects of sanitation and access to education in Paraisópolis – Vila Andrade in São Paulo, and Rocinha in Rio de Janeiro, showing the difficulties that the favelas have

been facing to control the virus spread. Knowing that the right to have access to sanitation is one of the factors that ensures greater or lesser protection against the COVID-19, it is of great importance that the public authorities take care of the basic sanitation in these zones as one of the preventive measures to help the residents of the areas to have access to basic human necessities.

It should be taken into consideration that the federal government could have participated more actively in fighting the virus, with the implementation of national coordination between the federal government, state governors, and municipalities as an important measure to achieve transparency of information and coordinating actions to fight COVID-19. A well-structured plan should have been developed since the beginning of the pandemic, with measures to assure citizens' life safety for when they had to go outside to their workplaces.

The economic deterioration caused by the coronavirus pandemic has made evident the vulnerability of a large part of the Brazilian population. From those included in the formal labour market to those in the informal sector, each could easily fall into a situation of poverty in the face of income instability. Thus, the impacts of the Emergency Aid *(Auxílio Emergencial)* on the country's social dynamics were immediate. But there are still 52 million people considered poor, with a per capita household income of less than half the minimum monthly wage. Though Brazil has a long way to go to overcome poverty, the country has already started to explore tools that are necessary and valuable to get there. There is the *Cadastro Único,* responsible for mapping the poor population, and the Unified Social Assistance System (SUS), which was created with the goal of decentralizing the country's social assistance policy by involving the municipality.

The federal and state governments have a role to support the most susceptible population, but it is the cities and local governments that are more properly able to identify, according to the citizens' living circumstances, what lead these people into poverty. The social inclusion should start in the local community due to the distinctiveness of separate regions. Some might demand cooperatives, training programs, labour intermediation, or credit. Hence, to be able to overcome poverty, the Brazilian government will have to think over cash transfers to lift millions out of poverty. To conduct a proper social policy, Brazil needs to guarantee access to basic services and support the inclusion of poor population into the labour market. More than mitigating the country's existing poverty condition with money from social programs, Brazil's main challenge is to overcome medium and long-term poverty.

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The Re-Existences of the Inhabitants in the Time of Pandemic: Proposals and Struggles for Rebuilding Cities Grounded on Human Rights

Cesare Ottolini*

Abstract

The Coronavirus pandemic has opened a historical portal visible to the majority of the world's population. On the one hand, it showed the systemic failure of neoliberalism, which has consigned health and economy to the private sector. On the other hand, it created the opportunity for an alternative to neoliberalism, grounded on human and environmental rights and the equitable redistribution of resources. The rights to housing and social protection are being violated for the vast majority of the inhabitants of cities and slums, who are threatened with eviction. People's organizations of inhabitants are on the frontline in order to help and struggle in solidarity, developing the concept and the practice of "re-existence" to the crisis. Re-exist: resisting by questioning the causes of the crisis, reviving their existence and lives and of their communities through alternative policies. The role played by grassroots organisations and activists of the right to housing as a substitute for the absence of states should be highlighted. While the responsible authorities openly ignore or violate international legislation ratified by states, the right to housing activists are at the forefront as human rights defenders. The cooperation of these activists and organisations promotes not only the exchange of experiences and analysis but also the sharing of strategies, including struggle, independence, and alliances with other stakeholders, such as local authorities and trade unions.

Keywords: Re-existence, Coronavirus, inhabitants, zero evictions, Virtual World Assembly of Inhabitants, failure of neoliberalism

The Coronavirus pandemic has opened a historical portal, visible to the majority of the world's population. On the one hand, it showed the systemic failure of neoliberalism, which has consigned health and economy to the private sector, revealing a global and financial crisis worse than those of 1929 and 2008. On the other hand, it created the opportunity for an alternative to neoliberalism, grounded on human and environmental rights and the equitable redistribution of

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resources.

This crisis has challenged everything, but how can we ensure that policies that are truly alternative to the status quo that underlies the current systemic crisis will emerge and become established? Let us try to understand it starting from the basic needs, responses, and proposals that come, in particular, from the struggles of the world's inhabitants and their allies. This mobilization is developing initiatives more than ever grounded on the legitimacy of alternative responses, not merely "resilience," and on the evolution of international human rights law.

