A 'more' participatory approach to informal settlement development: possible and desirable?

The case of Orangi Town, Karachi

Figure 1: A street in Saddar, Karachi (Photographer: Hira Munir)

Bachelor thesis Geography, Planning and Environment (GPE)

Nijmegen School of Management

Radboud University Nijmegen

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Nijmegen, 12 August 2021

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Bachelor Thesis

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Wordcount: 21.725

Geography, Planning and Environment

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Preface

When I visited a predominantly muslim country for the first time, Morocco in 2016, I was immediately interested in the religion, culture and social customs. I then visited Egypt about a year later, which only intensified this interest into a broader interest in the languages, religions, cultures and geographical issues in certain regions of the world, mainly the Arab world. So, when I had the opportunity to study abroad for my GPE bachelor programme last year, it wasn't hard for me to choose where to go. The obvious choice for me was to go to Cairo, Egypt, which can be seen as one of the main centres of the Middle East. Unfortunately, the semester was cut short by Covid-19 in March, but I was able to finish the courses online. Here, I learned about and experienced the different urban issues that are present in cities in the Global South, and how these challenges are both similar and different to the challenges in Global North cities. I learned much more about informality and its various forms, and the interplay between a largely informal megacity and an authoritarian military regime. This further sparked my interest in informal development and how to approach these phenomena, which are very prevalent in cities in the Global South.

Parallel to my interest in Egypt and the Arab world, an interest grew into South Asia. It is an incredibly diverse region in terms of languages and cultures, and as such is a very exciting region to visit and study. Here, too, informality seemed to be a dominant feature of the urban landscape, and was one of the key factors determining development strategies in cities in this region. More and more, I wanted to combine the things I had learned in Egypt about informality and urban development with the interest I had in cities in South Asia, which is what led me to the topic of this thesis.

Before you lies the end result, and I am proud of what it has become. It could not have been done without the help of the people around me. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Lothar Smith for his feedback and help during the research process. I would also like to thank my family and friends for the support and motivation they provided over the past months. Finally, I want to wholeheartedly thank my respondents as well as my other online contacts in Pakistan who provided pictures, information and important connections that were essential for conducting the research.

I hope you will enjoy reading this thesis.

Nijmegen, August

Simon Janssen

Executive Summary

In many cities around the world, rapid urbanisation is causing growth pains. The growth of urban populations has formed one of the main challenges for many cities, and Pakistan's largest city of Karachi is no exception. In urban areas in the Global South, including Karachi, urbanisation has often led to the creation of large informal settlements where people do not initially have formal land tenure rights, are at risk of eviction at all times and do not have access to public services. This presence of informal settlements poses a development challenge for governments as well as other stakeholders. The aim of this research is to explore whether and how community participation in planning processes might bring about new alternative approaches to development that are more suitable and effective in improving residents' lives. The main research question of this thesis is therefore: *'How might participatory planning produce alternative approaches to developing informal areas in cities in the Global South?'* The research zooms in on the situation in one particular settlement of Karachi: Orangi Town. It uses the findings from this geographical context and studies what may be learned from it.

This research is an attempt to contribute to knowledge regarding development approaches for informal settlements. It may be used by NGOs working in this field, as well as policymakers, communities and other stakeholders. Since urban informality is a widespread phenomenon, the findings of this study may be relevant in many different geographical contexts. Moreover, the research also contributes to the academic field, in the sense that it draws from and attempts to add to existing theories regarding participatory planning, urban informality and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda as outlined by UNHabitat. In this sense, it fills a gap in the scientific body of knowledge, since urban informality has not been as widely studied as other issues.

The three main theoretical concepts have been named before: informal settlements, participatory planning and the four focal dimensions of the New Urban Agenda (NUA). In this research, we find that informal settlements have various and sometimes divergent definitions. The most important definition of informal settlements in this research was conceived by Roy. They are here defined as a field of habitation, livelihoods and politics. That is to say, they are places where people live and make a living, and where land ownership is not always legally underpinned. Hereby, according to Roy, it is a 'state of deregulation, one where the ownership, use and purpose of land cannot be fixed and mapped according to any prescribed set of regulations or the law'. The second concept is participatory planning. This concept describes a phenomenon where individuals and communities have agency over the urban planning affecting the areas where they live. For this concept, the theory of communicative rationality by Habermas plays a role. It touches upon the role of the planner as a mediator between stakeholders. The discursive democracy that should come about from this process might produce more just and effective decision making. The degree to which a planning process is participatory can be assessed using Arnstein's Ladder of Participation. The last relevant concept is the NUA by UNHabitat. This contains four dimensions which are used in this research to analyse the current situation in the informal settlements of Karachi. The four dimensions are 1) social sustainability, where settlements engender a sense of belonging, promote civic engagement and enhance social cohesion, interaction and expression; 2) economic sustainability, where decent employment is promoted, agglomeration benefits such as innovation and productivity are leveraged and land speculation is prevented; 3) environmental sustainability, where settlements do not overuse their natural resources and pollution is minimized; and 4) spatial sustainability, which can be seen as an aggregate of all dimensions: guiding the urban space to become economically and socially inclusive and environmentally friendly.

For this research, a mostly qualitative approach is used, since the research concerns a highly complex and multifaceted issue, and the goal is to gain a holistic understanding of this issue. However, for a part of the research, a quantitative method of analysing existing survey data is more suitable. The approach used is phenomenology, because the research aims to gain a better understanding of a certain phenomenon, as opposed to a case, population or discourse. Phenomenology can be used to combine individual perspectives and experiences into a holistic view and understanding of the phenomenon to be researched: participatory planning within a context of informality. The data was gathered by conducting in-depth interviews with experts, as well as performing an online street observation using YouTube videos. The interviews were held in an online setting on Zoom because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, existing surveys were used as well as a study of the existing academic literature on the subject.

The findings of the research are presented in two parts. The first part describes the current situation in the informal areas of Karachi, and specifically Orangi Town. The second part dives into the lessons that may be learned from participatory planning as it has been applied in Karachi, as well as how these approaches might be extrapolated to other cities in the Global South. When looking at the current situation in Karachi's informal areas through the lens of the focal dimensions of the NUA, one finds that there exist many problems. Regarding social sustainability, the results are twofold. On the one hand, informal settlements such as Orangi are strongly segregated from the rest of the city and as such much social cohesion does not exist between areas of different classes. Moreover, in government circles there seems to not be much political will to change the plight of lower-income residents of Karachi. On the other hand, within the settlement itself there seems to be a sense of community and social cohesion, although this is also sometimes hampered by ethnic tensions. Furthermore, there exists a divide between residents who have been living in Karachi for a longer time, and those who are new arrivals. This second group is often stuck in a 'hand-to-mouth' situation. Economic sustainability is another dimension of the NUA, and when we look at the situation in Karachi, the most important issues regarding this dimension are widespread corruption, land speculation and the privatisation of development. This has led to development funds and resources being directed towards speculative projects that often do not serve the 'greater good' and are not very inclusive. Furthermore, the informal and formal economies appear strongly connected and integrated, but this sometimes creates problems for informal workers who do not have many rights or power. The third dimension is environmental sustainability, and here too, problems exist. Since the quality of infrastructure in settlements like Orangi Town is poor, problems regarding solid waste collection and sewage leakage exist. This creates health hazards and points towards an unhealthy relationship between the human settlement and the environment. Water scarcity is also a problem which Karachi is already struggling with, and which will become an increasingly big problem due to climate change. The last dimension is spatial sustainability, and here the biggest issue is the uncertainty that residents face due to the absence of land tenure. Evictions are the biggest threat, and when land tenure is secured, the settlement usually improves. Moreover, sewage, water and electricity are all services that are sporadically provided by the government in Orangi, but more often built on a self-help basis by communities.

The second part of the research findings concerns community participation in Karachi's informal settlements as well as possible lessons to draw for other cities in the Global South. Participatory planning processes have been applied in Karachi. Especially in Orangi, several NGOs have worked with and facilitated communities in constructing services such as sanitation systems. What is essential here is that the community has ownership of the development that is being done. In

practice, this usually happens by letting the community fund (in part or whole) a project, and sometimes even teaching them how to construct it themselves. Low-cost methods have been invented by NGOs to make it accessible to lower-income communities. Moreover, the research finds that one of the most important parts of successful planning is communication. Communication between all stakeholders (government, community, builders, etc.) can lead to the most effective and successful solutions. However, the research also finds that there exist many problems with participatory planning. For example, communities often feel that public services should be provided by the government, and therefore do not want to build them themselves. Moreover, they often do not have the time or the money to build such infrastructure. What is therefore needed is a strong civil society to advocate and organise communities and give good guidance for construction as well as interaction with other stakeholders such as government institutions. However, NGOs are not a universal solution, and community ownership of the end result is still an essential element of successful planning.

The research findings from Karachi may be applicable to other geographical contexts, since many similar problems exist there. What the research finds is an important element that is missing in the politics of many countries is a clear vision for the future of the city and of informal settlements. Moreover, many countries in the Global South face the same issues of weak states, corruption and private land speculation, and this also determines the planning approaches taken by local governments in cities. Here, too, participation might be a way to escape this paradigm.

In conclusion, one can say that the informal settlements of Karachi, specifically Orangi Town, face many different problems with regard to the New Urban Agenda dimensions. Development largely takes place informally on a self-help basis. The holistic dimensions of the NUA do not appear to be taken into account by state actors concerned with urban development, and instead most development takes place through private investment projects. These projects often serve to generate a return on investment and do not serve the city as a whole, and especially do not cater to lower-income communities. However, participation may be a solution to the issues existing in informal areas in Karachi and elsewhere. Communication is an essential aspect of any planning process, linking back to the theory of discursive democracy as conceived by Habermas. Through communicative participation, a more just and effective planning approach may be realised. The mediating role of the planner in combining stakeholder perspectives in a fair way is central here. For this to truly happen, though, a clear political vision for the city is necessary in government. This may be hard to achieve, since the research found that Pakistan and other countries are embedded in a global system which makes funds flow to private investment development projects and away from planned holistic development strategies. This links back to theories of subaltern urbanism, where especially lower-income city dwellers in the Global South are left behind in development, and where Global South states appear too weak to direct investment towards these groups instead of speculative private developments. However, still participation may be an opportunity to change this under the right conditions. If the political will and vision is there, and communities are empowered and can take ownership of the development of their own settlements, participatory planning can be a successful and just way to improve the lives of inhabitants.