The rights to health, housing, and land security, to the city, to social protection for the inhabitants of cities and slums, are being violated through evictions, due to the non affordability in the housing market and poverty. The 1.8 billion people who live in reduced spaces that are overcrowded, sometimes not even with water or a toilet, and those who are homeless, are at a serious disadvantage in accessing health care and adequate precautions, thus paying the highest price.

A variety of situations and responses in this time of pandemic depend on the basic political approach and the relative wealth/poverty of the countries and cities, and on the ability of popular organizations to mobilize. In many European countries, in Latin America, in Africa and Asia, even in the USA, at various levels and modalities, evictions have been suspended, rents have been frozen, or relief funds for tenants has been provided. During all 2020, from Italy and Venezuela, which are "zero evictions" countries, to France, which extended the winter moratorium until the whole summer, and to Spain and Argentina, nations have taken similar measures. In almost all Europe, health protection measures have led to housing solutions for many homeless people. However, in the same countries, though the evictions of squatters, migrants, and travellers, slowed down, they have still proceeded. In many other countries (Amnesty International, 2020), threats, evictions, even violent ones, and house demolitions have continued: such as in Kenya, Nairobi (Rajagopal & Lawlor, 2020) and the Emboubut forest (Wanjiru, 2020), in South Africa, in many parts of Brazil (Despejo Zero, 2020), in the occupied Palestinian territories (ICAHD, 2020), in the Philippines (Ottolini, 2020), in India (Rajagopal, 2020) and many others. It is also significant that while Surabaya in Indonesia has been selected as this year's host for World Habitat Day, mass evictions have taken place in some regions in Indonesia (Ubaidillah, 2020), including in Ancol village in North Jakarta and in Tangerang.

The evictions are carried out, for some, under the pretext of cleaning up coronavirus-infected areas, as in the past for other pandemics, under the pretext of resilience to climate change on urban settlements and on territories of indigenous peoples, or for infrastructure projects such as roads, railways and airports. There is a great risk of escalating evictions and displacement of people, families and communities, from areas that will be exploited in the upcoming speculative revival of the economy, aggravating the crisis of migration due to ongoing wars and inequalities between North and South.

The silent but no less violent evictions of many dozens of millions of people are underway, even as working poors and an impoverished middle class have, due to the crisis revealed by the pandemic, lost their jobs with the income needed to pay rents and mortgages. Recent analysis estimates that 34 million people in the U.S. could face eviction for economic reasons, emphasizing

the weakness of an economic system based on job insecurity (NCSHA, 2020, p. 7).

The vultures of the financialization of the economy are ready to take advantage of the private and public debts accumulated during this crisis.

A tsunami of immense proportions, violating a series of international regulations ratified by almost all the countries of the world, is being prepared with overwhelming risks for entire communities. Among these violations, I want to emphasize Article 11 (Right to Housing) and Article 12 (Right to Health Protection) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). According to the Optional Protocol of ICESCR, entered into force on 5 May 2013, in the 25 states that have ratified it (UN, 2008), it is now possible through the appeal of last instance to the UN Committee on Human Rights to seek and obtain justice in case of violations. In the example of Spain, where the Platform of Affected by Mortgage (Plataforma Afectados por la Hipoteca) (IAI, 2019) has obtained the suspension of dozens of evictions that the tribunals had already definitively authorized.

This paper will show the added value of people's organizations of inhabitants to emerge out of the good side of the crisis portal. Those organizations are on the frontline, helping and struggling in solidarity, developing the concept and practice of "re-existing" to the crisis.

Re-exist: resisting by questioning the causes of the crisis, reviving their existence and lives of their communities through alternative policies. Therefore, they are challenging the mere "resilience," that is, just accepting the situation by adapting to the "normality" that caused the crisis, a normality that means simply finding temporary solutions to evictions, a little money to pay the cost of housing, or social housing proposed by public-private partnerships in the hope that people will return to the real estate market after the crisis. The re-existence initiatives consider instead the relationship between the human rights and environmental approach and the fair redistribution of wealth and resources inseparable.