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List of Abbreviations and Local Terms

CDGK   City District Government Karachi
DHA   Defence Housing Authority
KDA   Karachi Development Authority
KMC   Karachi Municipal Corporation
MQM   Mohajir Qaumi Movement (political party)
MNA   Member National Assembly
MPA   Member Provincial Assembly
NGO   Non-governmental organization
NUA   New Urban Agenda
OPP   Orangi Pilot Project
PTI   Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (political party)
TTRC   Technical Training Resource Center
URC   Urban Resource Center

katchi abadi   informal settlement
madrassa   islamic religious school
Muhajir   migrant from India
nala   natural drain
Pathan/Pashtun   people from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the northwestern province of Pakistan

Introduction

1.1 Research framework

One of the most discernible and important geographical trends seen all over the world, and nowadays most strikingly in the Global South, is urbanisation. One only has to look at satellite imagery taken recently and compare it with pictures taken a few decades ago, and see that major urban centres around the world have grown exponentially (Atlas of Urban Expansion, 2013). In many cities in developing countries, the enormous influx of new inhabitants poses a major challenge. Urbanisation in developing countries has been accompanied by a growth of the informal sector in many cases (Carr & Chen, 2002). Both informal housing and the informal economy sometimes even encompass more than half of a city's population and economy, and globally it is estimated that around a quarter of the urban population lives in informal settlements (UN-HABITAT, 2013). As a city's population grows, its demands for housing, sanitation and other public amenities rise along with it. Governments are faced with the task of successfully channeling this growth by designating new areas for sprawling expansion, or facilitating the growth in the existing city. The sheer size of the flow of newcomers - and of course local newborns - has become a problem in some cities (Kuddus, Tynan & McBryde, 2020). If the government does not provide sufficient locations for the development of settlements, the private sector takes up the task through legal and/or illegal means (Khalifa, 2015).

For cities in the Global South, the growth of informal urban development has delineated how they are imagined and portrayed. In both planning and popular discourse, megacities of the Global South are often imagined along the lines of developmentalism. That is to say, their problems of underdevelopment, such as poverty, disease and environmental hazards, are used as justifications for a wide array of 'diagnostic and reformist interventions' (Robinson, 2002; Roy, 2011). The nature of these interventions is almost exclusively a top-down undertaking, with little consultation of local communities (Robinson, 2002; Das, 2003).

In the past, too, urban planning was a predominantly top-down endeavour taken up by technocratic elites, mainly engineers and architects. Starting in the 1980's however, a shift has occurred within human geography and urban planning discourse and practice. Increasingly, planners have started consulting other actors in the planning process, and have tried to design and implement plans based on diverse stakeholder input. This shift has been named by some planning theorists as the '*communicative turn in planning*' (Healey, 1992). As a result of this discursive turn in designing and developing modern cities, new questions arose regarding the role of planners in planning processes. Are planners purely technicians and experts in the field of urban design, or are they also political actors playing their own role in the complex power dynamics of a particular social context? Many planners see themselves as a combination of the two, but constantly feel pressures from both roles (Healey, 1992).

In many cities around the world, problems arise when a top-down approach is used for upgrading or relocating informal areas. For instance, the predominant approach to informal settlement upgrading includes regularisation of tenure, infrastructure improvements and self-help housing support. However, in many cases one or more of these elements is neglected, leading to less effective

outcomes (Khalifa, 2015). Another problem occurs with many relocation projects, where informal settlements are demolished and the inhabitants have to move elsewhere. In many instances the relocation has led to inhabitants having to live too far away from their place of employment, and existing social structures within informal settlements being uprooted and disturbed (Hasan, 2020a). Such was also the case when the inhabitants of the Gujjar Nala settlement in Karachi were told to vacate their homes on September 2nd, 2020. Research into the fate of these residents has shown that many of them are now poorer than they were before relocation, since they now live further away from employment and transportation amenities (Hasan, 2020a). Moreover, when upgrading strategies are implemented by planners in a top-down manner, local social, cultural and physical needs are often misinterpreted or ignored, limiting the success of these interventions (Khalifa, 2015). Thus there remains a problem to be solved regarding the role planners have and the approach they should take in the development process of informal urban areas.

This research focuses on urban areas in the Global South. This term has been widely used in human geography research to demarcate a particular region of the world. However, the concept is not without controversy, since some authors claim that the concept is too generalising and homogenising. They say it is too simplistic to create a binary division in the global diversity of countries and regions (Toshkov, 2018). This is a valid criticism, but the Global South concept according to other authors is not necessarily a spatial dichotomy between different degrees of 'economic development'. According to Dados and Conwell (2012), the most important conceptual idea it conveys is a shift away from a focus on 'development' or cultural difference, towards an emphasis on geopolitical power relations. In this research, it is used in this way to define the research context, and as such referencing 'an entire history of colonialism, neo-imperialism, and differential economic and social change through which large inequalities in living standards, life expectancy, and access to resources are maintained' (Dados & Connell, 2012). In this sense, too, the term 'has great potential to consolidate and empower the various social actors that consider themselves to be in subaltern(ized) positionalities of global networks of power' (Kloß, 2017).

The case that will be used in this study is situated in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city. Informal settlements, or *katchi abadis* as they are called in the local Urdu language, are a dominant feature of the urban landscape of Karachi. Although they are anything but new, their portion of the total city population has increased over the years. As of 2020, more than sixty percent of the city's population is housed in these informal settlements (Saleem, Toheed & Arif, 2020). As Hasan writes (1999), most informal settlements have often been neglected by government institutions in Karachi and other cities, and they continue to be ignored (Hasan, 1999). One reason for this is the fact that they are not legally recognised. Moreover, the government at all levels lacks, 'holistic public policy including social, economic and environmental challenges' concerning the informal areas of Karachi (Khan, Abassi, Ahmad & Nasir, 2019). However, since the majority of the city's inhabitants live in these kinds of settlements, the question arises how these areas should be developed and integrated into the rest of the city. The unprecedented rate at which informal settlements are growing in Karachi, as well as other cities in the Global South, requires further analysis and understanding (Yiftachel, 2009). This is necessary if planners want to improve city life for the world's population.

In the context of the case used in this research, Orangi Town in Karachi, participatory processes have been put into practice in urban development. Specifically, the Orangi Pilot Project, which was started

in 1980, has played a significant role in organising local communities to improve their living environment. Its founder, Akhtar Hameed Khan, had great faith in how the local population managed and improved their lives (Omar, 2020). According to project initiator and social activist Perween Rahman, the project's philosophy consists of four stages: (1) see what local inhabitants are already doing; (2) observe with your own knowledge what they are doing; (3) learn from what local inhabitants are doing; and (4) teach with gentleness. As a result of this project, hundreds of households in Orangi Town were able to organise and finance their own sanitary systems. This greatly improved hygiene and living standards in the affected areas. It is an example of bottom-up development in an informal context (Omar, 2020). The Orangi Pilot Project NGO is closely tied to the Urban Resource Centre, another NGO in Karachi concerned with improving the living environment in the city in an equitable and inclusive way (Hasan, 2007). These two organizations play a significant role in urban planning in Karachi.

In this time of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown measures implemented around the world, it is especially evident how precarious the livelihoods of many of those working in the informal sector and living informally truly are. Resilience to these external disastrous events is limited among groups living in informal settlements in the Global South. Many of Karachi's inhabitants are no exception, living through an erratic and unpredictable period of unclear lockdown regulations and closures of essential economic and social activities. This makes this topic all the more relevant and interesting today.

1.2 Research aim

The aim of this research is to explore whether and how processes of participatory planning might bring about new approaches to the development, governance, and/or habitat of informal settlements in cities. This is done by studying the case of Orangi Town in Karachi, an informal settlement where such processes have been put into practice. This research will analyse the current situation in the specific case of Orangi Town, an informal settlement in Karachi. Furthermore, it will analyse the impact of participatory planning processes on the situation in this area, followed by what can potentially be learned from these practices and how they can produce alternative approaches to informal settlement development more generally.

1.2.2 Societal relevance

This thesis is relevant to wider society, especially certain societies and countries where urban informality is very widespread. As mentioned previously, an estimated 25% of the world's urban population lives in informal settlements (UN-HABITAT, 2013), so globally the magnitude of the phenomenon is significant. This study will contribute to knowledge that can help governments better understand these issues present in their cities. The aim is for it to also explore what role citizens are to play in the development process and how new approaches might help the development and create better outcomes for the city. It thus concerns both the leaders and the inhabitants of developing cities. Furthermore, the research aims to gather new insights into contemporary problems in urban planning regarding informal areas, such as lack of diverse stakeholder input. This knowledge may help various civil society and non-governmental organizations in coming up with creative and innovative solutions to create a better living environment. In Karachi, one of these NGO's is the Urban Resource Centre, which has advocated for

better and more inclusive urban planning since 1989 (Hasan, 2007). Furthermore, UNHabitat has recently released their New Urban Agenda, attempting to summarize concisely how cities can move towards becoming more liveable (UNHabitat, 2020). This agenda will be used in the theoretical framework of this research. This research aims to contribute to knowledge on how the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda might be more successfully executed and applied in practice.

Moreover, perhaps further comparative research could explore what developed cities, where informality is not such a major aspect in the urban landscape, could learn from processes taking place in urban centres in developing countries regarding informal areas. In many developed cities, there is a growing desire to be involved in the planning process.

1.2.3 Scientific relevance

In much of the older literature, especially from the 1990's, the concept of participation in planning is often looked at in a Western context by the authors. For example, Healey writes extensively about participation in planning in the English context (Healey, 1992; Healey, 1998), and Judith Innes writes from a United States perspective (Innes, 1995; Innes, 1999). The Global South context is not taken into account extensively here. However, more recently participation in planning has been linked to the development of informal areas in the Global South in the academic literature by many authors (Dobson, Nyamweru & Dodman, 2015; Khalifa, 2015; McFarlane, 2008; Roy, 2009a; Simone & Pieterse, 2017). This research is an attempt to contribute to this literature.

Moreover, informality is a concept that has not been widely written on in planning research and literature. Yiftachel (2009) writes that 'in a content analysis of six leading international planning journals over a period of three years (2005–08), only three (!) out of 327 published articles, were devoted to the issue of urban informality' (Yiftachel, 2009). Thus, there remains enough to be studied regarding this concept, and this research is an attempt to explore the issue further. For example, subaltern urbanism is quite a popular theoretical theme in the existing academic body regarding Global South cities. This research might contribute to knowledge regarding this theory, since it also researches the potential role of community involvement and community empowerment in urban development. Moreover, it focuses mainly on lower-income and marginalized communities, which entwines the research with theories of subaltern urbanism (Roy, 2011). Finally, the research involves the New Urban Agenda as formulated by UNHabitat as a way to analyse the current situation in Karachi's informal settlements. The conclusions in this research might help with a more adequate and effective implementation of this agenda.

1.3 Research questions

In order to successfully achieve the aim of this study, one main research question is posed along with three subquestions that contribute to answering the main question. The concepts in the questions will be elaborated on in the next chapter. These questions are as follows:

Main question
How might participatory planning produce alternative approaches to developing informal areas in cities in the Global South?

Subquestions

- *What is the current situation in Karachi's informal areas regarding the focal points of a UNHabitat agenda for urban areas?*

In order to study the potential role participatory planning processes might play in developing informal areas, it is imperative to exhaustively analyse the current situation in these areas regarding the core dimensions of a UNHabitat agenda for urban areas: social, economic, environmental and spatial sustainability (UNHabitat, 2020).

- *What can we learn from participatory planning processes as implemented in Orangi Town, Karachi?*

This question intends to analyse the lessons that could potentially be learned from citizen participation in development as it has occurred in this informal settlement of Karachi.

- *What can the findings from Karachi tell us about developing informal areas in other cities in the Global South?*

The last subquestion is intended to draw more general lessons from the research findings about other cities in the Global South where urban informality is also prevalent, and what can be learned from this particular case in a wider sense.

1.4 Reading guide

The second chapter of this study will dive deeper into the existing theories regarding the theoretical concepts that are central to this research: informal settlements, participatory planning, and the dimensions of the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda. Chapter three will elaborate the research methods used to execute the research, including the research strategy, data collection and data analysis. The fourth chapter dives into the empirical results of the research. First it sets the scene by describing the context of Karachi and of Orangi Town, and then it presents the research findings regarding the current situation in Karachi's informal areas. Chapter five continues with the empirical results and focuses more on participatory planning in Karachi and whether the knowledge and experience from Karachi might be extrapolated to other cities in the Global South. Chapter six then draws the final conclusions that come out of the research and answers the main research question. Then, chapter seven provides the reader with recommendations to certain stakeholders as well as recommendations for further research. Finally, the last chapter is a personal reflection on the research process.

2. Theoretical explorations: urban informality and community participation in the Global South

This chapter is meant to position and embed the study within the existing literature. The main concepts relevant to this research will be discussed using scientific theories and academic literature. The concepts that will be given centre stage here are informal settlements, participation in planning and the core dimensions of the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda.

2.1 Informal settlements

Informality is a concept that has carried various meanings overtime. For many urbanists, it is not a concept that is deeply understood, and as such a single clear definition is hard to find (Revell, 2010). Moreover, the general understanding regarding informal settlements has shifted overtime: 'Informality, once associated with poor squatter settlements, is now seen as a generalized mode of metropolitan urbanization' (Roy, 2005). It is therefore important to look at some of the definitions that have been given throughout the literature, to get a broader picture of the concept.

For example, UN-Habitat defines informal activity as being a 'different way from the norm, one which breaches formal conventions and is not acceptable in formal circles – one which is inferior, irregular and, at least somewhat, undesirable.' (UN-HABITAT, 2003). An analysis by Roy (2009b) defines it differently and perhaps less negatively, and says that informality is 'state of deregulation, one where the ownership, use and purpose of land cannot be fixed and mapped according to any prescribed set of regulations or the law'. She also further explains that informality touches upon the constantly changing relationship between legal and illegal, legitimate and illegitimate and authorized and unauthorized (Roy, 2009b).

The first definition associates informal settlements more with poverty, where for example Neuwirth (2004) describes them as 'shadow cities' built by squatters (Neuwirth, 2004). However, among some planning theorists, informality is seen as an element of communicative rationality and is strongly linked to the ideas of Habermas (Roy, 2009a). They say informality means planning strategies that are 'neither prescribed nor proscribed any rules . . . The idea of informality also connotes casual and spontaneous interactions and personal affective ties among participants' (Innes, Connick, & Booher, 2007). It is thus a complex interplay between local actors and participants who produce their spaces in a manner that is not bound to any legal laws or regulations. Especially the importance of inter-actor relations relates strongly to the theory of Habermas, since intersubjective communication is central in his theory. This process of intersubjective communication is the thing that drives and constitutes the social world. Through communication, according to Habermas, rational outcomes can be achieved. Taking this into consideration, informal settlements can be seen as a platform of communicative rationalisation (Roy, 2009a).

Another interesting and useful perspective on the analysis of urban informality is the concept of subaltern urbanism. In academic and in popular discourse, the narrative concerning the megacity of the Global South is dominated by a dystopian terrain of filthy, unhealthy and inhospitable slums. In contrast, subaltern urbanism provides a vision of the informal settlement as a field of habitation, livelihood and politics (Roy, 2011). Subaltern urbanism draws from postcolonial theory in order to study spaces of poverty and forms of popular agency (Roy, 2011). This alternative vision of informal

settlements might serve as a more inclusive conceptualisation that defines the inhabitants as more than simply 'a warehousing of surplus labour' (Nijman, 2010). Contrastingly, it sees subaltern actors as agents of change in the urban environment. It places emphasis on the economic entrepreneurialism and popular agency of inhabitants of informal settlements (Roy, 2011).

A crucial analytical element of subaltern urbanism, which was briefly mentioned earlier, is popular agency in its various forms. This is where a link lies between the two central concepts of this research: urban informality and participatory planning. Subaltern urbanism may unify the two in a sense, because some forms of participation in planning processes can also be seen as forms of popular agency of inhabitants of informal settlements (Roy, 2011).

2.2 Participatory planning

In 1984, the theory of communicative action was formulated and published by Habermas. This theory defined social processes along the lines of language, where interaction between actors is the most important element. Habermas said that power dynamics and inequalities between actors could be overcome by rationality in communication (Habermas, 1984). If communication or a negotiation process was, as Habermas calls it, 'undistorted', then communicative rationality would reach its full potential (Inglis & Thorpe, 2012).

After some time, planning theorists started to apply Habermas' theory to their own field. In the 1980's, a shift took place in the field of urban planning from a systematic way of thinking to a more communicative and collaborative planning theory. Healey and Gilroy (1990) write that this change in 'how planning thinkers and practitioners have imagined the relation between citizens and planning activity' has been 'strongly influenced by prevailing ideologies about social and political organization' that took place in that time. They say that the movement towards more democracy that took place in the late twentieth century 'challenges the capacity and desirability of politicians, bureaucrats, and technocrats to act 'for' citizens guided by some superior knowledge of what 'people' want and 'the public interest''. In this context, planning theory changed. Where the old systematic thinkers seldom reported first-hand research, and instead relied tacitly on their own knowledge, the new theorists 'find out what planning is by finding out what planners do, rather than postulating what planning ought to be' (Innes, 1995). This paradigm shift had a major impact on the field, leading to a different role for planners in the planning process and a change in the nature of the process (Healey, 1992). In this new paradigm of communicative planning, what planners do most is talk and interact. They can influence action in the public sphere through what is called communicative practice in Habermasian terms (Innes, 1999; Habermas, 1984). Thus, the planner functions more as a mediator and 'planning method thus becomes interactive, using discursive communication as a key tool' (Healey & Gilroy, 1990).

Moreover, Healey and Gilroy (1990) saw citizen participation in planning processes as necessary and desirable for creating more successful planning outcomes. Where planning used to be mostly a top-down process, citizens now felt more driven to participate in the planning processes that influenced the places where they lived (Healey, 1992). This new way of planning relates to Habermas' concept of discursive democracy, a place where every actor can express their opinions and arguments in a rational way, leading to better outcomes (Inglis & Thorpe, 2012).

Some planning theorists claim that citizen participation in planning might lead to better outcomes and a living environment that is more suitable to the needs and desires of the local population (Healey, 2012). In "Collaborative Planning in Perspective" (1998), Healey writes that participatory planning contains a moral commitment to social justice (Healey, 2003). This means that the outcome of a planning process must be socially just, but this is not the only dimension of social justice. David Harvey writes that social justice has a dimension of both outcome and process, a just outcome justly arrived at (Harvey, 2010). This also links to the theory of Habermas, who says it is essential for the *process* to be morally just. The negotiation and decision making process must be undistorted in order to reach both a rational and just outcome (Habermas, 1984). In the same vein, Das (2003) writes that it is morally right and necessary for local impoverished communities to have a say in their housing needs and for them to be able to participate in this process. Where this has not happened, such as in the case of Mumbai's informal areas in India, rights of inhabitants of informal settlements have been infringed upon and ignored (Das, 2003). Thus, hereby the role of the planner changes from purely technocratic decision makers of the content of plans to more of a mediating, negotiating and facilitating function (Mohammadi, 2010).