For instance, the liberalization of the rental market and the withdrawal of public housing has made it clear that it is impossible to meet the demand for affordable and safe housing. While the responsible authorities openly disregard or violate international legislation ratified by States, the housing rights activists are on the frontline as human rights defenders, risking and paying with their health, freedom, and life facing the pandemic and the incessant authoritarian and offensive attacks against them. Unfortunately, among the casualties on the pandemic front, we must count threatened, injured, and dead human rights defenders. The legal reference that legitimizes their actions and condemns those who attack them is clearly systematized in the "COVID 19 Guidance Notes" (OHCHR, 2020) issued by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing at the beginning of the pandemic. One can have a first-hand look to the hundreds of initiatives carried out, thanks to the Zero Evictions for the Coronavirus Campaign (IAI, 2020b) launched by the International Alliance of Inhabitants at the very beginning of the pandemic, counting on the International Tribunal on Evictions, a key tool, since 2011. Its ninth session, on evictions under climate change, held in Santiago de Chile and Madrid in parallel to COP 25, called for structural changes, highlighting the close link with the housing crisis. With cases of resistance to evictions, food and medical aid, struggles to obtain laws to protect tenants and impoverished inhabitants, and rent strikes leading to negotiations to reduce rent, with the important help of a progressive

local government's actions based on human rights, including requisitions of vacant properties to house the homeless and other measures.

Therefore the struggle is not only to stop evictions, but also to demand policies to control the housing market, claiming the social function of property. It must also include the re-municipalization of the public services aimed at the general public, not only at fragile sectors.

At the global level, it is a question of redistributing trillions of euros of public funds, from the rent sector and others, such as armaments, to public service.

Utopia? Yes, in the sense of a very concrete policy change that is taking place in some geopolitical areas.

Before the pandemic, the European Commission banned funding for public housing as "state aid" that violates the freedom of competition. Now these funds are accepted, and they do not even contribute to violating the parameters of budgetary equilibrium on which the structure of the European Union is founded.

The risk is that this mountain of money will be misused, or channelled into public-private partnerships that have already shown great limits and directions that are not consistent with the human rights approach. Or, if the money is not repaid by policies of redistribution of wealth, will become the backbone of the sovereign debt of impoverished countries, i.e. the premise for policies of cuts in public services and privatization of common goods to fuel the financialisation of economy.

Who could concretize this utopia? We need a variety of actors.

The Virtual World Assembly of Inhabitants (IAI, 2020a), whose first session in history took place last July, is bringing together the dialogue and coordination of international organizations and networks and their allies. Hence, the Zero Evictions World Days throughout the month of October, 2020 not only highlighted the mobilizations, but atempted to have an impact on policies. Allies include not only local authorities, progressive governments, and the UN Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, but also workers' organizations. In particular, the International Public Service, which represents 20 million workers in the sector who are available for the struggle for the re-municipalization of the housing (Cibrario, 2020) and water sectors.

This paper hopes to offer elements of analysis, not definite answers on the social convergences on the way, on the original solutions introduced for mobilisations, even with "social distancing" imposed by the health-authoritarian management of the crisis. It also hopes to understand whether those convergences, to be considered a sort of "Urban and Community Way," are not only enabling the exchange of experiences and analysis, but also showing to what extent the sharing of strategies is important, including struggles, independence, and alliances with other stakeholders, such as local authorities and trade unions. And, finally, it hopes to find out whether it will be enough to define precise objectives and a strong mobilisation capable of achieving the desired systemic impact for a new normality grounded on human rights, or only influence some aspects of the policies.

An ongoing exercise just begun.

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Redefined VUCA as the Urban Response to the Post-COVID Paradigm

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Abstract

Over the last months, the acronym VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity), describing features defining a majority of modern conflicts, started to be frequently used in reference to the virus-struck world. The panorama caused by the COVID-19 shares many similarities with a VUCA situation. It has had deep impact on the notions of inclusion and diversity, which had to give space to the priority of security. The pandemic has brought about new sharp divisions and has kept people locked down in households and zones, which started to be defined based on the number of contagions. Safety has replaced development as the main priority in state and urban policies globally. It has been a difficult test for both central and local governments, demanding of them to be agile and adapt quickly to the VUCA conditions.