In order to judge the level of influence citizens have in a particular planning process, Arnstein came up with the Ladder of Participation (Arnstein, 1969). This ladder contains eight different degrees of citizen (non-)involvement ranging from various forms of non-participation to complete citizen control. This model is useful to this research when one has to determine whether, and to what degree, a planning process happened in a participatory manner.
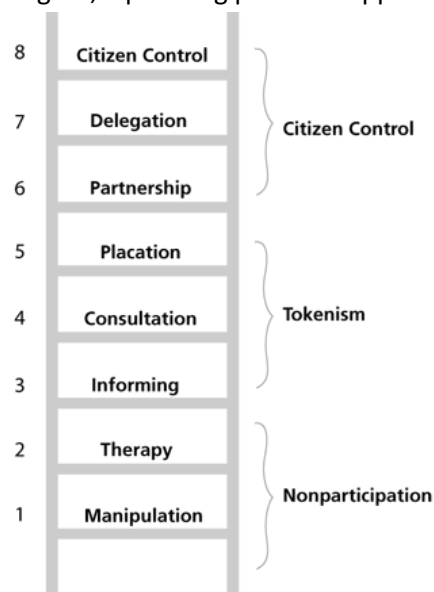
Arnstein's Ladder (1969)
Degrees of Citizen Participation

Figure 2: The Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969)

The different levels of participation will now be briefly explained.

(1) Manipulation and (2) Therapy are considered forms of non-participation. Here, citizens do not actively participate at all, but instead the aim is to sell a policy plan and garner support, sometimes through dishonest information campaigns.

(3) Informing is one step above in terms of participation, but often the emphasis lies on a one-way flow of information without ways to give feedback. (4) Consultation includes things such as attitude surveys, neighbourhood meetings and public enquiries. According to Arnstein however, these are not always listened to by policymakers in practice. (5) Placation allows citizens to advise or plan as they see fit, but policymakers and holders of power still judge citizen's ideas for their worth.

(6) Partnership goes a step further and is the first to fall under citizen control according to Arnstein, here citizens and power holders negotiate and responsibilities are shared between actors. (7) Delegation means citizens have a majority on decision making committees in the form of delegates who represent their interests and can be held accountable. (8) Citizen control is the highest level of participation according to Arnstein. Here, citizens hold full control over planning, budgeting, policy making and management of a plan without interference.

In this research, it is necessary to apply the existing knowledge and literature on participatory planning to a different context. Where a lot of the literature concerns mostly cities in the Global North, this research tries to use the concept in a Global South context. Here, different factors might come into play. For example, the concept of informality, which was discussed in the previous section, is more prevalent in the Global South than in the Global North (Roy, 2009b). This probably means that there are different actors that play a role, and that these actors are not always formal. This could change the nature of the process, but it also ties the concept of participatory planning to the previously discussed concept of urban informality.

2.3 Four core dimensions of the New Urban Agenda

The New Urban Agenda, as formulated by UNHabitat, is a handbook meant to guide cities towards becoming inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, this being one of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is supposed to provide a framework of definitions and practical applications to be used by policymakers, urban practitioners and other stakeholders working in urban contexts. Furthermore, it is a document which clearly outlines several focal dimensions along which the inclusiveness, resilience and sustainability of cities can be analyzed, so as to inspire new solutions for urban problems (UNHabitat, 2020). It is relevant to this research, as it can serve as a framework to analyze the socio-spatial quality of a particular area. It thus links to the research questions, as a way to express the current situation in the informal areas of Karachi in terms of several dimensions, and analyze whether, in what way and to what degree participation in development might impact these dimensions. The four dimensions are elaborated on below.

2.3.1 Social sustainability

The first of the four dimensions of sustainability is social sustainability. This dimension concerns the inclusiveness of cities, and thus entails human settlements that are:

> *'Participatory, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among their inhabitants…, enhance social and intergenerational interaction, cultural expression and political participation, as appropriate, and foster social cohesion … and pluralistic societies, where the needs of all inhabitants are met, recognizing the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations'* (UNHabitat, 2020, p.2).

An important part of social sustainability is the special attention paid to marginalized groups in urban planning. It is essential that the needs of these groups are met by the government. More concretely, social sustainability means that planning is responsive to educational needs of youth, provides an age-responsive urban environment, empowers women and other vulnerable groups, and creates safe, healthy and accessible streets and public spaces and services (UNHabitat, 2020).

The principle of social sustainability is grounded in protection of rights and empowerment of those who have less rights. According to the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda, it is important that the principle is put into practice with concrete measures. This kind of inclusive urban planning can improve the quality of life for all residents, not just the targeted marginalized groups. Education programs for vulnerable groups create opportunities for the whole city. Similarly, infrastructural improvements to cater to the needs of disabled and elderly populations can make the city as a whole more mobile, and empowering women by giving them access to land, title and financing creates more economic opportunities for all city dwellers (UNHabitat, 2020).

One more element of social sustainability is planning for migrants. This is especially relevant for Karachi, since it is a city of immigrants. As mentioned earlier, right after Partition in 1947, the population was 450.000. Today, the population has risen to around 15 to 20 million, in a large part due to immigration from India, refugees from Afghanistan and more importantly immigrants from elsewhere in Pakistan (Hasan, 2021). Discrimination based on ethnicity is widespread in many parts of the world, but policies should be implemented to combat this. Moreover, the New Urban Agenda promotes inclusive policies regarding land registration and tenure rights. Inclusion and integration into the wider city is an important element of social sustainability (UNHabitat, 2020).

2.3.2 Economic sustainability

The second dimension is economic sustainability. According to UNHabitat, this means ensuring sustainable and inclusive urban economies. Governments can do this by:

> *'Leveraging the agglomeration benefits of well planned urbanization, including high productivity, competitiveness and innovation; by promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all; by ensuring the creation of decent jobs and equal access for all to economic and productive resources and opportunities; and by preventing land speculation, promoting secure land tenure and managing urban shrinking, where appropriate.'* (UNHabitat, 2020, p.19)

Again, inclusiveness is an essential element of this dimension. Economic growth, if done in an inclusive way, is very important to urban development. Inclusiveness means that opportunities are equal for everyone and that everyone can achieve a productive and prosperous life. According to UNHabitat, this can be done by committing to the creation of income-earning opportunities for people who want to work in an innovative urban economy. Job creation should be included in every urban renewal policy, but extra attention should be paid to creating decent jobs with fair, sustainable wages and workers' rights. In order to safeguard this principle, a variety of stakeholders should be able to participate in the decision making process. Sustainable and inclusive industrial development should be promoted and facilitated in planning in order to create more sources of livelihood for all inhabitants of cities. Moreover, workers in the informal sector should be

transitioned into the formal sector to give them more security and protect their livelihood (UNHabitat, 2020).

The other element in this dimension of the New Urban Agenda is the emphasis on increasing economic productivity and competitiveness. The labour force should have widespread access to learning opportunities for new skills and knowledge, so as to increase their ability to participate in the economy and become more productive. Decent work can provide everyone with the equal opportunity to secure a source of livelihood and develop and grow the city. In order to grow the city, policies of regional economic clustering can be implemented to reap the benefits of agglomeration. However, it is imperative that all city dwellers are mobile and have good transport options to access the economic agglomerations. This relates to the element of competitiveness in the urban economy, which manifests in a city which facilitates foreign investment, job creation and increased productivity, but most importantly is inclusive in its access to opportunities (UNHabitat, 2020).

2.3.3 Environmental sustainability

Thirdly, environmental sustainability is also a dimension of the New Urban Agenda. It says that this principle can be achieved *'by promoting clean energy and sustainable use of land and resources in urban development, by protecting ecosystems and biodiversity, including adopting healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature, by promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns, by building urban resilience, by reducing disaster risks and by mitigating and adapting to climate change'* (UNHabitat, 2020, p.28). The environment should thus not be overburdened and this dimension calls for a sustainable use of land, water and other resources. It is imperative that environmental factors such as climate change, water scarcity and urban pollution are tackled and mitigated, but again this should happen in a holistic and inclusive way where all city dwellers are protected from these perils. This dimension is very relevant to Karachi, since Pakistan has been listed as one of the countries most vulnerable to the impact of climate change (Abubakar, 2020). This will increase the frequency of natural disasters and it will make the supply of natural resources such as water less secure (UNHabitat, 2020).

Natural ecosystems should be protected from development and pollution. Sprawling and densifying cities can pose a threat to these ecosystems and at the same time the damaging of these ecosystems can pose a threat to the city in terms of less resilience in the face of natural disasters. This is therefore an important principle of environmental sustainability (UNHabitat, 2020).

2.3.4 Spatial sustainability

The last dimension of the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda can be seen as an aggregate of all previous dimensions expressed in the physical form of the city. As such, it is said to be achieved *'by guiding the physical form of urban environments to create equitable access to jobs, housing and social interactions; enable agglomeration economies and encourage sustainable relationships to ecosystems and natural habitats'* (UNHabitat, 2020, p.45). This means guiding expansion and prioritizing urban renewal as a way of increasing accessibility to affordable housing, good quality services and transport infrastructure and integration of diverse areas into a cohesive urban fabric. An important element of this is *'the participation of relevant stakeholders and communities'* (UNHabitat, 2020, p.45).

In spatial sustainability, the equity in accessibility to services, also termed spatial justice by authors such as Harvey (2010). Spatial justice requires an inclusive approach to planning and a certain degree of participation of local inhabitants and other stakeholders. Urban density is a major factor here, since it can both increase and decrease spatial justice. On the one hand, density makes it easier for large groups of people to have close access to transport, jobs and other services, but it can also lead to congestion and health hazards if not guided correctly (UNHabitat, 2020)

2.4 Conceptual model
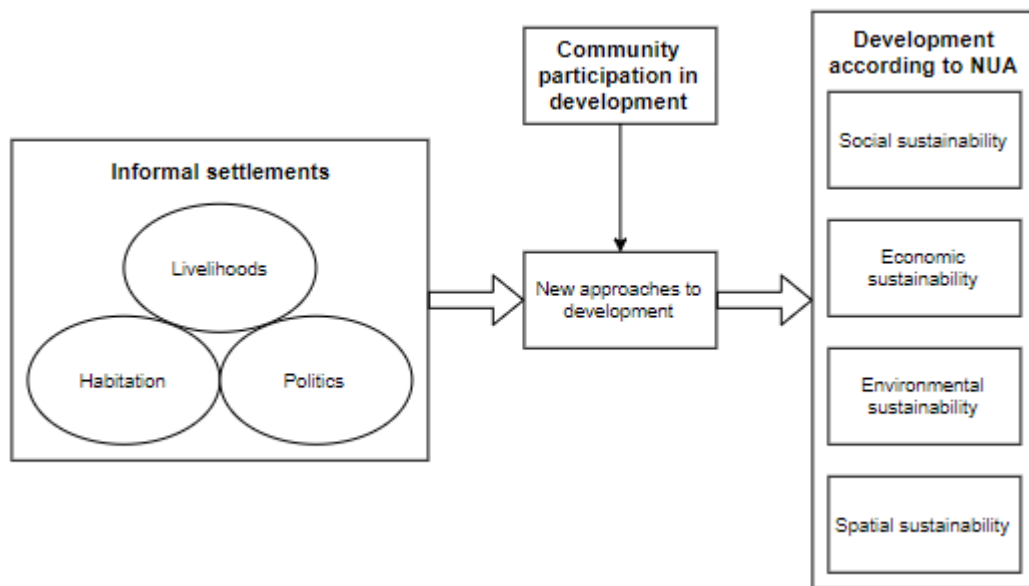
Figure 3: Conceptual model of this research

According to the conceptual model tested in this research and showcased above, it is to be studied whether and in what way informal settlements as Roy (2011) defines them (a subaltern urbanist field of habitation, livelihoods and politics) can be developed using new alternative approaches. The role that community participation might play in creating and constituting these new approaches to development is central to the research. Moreover, whether and how these new approaches might lead to an informal settlement's development along the lines of the four focal dimensions of the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda (NUA) is also studied.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology that was used in this study will be discussed. This chapter will summarize and explain the methods used for collecting and analysing data. In order to gather and analyse data, and eventually provide answers to the research questions posed earlier, several methods were used. A justification for the methodological choices made will also be given.

3.1 Research strategy

The aim of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of processes of participatory planning in the context of informal areas in cities in the Global South. The study explores how and whether these processes might in the future lead to different approaches being used when developing these areas. In order to achieve the research objective and sufficiently answer the research question, a qualitative approach was used in most, though not all, of this research. However, for the first subquestion, a quantitative approach is more suitable. This research question (*What is the current situation in Karachi's informal areas regarding the focal points of a UNHabitat agenda for urban areas?*) in particular is different in nature. It concerns the character of, and the situation in Orangi Town in Karachi. For this question specifically, a quantitative analysis of data is more suitable. In order to gain an understanding of the current situation in the informal settlements of Karachi, one should look at previous research and surveys done and/or perform an observation to determine the state of every dimension named in UNHabitat's New Urban Agenda respectively (Creswell, 2016).

For the other subquestions, however, a qualitative research approach is the most suitable, since the issue to be studied is highly complex, multifaceted, and requires a detailed understanding (Creswell, 2016). One of the key goals of qualitative research is to produce a holistic account of the issue at hand. According to Creswell (2016), 'this involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation, and generally sketching the larger picture that emerges. Researchers are bound not by tight cause-and-effect relationships among factors, but rather by identifying the complex interactions of factors in any situation' (Creswell, 2016, p.39). A quantitative approach is less suitable for gaining such a holistic understanding of the studied problem. Moreover, some of the central elements of this issue are very hard to quantify. The aim is to analyse the role that the concept of participatory planning might play in the reproduction or transformation of planning practices. These planning practices, in this study specifically concerning the development of informal areas in Karachi, are very complex and difficult to quantify. Questions of just planning processes and just planning outcomes are thus better researched using a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2016). Furthermore, the practices that were studied involve many different actors with varying interests, and are subject to intricate and complex power structures. Qualitative research can be used to empower those specific stakeholders that hold less power within these structures, and as such it is fitting for this research topic (Creswell, 2016).

There are several possible approaches to qualitative research, but the one that was used in this study is phenomenology. This research aims to gain a better understanding of a certain phenomenon: participatory planning within a context of informality. The issue at hand is thus a particular phenomenon, and not a case, population or discourse, which would all require different approaches (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenology can be used to combine individual perspectives and experiences into a holistic view and understanding of the phenomenon to be researched. Hereby, as

van Manen (1990) writes, you gain a 'grasp of the very nature of the thing'. In order to gain a whole and complete understanding of the phenomenon within the chosen research context, the participants chosen are diverse in their background, ranging from social activists and writers, to NGO workers and architects. Between hermeneutic and psychological phenomenology, a distinction made by Creswell (2016), hermeneutic phenomenology is chosen. With this approach, research comes forth from an 'abiding concern'; a great interest in a certain phenomenon, in this case participation in planning (van Manen, 1990). From this interest, the researcher tries to reflect on the most important themes that constitute the phenomenon as it is experienced by participants. During the study, the researcher is constantly interpreting the lived experiences of participants and their meanings (van Manen, 1990; Creswell, 2016).

For this research, a case study was chosen as the research design. Lune & Berg (2017) write the following on case studies:

> 'By concentrating on a single phenomenon, individual, community, or institution, the researcher aims to uncover the manifest interactions of significant factors characteristic of this phenomenon, individual, community, or institution. In addition, the researcher is able to capture various nuances, patterns, and more latent elements that other research approaches might overlook. The case study method tends to focus on holistic description and explanation; and, as a general statement, any phenomenon can be studied by case study methods' (Lune & Berg, 2017, p.171).

As the quote above illustrates, a case study is an appropriate research design, since it can be used to gain a holistic understanding of a particular phenomenon within a chosen context, to then draw more general conclusions about the phenomenon at hand. Moreover, according to Yin (1994), a case study is 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.' In this case, participatory planning is a contemporary phenomenon that is not clearly separable from the context it takes place in. As such, the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are vague and the two are intertwined. Moreover, case studies are most suitable when the research question concerns a contemporary set of events that lies largely outside the control of the researcher (Yin, 1994, p.9), which was also the case here, since the researcher has very little control over the planning processes governing urban planning and development of informal settlements such as Orangi Town in Karachi.

3.2 Data collection

As mentioned in the previous section, the goal of this qualitative research was to study the phenomenon of participatory planning of informal settlements holistically. Therefore, it is imperative that a wide array of sources of information and methods are used for triangulation (Vennix, 2016). In the following section, these different methods are elaborated on. The methods that have been used for collecting the data are: a literature review, an analysis of existing survey data, in-depth semi-structured interviews with local experts and an online observation using video material. The research has been performed in several stages, which all fulfill different functions in

the data collection. But there was a constant iterative process of going back and forth between the different stages.

Literature review

In order to gain an exhaustive overview and understanding of the concepts of participatory planning, informal settlements, and the dimensions of a UNHabitat agenda for urban areas, existing academic literature was reviewed. The information from these scientific sources was essential for defining the research framework and the needed theory and data to conduct the study. In addition to the academic literature referenced in the text and reference list, several books, articles and documentaries were used to garner an initial overview of the situation in Karachi and Orangi Town. Since these were not directly used, they are not present in the text, but they were an important initial source of information.

Analysis of survey data

In order to answer the first subquestion, several existing bodies of data regarding informal areas in Karachi have been analysed. These datasets are mostly surveys of various dimensions that can be used to assess the spatial quality of an area along the lines of the core dimensions as defined in the UNHabitat agenda for urban areas (UNHabitat, 2020). Indicators in these surveys include infrastructural indicators, such as access to potable water, power and a sewage system, but also social indicators such as access to health and education facilities, as well as economic indicators such as employment and income. One of the documents used is the Karachi Master Plan 2020, which is a vision formulated in 2007 by the City District Government Karachi (CDGK). In this document, survey data is provided along the lines of several indicators. Demographic indicators like population density and household size; infrastructural indicators such as availability of water, sewerage and electricity; social indicators such as healthcare and education; and economic indicators such as income and poverty. A second survey is one conducted by Rahman (2004) in more than 300 *katchi abadis* regarding similar indicators. The second survey also provides data regarding the process of service development, for example how many lanes have constructed their sewage lines on a self-help basis.