The authors argue that this new reality requires cities to develop the VUCA Prime response to the discharge of urban functions - a scheme, a direction of action that allows to find oneself in this seemingly unpredictable chaos. It is proposed that each of the main four components of VUCA is counteracted with a corresponding value - Volatility with Vision, Uncertainty with Understanding, Complexity with Clarity and Ambiguity with Agility.

Keywords: VUCA, urban resilience, inclusion, diversity, VUCA Prime, urban response to COVID-19

> The illiterate of the 21st century
> will not be those who cannot read and write,
> but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.
> Alvin Toffler

VUCA World and the City

Over the last months, the acronym of military origin – VUCA – originally used to describe reality after the Cold War, started to be frequently used in reference to another contemporary 'war' with

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an invisible enemy that we tend to call a New Normal. It covers the various dimensions of this 'uncontrollable' environment we all live in. VUCA stands for Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity.

Volatility refers to the speed of changes affecting the world which is becoming more unstable each day. There are anomalies, peaks and crises, such as instability of the legal system or economic crisis provoked e.g. by slowdown in China's growth or UK's Brexit vote, which affect labour markets, politics, public policies or social safety. Moreover, volatility is associated with fluctuations in demand and turbulence where it is becoming difficult to determine cause and effect. This is why it affects the decision making process. The longer it takes, the less effective and applicable are its outcomes.

Uncertainty refers to the extent to which we can confidently predict the future. In a VUCA world historical forecasts, past experiences and even statistical basis are losing their relevance and are rarely applicable for predicting the things to come. This causes numerous exceptions and disclaimers and results in a chaotic approach to business caused by abrupt termination of contracts or concessions, new, unsure perspectives, or decrease in a market value of investments because of external factors over which there is no control; to policies, as existing policies and multi-annual action plans are no longer relevant and need verification; or to society, as the changing needs of the residents entail the necessity of undertaking new actions and efforts that were not tested earlier. The more unknown and uncertain the reality is, the harder it is to predict and manage, which in turn affects adversely the psychological safety and sense of setting of urban residents.

Complexity refers to the number of factors that we need to take into account, their variety and how they are interrelated and interdependent. The complexity is reinforced not only by the external events but also by internal factors such as diversity of the citizens for example in terms of their origin, culture, religion or belief and language as well as level of relationship and quality of interaction between urban residents themselves and between their communities. Actions and their repercussions are more multi-layered and harder to understand. It is therefore difficult to fully analyse the reality and come to rational conclusions.

Ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity about how to interpret reality. It can by identified through incomplete information and fuzziness and vagueness in ideas and terminology. It results with mistakes that are impossible to avoid or even disputes or conflicts related to unclear provisions or urban procedures. This may result in the risk of increased outlays and costs, but also of a decrease in social legitimacy of the decisions made by local authorities.

In practice, those four terms are interrelated. The panorama caused by the COVID-19 virus shares many similarities with a VUCA situation. The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the fact that what we used to call 'normal' has not worked for a majority of the world's population, whose basic needs and respect for whose human rights were not safeguarded. It turned out that what we used to call 'normal' did not provide an adequate response to the challenges of today's world. Nor did measures that were undertaken by various countries in response to the pandemic, which created what we started to call the New Normal. Thus, there is a dire need for redefinition of the New Normal.

But what exactly is to be 'normal' in this 'New Normal'? Normal is regular and normativity refers to society en masse. Should we really search for standardised concepts that can mitigate omnipresent threat to all humans? Or shall we rather design a wide range of solutions but only for elites, for the chosen ones, those who are privileged in some way?