Online observation

To help answer the first and second subquestions, an online observation using digital video material has been performed. This observation was used in order to gain more knowledge about the current situation in the informal areas of Karachi, and was conducted along the lines of the dimensions of the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda. Certain indicators, such as presence of infrastructure like power lines or a sewage system, presence of schools and healthcare facilities, types of economic activity and types of social activity and interactions, were studied using videos posted on YouTube. On a channel owned by Adeel Jamil, videos recorded from the dashboard camera of a small car are frequently posted. Mostly, driving takes place in many different areas of Karachi. For this research, seven videos were selected for analysis, all of which were recorded in Orangi Town at the end of 2020 or in 2021. These videos were selected to have a spatially representative view of the settlement, since the different areas are located all over Orangi. Moreover, the selection covers a wide ethnic diversity, including Biharis (from former East-Pakistan), Mohajirs (from present-day India), Balochis (from Balochistan) and Pathans (from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province). The following videos were used, and in the results section they will be referred to using the numbers given below:
- V1 Sector 11 1/2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IRLD9Db3IU

- V2 Sector 14G Muslim Nagar https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETNGAIZbDqY
- V3 Gulshan-e-Bihar Market https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEqA_lOOvsc&t=189s
- V4 Aligarh Colony https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OB1tmqn32uQ&t=424s
- V5 Ghaziabad Christian Colony https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKHr_TUoCQ4
- V6 Sector 1D https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeY63BdspmM
- V7 Baloch Goth Colony https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4jkVZkLrD0

In-depth semi-structured interviews

For answering the second and third subquestions, several long-distance semi-structured interviews have been conducted with local experts from Karachi. These types of interviews are a good way of gaining insight into the perspective and experience on the research phenomenon (Creswell, 2016). The semi-structured nature of these interviews allows the interviewer to pose follow-up probing questions for clarification and extra information. At the same time, it allows the expert participant to express their thoughts and convey their knowledge more freely and at their own pace. This provides data which is more detailed and in-depth in nature to be analysed (Creswell, 2016). To serve as a frame for conducting the interviews, an interview guide was made. This guide contains questions to start the interview, but are not rigid in their order and have sometimes been altered or expanded on during the interview, as the conversation naturally flowed. Due to limitations caused by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, they have been conducted through the online platform Zoom. The experts participating in the interviews are briefly introduced below:

Expert 1: Arif Hasan

The first expert is a prominent social activist, architect and writer on urban planning based in Karachi. He was one of the founders of the Urban Resource Center and one of the key figures in setting up the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP). He has since retired from these organisations, but is still working as a writer on urban issues in Pakistan with a special focus on marginalized groups.

Expert 2: Muhammad Sirajuddin

The second expert is the founder of the Technical Training Resource Center (TTRC), an NGO that works mostly on community housing on a self-help basis. He is still the director of this organisation and works with both communities and many government organizations to improve and sometimes assist in regularizing informal settlements.

3.3 Data analysis

After the primary and secondary data had been collected, it needed to be analysed before conclusions could be drawn regarding the research questions. In order to do this, the interview transcript and observational reports have been uploaded in Atlas.ti and coded. These codes could then be grouped together to form code groups, which can unveil a pattern in the data. The codes link to the key concepts of urban informality, participatory planning and the New Urban Agenda. These are the themes that the codes were respectively assigned to:
- Informal settlements: Livelihood limitations, local politics, ethnic diversity.
- Participatory planning: Participatory projects, pitfalls of participation, communication.
- New Urban Agenda: Public services provision, corruption, land speculation.

They were grouped according to the three subquestions and which ones they fit with most. Hereby, an overview is created that can be used to write the next chapters, which elaborate on the empirical research results.

3.4 Limitations

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the way the research was conducted was not the same as it would have been in normal circumstances. Unfortunately, the research had to be done remotely and it was impossible to do real-life interviews and observations in Orangi Town. This way, it might have been possible to have conversations with the actual inhabitants of the settlement. Moreover, finding respondents would likely have been easier because not all Pakistanis have access to a stable internet connection and good technical equipment, especially in lower-income settlements such as Orangi Town. Even establishing contact with a government representative proved very difficult, and so the respondents were all owners or members of NGOs working in Karachi. Fortunately, these people could be reached digitally.

In the next two chapters, the empirical results of this research are presented. They have been split into two chapters to make the arguments clearer and more readable. First, chapter four explains briefly the empirical context the research took place in, so as to 'set the scene' for the research results. Later on in the chapter the first subquestion is answered. The fifth chapter aims to answer the second and third subquestions.

4. The Karachi context: history and present

In the following two chapters, the insights and information resulting from the data collection are presented. The results will be presented along the lines of the three subquestions central to the research. In this order, the relevant parts of the video analysis and the encoded interviews will be summarized concisely. The fieldwork started in the month of May and lasted until the end of June. During this period, a total of seven videos were analyzed using AtlasTI. This first of two chapters begins with a brief explanation of the research context: the city of Karachi and the district of Orangi Town, the main research area. Then, after setting the scene of the research, the results relating to the first research question are presented. Since the first subquestion concerns the current situation in Karachi's informal areas, these results are very much intertwined with the context of Karachi generally and Orangi specifically.

4.1 Karachi

Most narrations of the history of Karachi really begin after 1947, when the Partition divided the former British Raj into a secular and majority hindu India, and an islamic Pakistan. When this happened, millions of people migrated to either side of the border, often to be safe from religious and sectarian violence. As a result of this, the population of Karachi boomed and grew from 450.000 in 1947 to around 1,5 million just five years later (Hasan, 2020b). With the arrival of so many migrants from the rest of South Asia, the demographics of the city shifted. Before Partition, Karachi was majority Sindhi speaking with Hindu and Sikh minorities as well as other groups. After Partition, this changed to a majority Urdu speaking with a large Sindhi majority, as well as other islamic groups from the rest of Pakistan (Khalidi, 1998). This shift resulted in ethnic tensions which have always played an important role in the politics of the city, and until recently led to regular outbreaks of violence (Hasan, 2009).

Another consequence of the massive population growth, combined with a lack of holistic urban planning, is erratic and sprawling development and both formal and informal encroachments on important public spaces such as *nalas* (natural drains) and open spaces. The lack of comprehensive planning has become a problem in Karachi since it prevents inclusive and effective development from taking place (Khan, Abassi, Ahmad & Nasir, 2019).

Throughout its existence, Karachi has played a vital role in the economy of its region (what is today Pakistan). This is mostly down to the fact that it is a large port city in a strategic location. Today, the majority of the working population in Karachi is employed in the downtown Saddar area, the port or one of the industrial zones (S.I.T.E and Port Qasim industrial area). Most people use privately run public transport in the form of mini-buses or the famous vibrantly colourful buses that go around the city's main arteries (Hasan, 2009).

Figure 4: A colourful Pakistani bus (Wikimedia Commons, 2009)
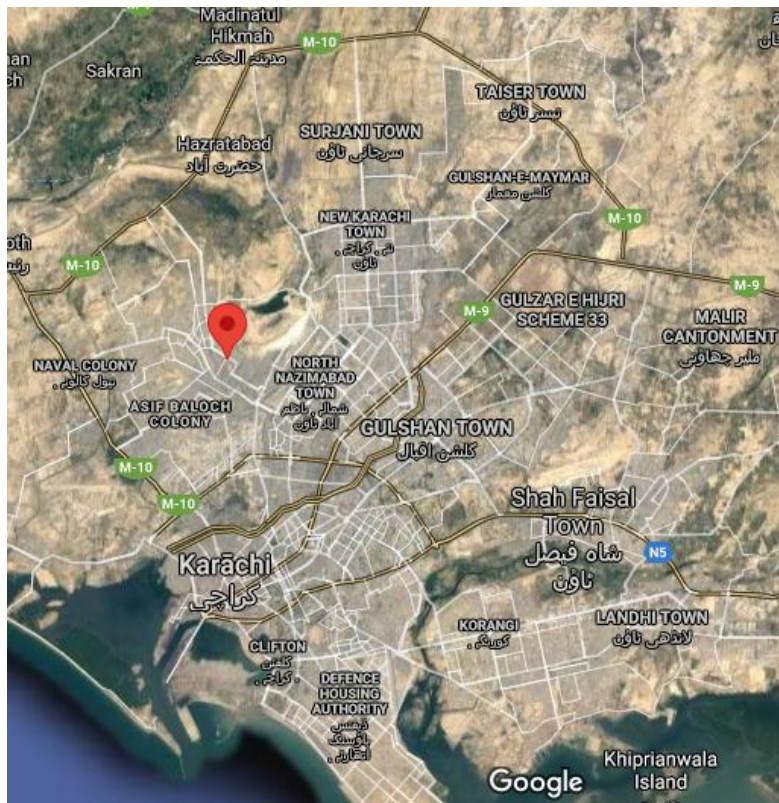
4.2 Orangi Town

Figure 5: Map of Karachi with Orangi Town in the northwest (Google Maps, n.d.)

Orangi Town is an informal settlement situated in the northwest of Karachi. The official population of the district is around half a million (Dekh Pakistan, 2021), although the actual figure is thought to be higher than this, going up to 2,4 million (Tribune.pk, 2016). The settlement was first inhabited by immigrants from India called Muhajirs who arrived after partition in 1947. Then, in 1971 many immigrants arrived from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and in the 1980's Pashtun and Balochi people also settled in Orangi, leading to ethnic tensions and violence (Gayer, 2003).

Orangi was first settled by people who bought the land from middlemen who had a strong relationship with the police and Karachi Development Authority (KDA) officials. The middlemen usually had already divided the land into sectors and lanes. This structure is still visible today. Though Orangi Town is considered an informal settlement since it was built informally, and not all of it has been regularized, it is more structured and less dense than most urban 'slums' (Tovror, 2011). In the beginning, the settlement did not really have any infrastructure such as electricity, water, sewerage or paved roads. Usually, homes were small at first and people then incrementally expanded them (Hasan, 1998). Most inhabitants of Orangi worked as construction workers, factory workers, labourers and shopkeepers (Hasan, 1998).

Figure 6: Map of drainage systems in Orangi Town (Hasan, 2006)

4.3 The contemporary situation from a New Urban Agenda perspective

'Let me say that, yes, there are projects, but this is not a priority with the government. The poor are no longer a priority. They were a priority, they're not a priority anymore' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The first subquestion is '*What is the current situation in Karachi's informal areas regarding the focal points of a UNHabitat agenda for urban areas?*', thus using the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda as a guideline for analysis. The visual data in the form of the seven videos has been used to cast a light onto this situation. For example, the quality of housing and presence of infrastructural and social services can be observed from these videos, providing insight regarding the first subquestion. Additionally, for answering this subquestion as well as the other ones, in-depth interviews were conducted with two experts on the subject. Though the results will be presented along the lines of the four dimensions of the New Urban Agenda (social, economic, environmental and spatial sustainability), there are two general findings that should be mentioned first regarding the situation in Karachi and its informal areas.