New Divisions: The Rise of Polarisation and Radicalisation

Remedies focused on social distancing such as stay-at-home orders or strategies based on personal protective equipment cannot be observed by more than 100 million homeless people worldwide. If one's and one's family existence relies on a day-to-day income, the 'stay home and stay safe' strategy seems to be a luxury they cannot and probably will not be able to afford. The 'new normal' together with its remote standards, ignores also this part of the world population that remains offline, those who experience migrant displacement, as well as the fact that the pandemic resulted in the closure of those sectors of the economy that primarily employed women. It also contributed to increased feelings of isolation.

The crisis and the ensuing lockdown tore the veil from and exposed to the whole society aberrations leading to and the scale of the precarisation of the vast numbers of the working population to which researchers, trade unions and civil society activists were pointing for a long time, not only in Central and Eastern Europe. It revealed how a large percentage of the population is affected by the lack of social protection as a result of 'innovative' ways of circumventing the labour law protections by – not only international – companies, aiming for maximisation of profits. While part of the answer to the crisis is change of the paradigm of the purpose of the company and adequate regulatory action on the side of the legislator, it is only part of the response.

After all, the coronavirus pandemic has deepened social inequalities, sharpened borders, but also intensified social radicalization based on new and old sharp divisions (e.g. the ill and the healthy, 'elite' able to work from home and those who can't, those with access to medical care and those without any medical insurance and health care, 'the other' like migrants and 'us') and the lack of physical and psychological safety. Additionally, central authorities in many countries introduced tools that were aimed to contain the spread of the virus but often approached mass surveillance of the society based on regulations introduced hastily and without adequate public debate, as well as introducing sharply increased risks to human rights compared to pre-pandemic times. Dixon (2019) has observed at The World Economic Forum increased "public frustration with the status quo, populist insurgencies, [and] the division of groups into 'us-vs-them'" in countries as diverse as the United States, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Sweden, Poland, Brazil, the Philippines, and others (see also Krause & Gagné, 2019). All this, powered additionally by the economic crisis affecting lives of many as well as by increase in verbal and physical aggression in public and private spheres, led to a human rights crisis that has not been experienced at this scale in post-war history.

As the 'New Normal' fosters one-size-fits-all strategies based on privilege, there is nothing 'normal' in it. It proved to be an inadequate tool to help address the ongoing human rights crisis. This is why we need a new paradigm for the post-COVID situation that would provide an adequate response to the human rights crisis, a response in which personal safety, both physical and

psychological, is the main priority in state and urban policies across the globe. It no doubt will be a difficult test for both central and local governments, demanding of them to be agile and adapt quickly to the VUCA conditions.

Underlying values of the urban response to VUCA

What knowledge, competences and skills-set will prove crucial for the discharge of urban functions in the new reality? What is and what could be the answer of the conscious cities to the human rights crisis? How to struggle with fostering belonging in a polarized world? After all, VUCA stands for nothing else but conditions, which, given the nature of the VUCA world, will increase in intensity in the future. On the other hand, even without COVID-19, related VUCA environment urbanization itself constitutes "a global multidimensional process paired with increasing uncertainty due to climate change, migration of people, and changes in the capacity to sustain ecosystem services". (Ernstson et al., 2010, p. 531). This "in an urban context, (…) means that the traditional paradigm of planning for a predictable future is not only insufficient, but it may, in some ways, also be destructive" and thus there is a need for approach to urban planning and governance which "enable cities to navigate change, build capacity to withstand shocks, and locate sources of experimentation and innovation in face of uncertainty." (Ernstson et al., 2010, p. 531).

It seems the time is ripe not only for post-COVID urban communities, but rather generally 21st-century communities to abandon traditional models, like a tree model and look for new approaches that are more inclusive, offer better understanding of the root causes of individual situations and offer more heterogeneous decision making, which thanks to its very nature provides the necessary agility. In the quiet times, the tree approach could have been sufficient with its sequential manner and point of origin, despite the idea of a split and duality so pertinent to this concept. Yet the new, much more volatile reality requires harnessing "much more complex unity, that has no evident origin or end", making the image of rhizome[1] (Deleuze & Guattrai, 2013, orig. 1980) appear much more relevant and reflective of the reality, in which each connection between the many inhabitants of the city is crucial and provides some information that is needed to find solution and develop the right solution. At the same time, even if one element of the rhizome body is lost, removed, the remaining part of it would continue to grow, creating new connections between inhabitants of the city. While there is no hierarchical structure to the growth of the rhizome, it does not mean that some connections, plateaus, will not have higher intellectual and problem solving value than the others, at certain times, depending on the nature of the problem that the community will be trying to solve. If the problem to be solved will be alcohol addiction, the value of non-hierarchical connection between people, who have experience of successfully fighting the addiction, people who experience it at the given moment and psychologists and other social staff, will be of higher value than that of even Nobel prize winning poet and a director of the best oncological hospital of the city. Important in the rhizome model is also the direct connection and access to all inhabitants and their experience and wisdom, which

1. "The idea of the rhizome is a structural metaphor taken from biological field of botany. It describes an underground mass of continuously growing horizontal stems or roots which extend lateral shoots at certain intervals in order to grow and establish connections with other shoots. There is no hierarchical structure to the growth of the rhizome" (Bluemink, 2015).

is key to the agility but also democratization of the decision making. It 'skips' the official formal channels of selecting representatives of certain groups, creating instead forms that will enable direct contribution.

This, however, will require new skills. It is thus worth noting here, that this urgent need to develop skills needed not in the future, but already now to enable ability to respond adequately to the new challenging contexts, is well recognised. In education, there is a recognition of a need for new, "transformative competencies" defined by the OECD Learning Compass 2030 as "the types of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values students need to transform society and shape the future for better lives. These have been identified as creating new value, reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and taking responsibility" (OECD, 2019; see also Grayling, 2017). Importantly those competencies are "highly transferable," and, as they build "the ability to cope with uncertainty, develop new attitudes and values, and act productively and meaningfully, even when goals shift" (OECD, 2019), can be used throughout a lifetime (see also Laukonnen et al., 2018). Those skills, which in order to be applied with success, require respect and empathy, are crucial for people to feel comfortable, connected, and in possession of the tools to contribute.

We argue that the challenges of urbanization as well as those of the crisis situations like the one caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, this new reality, require cities to develop what Bob Johansen (2012) defined as VUCA Prime response – a scheme, a direction of action that allows to find oneself in this seemingly unpredictable chaos. Transposing scientific research conducted for business (Volini 2020) to the urban ground, Conscious Cities approaching human first idea create a sense of belonging (place attachment) as the outcome of three mutually reinforcing attributes. Residents should feel comfortable where they live, including being treated fairly and respected by their neighbours. They should feel connected to the people they create their local community with. And they should feel that they *contribute* to meaningful quality of life—understanding how their unique strengths are helping their local communities and organizations achieve common goals.

This supports Bob Johansen's VUCA-Prime concept approach to responding to VUCA, which propose that each of the main four components of VUCA is counteracted with its corresponding value:

- *Volatility with Vision*
- *Uncertainty with Understanding*
- *Complexity with Clarity*
- *Ambiguity with Agility*

Responding to Volatility with Vision

Responding to *Volatility* with *Vision* means that, in terms of philosophy and values shared by diverse stakeholders and groups of interest, the response to volatility is more likely to focus on the set of values or a scenario that will bring the community together in dire times and is more like a compass than a detailed chart. This will be fostered by participatory decision making processes, such as civic budgets, which take into account the diverse needs of various urban residents, communities or neighborhoods. On the other hand, in the VUCA world, solutions

developed in a participatory manner should rather deal with the aims and priorities of urban policies than their specific activities. We can easily and rapidly adjust tools and measures to the new reality. Also policies will require certain openness to renegotiation to ensure necessary adjustability and resilience, without, however, losing the core aim.