4.3.1 Two important phenomena in the Pakistani urban environment

First of all, an important finding concerns the diversity of informal areas. It is hard to make blanket statements because settlements differ greatly in their origin, physical form, demographics and degree of development. When we use the local Urdu word *katchi abadi*, Hasan explains that these are officially only the settlements which have been built on government-owned land. However, the term has been widely used to describe any informal settlement in both public and academic

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discourse. He states: *'It depends on what you mean by katchi abadis. Strictly speaking, katchi abadi is a settlement on government land which has been marked for regularisation. Regularization means its inhabitants have been given, at least in theory, the right to ownership.'* … *'So that is what a katchi abadi is, but we use the term katchi abadi for most informal settlements'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).[1] Furthermore, informal settlements differ in the problems their inhabitants face concerning land ownership. This comes forth from the difference in historic origin. Hasan describes two main types: one is built on former agricultural land. The landowner divides the land up into many plots and people buy these plots to build their own homes. Hasan says about this type: *'What is the largest kind of informal settlement in Pakistan is born out of the subdivision of agricultural land on the periphery of the city. Agricultural land is divided into small little lots and sold to people over here. There is no problem of security of tenure. Because you buy that land legally from the landowner and you get it registered in the records of land ownership'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). The second type is different, he states: *'But in case of a katchi abadi, you have problems because you are… you have no papers, you have no registration, except an informal one between someone who occupied that land without legal... without legality and sold it to you'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). The problems that arise with this second type of settlement will be discussed further in the section on social sustainability. This distinction is important to make, but in the case relevant to this study, Orangi Town, it is mainly built on government-owned land and can therefore be seen as a 'real' *katchi abadi*. This brings with it its own set of problems, as will be laid out later.

Another general finding which plays a very important role today is the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting lockdown measures on the people living in informal areas in Karachi. Since March 2020, the inhabitants of Karachi have been living through a constantly transient and unpredictable maze of regulations and lockdown measures. This has created big problems for many people, especially those working in the informal sector. Sirajuddin also emphasizes the disastrous impact the pandemic has had on the livelihoods of this group and their ability to build better environments for themselves:

> *'Since covid all, all the work is facing problems, and now the people are... if they want to expand their money, they want to construct their house, it's not easy, OK, because the lockdown timings, the temperature, the COVID and the SOP's. (...) Yeah, this is the additional problem, but at the same time, people are trying to build, trying to manage their time, trying to manage all the things. But overall the construction of units, construction... have reduced. Particularly in the COVID'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

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[1] Quotes from the interviews have at times been slightly altered purely for the purpose of readability. In doing so, careful attention was paid to maintaining the intended message of the respondent. As such, changes are small and usually only consist of one word being removed or added respectively.

Figure 7: (Lack of) mask-wearing in Orangi during the Covid-19 pandemic. (V7, A. Jamil, 2020)

4.3.2 Social sustainability

The first dimension of the NUA is social sustainability. As described before in the theoretical framework, social sustainability is achieved when cities engender a sense of belonging and ownership among their inhabitants, enhance interaction and social cohesion and when all inhabitants' needs are sufficiently met (UNHabitat, 2020). When we look at the information given by the interview respondents and the data from the observation, the findings are twofold, and social sustainability is both present and not present to varying degrees in Orangi Town. On the one hand, local experts say that the city is not really inclusive and that low-income communities are especially underserviced and overburdened. According to Hasan, part of the reason for this is that the poor are not a priority of the government regarding urban planning and development. *'Let me say that, yes, there are projects, but this is not a priority with the government. The poor are no longer a priority. They were a priority, they're not a priority anymore'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

Moreover, they say that the stark segregation of areas on a spatial, ethnic and political basis is present and has been for a long time (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). For example, Hasan says that Akhtar Hameed Khan, the founder of the Orangi Pilot Project, an NGO involved in the development of Orangi Town using a highly participatory work method, *'had come to a conclusion long ago that we were living in a period of... uhm, both physical and social fragmentation and disruption'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021) This social fragmentation points to a change in society towards becoming less inclusive and more segregated. This widens the gap between groups on grounds of ethnicity, income, etc. and leads to inequality in the degree of development and participation in the wider urban area. Sirajuddin has witnessed the same trend in the local politics of Karachi, saying:

> *'As you know, as you know, the Karachi main… ten years before the political party, political party activists. They used to decide what we do because they have the… at the time the MQM was in power. So they never discussed it with a single person of the community: 'What is your needs? (…) And after that, now the People's Party and PTI, because they are elected, elected or selected, you know [laughs], the power is converged over there. The same pattern*

is continuing. There they are feeling shy to discuss with the low income community what is your needs, what is…' (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

The same process is again highlighted by Hasan later on in the interview. He says: *'The ambience of the city has changed. A divide has been created between the working class and the middle class. The problems of the middle class... working class are no longer the problems of the middle class'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). This has led to less social cohesion and a decrease in activism in middle class circles to help the working class. The question arising here however, is whether this same divide is present within informal areas such as Orangi Town, since this whole area is largely low-income people, and thus a class divide might not be present inside the settlement.

Another major issue facing the inhabitants of *katchi abadis* is land tenure rights. In Orangi Town, the majority of settlements, though not all, are regularized by the government. That is to say, the people living there have been given a lease for the land. However, still some people face issues regarding their rights to land. For example, Sirajuddin explains how people living alongside Orangi Nala, as well as other *nalas* in other parts of the city, are being evicted and their homes demolished to widen the *nala* as a reaction to urban floods in August 2020 (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). They are not given a replacement home and more often than not are also not or inadequately compensated (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). According to the respondents, the problem here is that the government is very slow in granting the 99 year leases needed to legally own land. Moreover, even those who have land tenure rights are not always exempt from evictions and demolitions (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). According to Hasan, all of this again comes forth out of the low priority lower-income communities have in the eyes of the government. Moreover, it is essential to have good connections with government officials in order to speed up the process. Sirajuddin mentions this, highlighting the seemingly irrational character of government service provision in the city:

> *'Yeah, no, no here in Orangi 90 percent of people took the land ownership with the government. Because the 90 percent area is regularized by the government and people got the lease with the KMC in katchi abadis. Yeah, so, they have the land rights. OK, but the government to regularize they took time, many time. Although the people are able to pay on current basis, but the government, because the government is… took time, why, we don't know [laughs]. (...) But the government, the servants, they are extremely lazy person, they use… they know that they have the government job and who can push them, nobody can push them, nobody can jobless them. So they are very lazy and they are not want to provide the facility on a priority basis. Their priority, their priority is bribe rather than the work'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

So, he says that a very large portion of Orangi is regularized. However, the settlement is completely informal in its origins and partially still is in terms of land tenure. Moreover, the respondents say that the provision of services is by and large still not undertaken by the government, and is thus an informal undertaking. Add to this the fact that in spite of land rights, inhabitants are still not always secure and are still at risk of evictions, and one can see that the settlement can still be considered an informal one (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Figure 8: A colourful street in Orangi Town (V7, A. Jamil, 2020)

The respondents go on to mention the prevalence of corruption and the role it plays at every level of government. *'The corruption rate is very high. So five to 10 percent the contractor, next five to 10 percent is accuracy level and then political level. That means one housing project if they're going to execute or construct. That means it's ten or fifteen thousand. This is very… the corruption rate is very high'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Here, the phenomenon of political patronage plays a major role. The respondents elaborated on a policy mechanism which is widely used and very important to the development of *katchi abadis*, which is the Development Fund. This is allocated to projects personally chosen by Members of the National Assembly and Members of the Provincial Assemblies of a particular constituency. Hasan states: *'So with that fund, they build a road, they build a water pipeline. They arrange for some leases of their closest associates, that sort of thing happens'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). According to the respondents, however, these projects are usually not chosen in an objective or fair manner, as Sirajuddin says: *'They decide for themselves, they never said, but when the time of election, they are trying to begging for votes. So this is the pattern here'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). So the MNAs and MPAs allocate the Development Fund according to what is in their best electoral interest. Since many settlements in Karachi are strictly segregated along ethnic and political lines, some groups in settlements are always at an advantage and some are excluded from much of the development money. Sirajuddin continues with a hypothetical example of a problem arising with the public sewerage system in a lane in a *katchi abadi*, saying:

> *'Even, even, even I am telling you, if one manhole was clogged, and one single person who had not any belonging to any political party goes to a union council and asked the councilor for one sweeper, they tell 'this time is not available when he will come and I will tell you.' So that so many times they… what we… they asked the councilor and finally after that, the people they hire privately. They pay pocket money, their pocket money to pay them and sweep their one or two manholes'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

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On the other hand, it is too simple to say that there is absolutely no availability of public services and no social interaction within the area and between areas in the city. On the contrary, from the observation it became clear that there is indeed a presence of infrastructure such as paved roads and electrical wires. Moreover, schools do exist everywhere in Orangi Town, but Sirajuddin critically notes about education: *'usually the student goes to the private school and somewhere madrassas like religious education, but mostly people send their kids to the private school for the education. So the government role in the development is very few'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). Generally speaking, access to services is there, but limited in scope and availability, and oftentimes facilitated on a self-help basis, as will be further elaborated on in the next chapter. Informally, social interactions are also quite lively on Orangi's streets with children playing cricket, people sweeping the street outside their homes and groups of men chatting.