Responding to Uncertainty with Understanding

Responding to *Uncertainty* with *Understanding* is based on constant development of social skills and communication-related policies, as well as use of modern conflict and dispute resolution tools such as mediation, facilitation or conciliation, reducing tensions and increasing the sense of community. Dialogue that precedes decision making forms the core of urban response to uncertainty. Decisions made by communities comprising individuals of different backgrounds and different ways of life, who ensure that different viewpoints will be taken into account in a tree-like process that will bow to unexpected circumstances but not break. This should not be surprising, as researchers have long argued (e.g. Granovetter, 1973; Arbesman et al., 2009, p. 1-5) that one of the reasons why bigger cities generate more innovations, which are crucial to adapting to new conditions, is because "they generate more interaction between people that are socially distant to each other (i.e. not family or friends)." Thus, the bigger the city, the easier it is for individuals to come across information that they have not met before, which adds up to increased innovation at the urban level (Arbesman et al., 2009, p. 1-5). A tree built on homogeneous thinking, planted according to the concept of one community only, is more likely to be uprooted in storms.

Those findings will come as nothing new to diversity management experts. Scientific research confirms that diverse teams are more creative, innovative, and, although the decision-making process takes longer, they are less likely to make mistakes. This is where the link between the approach and skill set used in diversity management on the organizational level and the urban response to the VUCA world conditions comes in. Therefore it is very important that city/local authorities and administration develop skills and approach that enables diversity and inclusion management that is crucial to make the city, including its 'social tissue', more resilient. The stakeholders need to become more adaptable, more capable of learning across rapidly changing contexts and more creative and flexible in adapting old approaches and creating new ones.

For that, adequate tools need to be implemented, tools that actually enable the municipality to profit from the wisdom of the its inhabitants and tap into new ideas and new points of view, as well as expose participants of such interaction to them. While social profiling increasingly results in individuals living in their own social and information bubble, the antidote to this can be provided by deliberative democracy[2]. Tools such as social consultations, deliberative polling or other forms of deliberative democracy and, more generally, moderated public deliberations

2. Fishkin (2018a) argues that deliberative democracy, which relies on the informed and moderated deliberations of representatives of all sections of the community, provides an alternative to the representative democracy which often either listens to the people and gets the angry voices of populism or relies on widely distrusted elites and gets policies that seem out of touch with the public's concerns. Deliberative democracy, and in particular deliberative polling, tested in a number of countries, is presented as a method for getting a representative and thoughtful public voice that is really worth listening to. For broader information on deliberative democracy and its critiques see also, for example, Fishkin (2018b).
One of the forms of the deliberative democracy in which a representative body of citizens, chosen by lot and stratified to include all relevant sections of the community, can, after deliberating, come to informed conclusions that have a major impact on key public decisions.

that engage various individuals and groups are the tools that seem to have potential not only to provide an antidote to many of representative democracy's ills and reinvigorate our democratic politics but also, thanks to the fact that it can be applied at all levels of government, including municipal, and for many kinds of policy choices and issues, to respond to the VUCA world. While deliberative democracy, and by extension, deliberative polling or other tools, are not perfect, and some of the concerns raised by researchers (e.g. Grönlund, 2018) point to the fact that in the real world, deliberation promotes not personal reflection and intellectual growth but groupthink and ideological polarization. Still, so far the methods and tools of deliberative democracy seem to be the most promising. As Fishkin (2018b) rightly notes, it seems that it is also perceived this way by its very critics, who, like Grönlund himself, carried out experiments designed to address the weak points. These critics found that "deliberation in natural settings without moderation or the establishment of group norms will, indeed, lead to polarization"(p.192), but that "properly structured deliberation, facilitated by trained moderators enforcing norms of mutual respect and balanced discussion of competing, evidence-based arguments, actually helps groups resist polarization and, even when groups are homogeneous, polarized thinking"(p. 192). Importantly, Grönlund's focus "on the importance of norms of civil discussion to the quality and outcomes of deliberative experiences suggests that if those norms could be spread to the broader population we might build a bulwark against the very polarization that some critics of deliberative democracy fear" (Fishkin, 2018b, p. 192). While this is still to be tested, it opens new possibilities for the city to challenge the VUCA reality and to use deliberative democracy tools that meet the "four criteria for popular control of government: *inclusion, choice, deliberation and impact*" (Fishkin, 2018b, p. 191), and thus encourage the community to get involved and importantly to co-create their city-space and community relations. There is no doubt that there is an urgent need for developing a less time-and-cost consuming form of deliberative democracy than that offered by deliberative polling, without however losing its added advantage.

Importantly, deliberative democracy needs a base that ensures that people share the same understanding of the equality and that everybody is equal and has the same rights. Such basis is provided by human rights. Only if we all share conviction that we all have the right to live in a given space and share the city, and that we have equal rights, will we be able to participate in a merit-based discussion and listen to arguments of others with whom we might disagree. Only then we will truly understand and internalize as well as accept the fact that our community and the city is what it is thanks to our diversity and the need to find solutions that benefit all. As pointed by Johan Lilja, Secretary General, ICLD, this is what Morten Kjaerum, Director, Raoul Wallenberg Institute argued in a recent editorial (Lilja & Kjaerum, 2020): "We all have the right to participate and have our voice heard on issues that affect us, regardless of our age. We have the right to have access to service, culture and other things in our communities, regardless of our functional variation or disability. This is still not always the case. (…) Municipalities and regions play a crucial role in protecting these rights."

Responding to Complexity with Clarity

Responding to *Complexity* with *Clarity*, or helping city dwellers to make sense of the reality

around them, can be achieved by the feed of reliable news to the community, as well as collection of data indispensable for the decision-making process. This requires participation and inclusion of various stakeholders, including local communities, informal groups and social partners, since it would both help the townhall to make the right decisions, and increase their social legitimization. Access to reliable information is the key! It also means that in complex situations regarding the cities, the more important it is to ensure the transparency of procedures and processes. This corresponds well with the above mentioned findings by Grönlund, who highlights that if the norms of civil discussion could be spread to the broader population, we might build a bulwark against the polarization thanks to the quality and outcomes of deliberative experiences. It may also create a foundation for greater satisfaction with residence and identity of the place by increasing mutual trust and understanding.

Responding to Ambiguity with Agility,

Responding to *Ambiguity* with *Agility* requires the ability of the local communities to change quickly and flexibly to the changing environment. And more importantly, it requires willingness to try to develop new forms of social dialogue in the urban setting, adjusted to the local needs, testing it but also ability to combine it with the practice of listening to the creative criticism those new forms generate, in order to develop ones that correspond better with local population needs. This requires not only having the legal powers to make the changes, but also knowing how to make them. Instead of having long productive discussions, agility assumes it is better to rapidly prototype and test a possible solution, reflect and analyze the current situation rather than involve time and resources in long processes. This, of course, implies risk taking. However according to a rule that if you want to be 100% sure, you'll be 100% late for sure. Without introducing and managing risk, it is impossible to meet today's VUCA City.

Despite risk taking, the complexity of urban structures and the associated inertia are becoming agility challengers. However there is a way to mitigate their negative impact. The solution comes from the collaboration between the local governments and social partners. Such collaboration gives an opportunity for quick and effective action. Furthermore, it uses the synergy effect resulting from the involvement of diverse entities such as non-profit organizations, academics, business, media or law enforcement officials, following the rule: various perspectives mean better solutions. Conscious managing of diversity of social partners through task forces, roundtables, and groups of social dialog reduces the risk of mistakes and boosts creativity. However they need also clarity in purpose, direction, and responsibilities.

Conclusions

As it was argued, the various challenges, but most importantly the human rights crisis caused inter alia by the COVID-19 pandemic, require cities to take a conscious stance and to respond with the VUCA-Prime approach (Vision, Understanding, Clarity and Agility), which is crucial to ensuring the resilience – understood as the ability to adapt and reduce vulnerability - of the city, with regards to both its social and urban tissue dimensions. To achieve that, development of specific skills set, including Diversity & Inclusion management and social competences such as

dispute and conflict resolution, intercultural competence, team building and integration as well as transparent communication, and implementation of specific tools of deliberative democracy by the local authorities and leaders is needed. However, the foundation stone of a resilient city is made of human rights. Hence, it is very important to ensure good quality human rights education thanks to which equality and respect for human life and dignity become part of the society's DNA. Only acceptance that we are all equal and have an equal right to live in a given space will result in willingness to find solutions, and thus ensure community resilience.

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