Figure 9: Street life in Orangi Town (V1, A. Jamil, 2021)

The observation also revealed, on the other hand, that there exist many barriers to social sustainability in Orangi Town. One major element is the inequality of women. In the streets, though female children are roaming around and playing at times, women are quite a rare sight. Literature also speaks of unequal relations between genders in Karachi and Pakistan in general, and also makes clear the age distinction regarding women. Female children are usually allowed to go out, as is also demonstrated in the observation. However, when they reach the age of marriage, and when they eventually get married, they do not usually mingle outside without a male family member. The near absence of women on the streets begs the question how they live their lives in this settlement. From the interviews, it became clear that many of them also work, although in different sectors from men, such as textile factories and the packaging industry (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Moreover, infrastructure for other marginalized groups such as disabled or elderly people is nearly absent in Orangi Town when analyzing the videos. This element of social sustainability is therefore not achieved, but cultural norms regarding tight-knit families in Pakistan might compensate for this in terms of care.

As stated previously, there are major differences between different settlements, their history and their problems. This difference also manifests itself in a difference in the degree of participation in city planning and in the development of a settlement. Hasan says that some *katchi abadis*, usually

the older settlements, possess a sizable number of community leaders who can represent the settlement and its inhabitants in the political and planning process of the city. These *katchi abadis*' inhabitants use their community representatives to voice the problems and difficulties they are facing, and constraints that they face in overcoming these issues. For other, newer *katchi abadis*, the problem is different: *'But then you have other katchi abadis that have new migrant populations. Their problem is to survive. Their problem is to get a piece of paper which gives them an identity'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). In this sense, migrant populations face far greater difficulties and precarity than those who have been living in Karachi for a longer time. Newer residents appear to be stuck in a 'hand-to-mouth' system, and the amount of social mobility and socio-economic advancement of these communities is limited.

4.3.3 Economic sustainability

The second dimension of the New Urban Agenda is economic sustainability. Regarding this topic, one of the main findings coming forth out of the interviews is the fact that land speculation is a major issue in Karachi. Hasan explains a shift in the politics of urban planning and development in Karachi:

> I: *'And is this in a historical context, more or less than it used to be, like the power of money in development?'* Arif Hasan: *'Oh, it's much more! Much more. I think, up to the almost up to the mid '90s, the ethos of development was that of a welfare state. Today, the ethos of development is not a welfare state, it's of a free market economy, so that change has taken place. Before you used to have planning, we used to plan. Now we have projects, wherever money comes from, wherever anyone wishes to invest, you have a project. The term used is direct foreign investment'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

Hasan then continues to explain how he has identified three changes as a consequence of this shift in politics in Pakistan. The first change is the shift from planning to projects, Hasan says: *'Projects have replaced planning. And those projects don't have to have anything with social reality at all. They don't have to have anything to do with poverty. They are investments, from which money is made'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). This change points to a shift towards privatisation of development, and a major example of this will be presented later in this chapter. *'The other difference is the increase in the political power of the developer. So the political parties, and neither the right wing nor the left wing nor the center. They are all with the real estate lobby'* (Arif Hasan, 2021). This means private developers do not only possess economic means, but also political power to exert over the development process. Thirdly, *'land has become a commodity. It's something just like gold was a commodity and you hoarded gold, to be secure. Now you hoard land to be secure. So land is becoming something you hoard, it's become an economic asset. So there's large scale speculation like that in Europe also now, large scale speculation'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). So, development in Karachi largely happens on a project basis, not a holistic, integral planning vision for the city. Moreover, private parties make money from these projects and politicians from almost all sides are heavily involved with these private parties. This process has led to a great degree of land speculation. The prevention and mitigation of land speculation is a core principle of the dimension of economic sustainability in the New Urban Agenda. In this sense, Karachi fails to achieve this dimension of the New Urban Agenda. Hasan goes on to explain the historical origins of land speculation in Pakistani cities:

'Much of this money that has been used for real estate was the result of the Afghan war. Yeah, the Afghan war was financed by the Americans and by the West through heroin money. They didn't put their money. The heroin trade, I can give... There are my writings on this, the heroin trade generated billions and billions and billions of dollars. Which was invested in the Afghan war. By the West and by us also, I mean, we are part of the West, we were no better. (...) And what could you do with that money? As they say, you had to make it white. So what you did was you invested it in land. And once you control the land, you were ready for a real estate boom. Because you also had the money to build and the money to hold onto before selling' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

He goes on to talk about the consequences this land speculation is having in practice nowadays.

'If you look at Karachi today, you have about approximately 300.000 plots lying vacant. Which have not been constructed upon and are not going to be constructed for a long time to come, and you have more than 100.000 apartments lying empty, which have been completed, they lie empty. And you have another, you have another hundred thousand apartments plus that are under construction, so this is all speculation' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The implications of this speculation also affect inhabitants of informal settlements. Not only is the price of land increased, but public development funds are also allocated to these speculative projects and away from developing services for informal urban dwellers. Moreover, speculation increases the uncertainty of tenure in informal settlements according to Sirajuddin. He says that evictions along *nalas* such as Orangi Nala are not only used for hazard management and flood prevention, but also to capture the land the informal settlements were built on. He says: *'The uncertainty it is, is the main thing in like this kind of areas, because I said in different nalas, the government, they demarcated 100 feet or 120 feet on both sides. What was their hidden plan? Hidden plan is to capture the land. To take the land, because there, the land value there is higher'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Moreover, regarding land speculation and privatisation of development, the biggest current project is the construction of Bahria Town just outside Karachi. The respondents started talking about this project without being asked about it, emphasizing its importance today. Hasan says about this project: *'Most of Bahria Town is speculative, it's not a genuine response to people's needs, because the needs are for low income people whose average income is about 30.000 rupees a month. Bahria Town doesn't cater to them. So in that sense, it does not cater to the poor. It caters to the upper levels of the lower middle class, yes. But not to the lower levels of the lower middle class and to the working class'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). And also Sirajuddin speaks about Bahria Town: *'That is like Bahria Town, DHA phase 9. Like many cooperative societies for the richest, for the richest man. For the richest. Because they have the planned [plots]… and the low income people cannot live there'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). It also appears that since most development is happening on a project basis and caters to middle and high income groups, very little resources are left to develop lower-income areas. Hasan says that many of the services in Bahria Town are not provided by the Bahria Town company, but by the government: *'You can't not have services provided by the*

government. Water is coming from water sources, state water sources, which are being developed specially for Bahria town. Electricity is another item, uh, which will be provided and is being provided partially by the electric company. Transport is being provided by the private sector. So, no, it's not all provided by Bahria Town [company]' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). The scarcity of resources in Karachi, especially water, means that unequal distribution can lead to certain areas facing shortages or lack of access to services.

Figure 10: Small-scale economic activity in Orangi Town (V3, A. Jamil, 2021)

From the observation, it became clear that Orangi is a largely residential area. The limited economic activity that exists within the settlement is mostly local markets consisting of general stores, furniture stores, mobile phone stores, and stores selling food and groceries. Although some industry exists in the form of local building material stores. The stores are many times informal, but not always, since there also exist official branches of Pakistani banks, such as in Iqbal Market in Orangi Sector 11 1/2. In the city of Karachi, however, the formal and informal economies are highly intertwined. They do not exist separate from each other, but work together. Hasan says:

> *'Today, the formal sector employs the informal economy and the informal sector. For instance, cloth is made in a textile mill. But the packaging for that cloth is made in the katchi abadis of Karachi. The cylinders and spare parts of machinery are made in the formal sector factories, but the gaskets are made in the katchi abadis of Karachi. So you can see how much slowly over time... how a lot of items that the formal sector used to manufacture are now made by the informal sector, the so-called informal sector, and they work together'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

This cooperation between formal and informal has both advantages and disadvantages according to the respondents. On the one hand, it creates a lot of opportunities for employment, also for the people living in *katchi abadis* such as Orangi Town. However, Hasan also states an important downside of the integration of many informal elements into the formal economy: *'Most of Karachi labor, for example, industrial labor, is contract labor. It is not properly employed, never. So it's*

informally employed. Which deprives it of the right of association, deprives it of the right of representation, et cetera et cetera' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). In this sense, the striving principle of the New Urban Agenda concerning formalizing labour seems like an important solution. Generally speaking, though, *katchi abadis* form an essential part of the Karachi economy and urban fabric: *'They work as drivers, as labour in the building industry, they work as artisans. Their women work in the packaging factory, in the garment factories or as domestics in middle class homes. So they are very much a part of the economy of the city. If you ask them all to go on strike for 10 days, the city will stop functioning'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

4.3.4 Environmental sustainability

Regarding environmental sustainability, problems exist in Karachi and Orangi. For example, waste management issues were visible from the video observation. In V5 (1:30), a pile of garbage can be seen on the side of the street. Moreover, a puddle of sewage leakage is seen on the right side as well. The frame is shown in the figure below.

Figure 11: Solid waste and leaking sewage pipes (V5, A. Jamil, 2021)

Waste management comes forward as a recurring environmental hazard in Karachi. In V1, for example, piles of ash can be seen where households burn their own waste. The government does not have the capacity to pick it up in the entire city. Another problem concerns the *nalas*, which were touched upon many times in the interviews. Since the local government does not have or allocate the resources to pick up all the municipal solid waste in Karachi, a lot of it ends up in the *nalas*. This leads to urban flooding, as Sirajuddin states: *'We saw that in an urban flooding last year, they have not their budgets to clean the clogged nalas and they have not the means to unclog the natural drains or nala'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Moreover, the effects of climate change pose a great threat to Karachi. This is especially true in terms of water security. In Orangi, water scarcity is a problem many households are already facing. Sirajuddin explains that households are paying their dues, but still receive a very limited amount of water: *'These people are pay all the things like tax, water tax, because initially they purchase water from the water tanker, the water tanker they use. Later on, the government provides the supply line.*

But in supply line, they supply the water, one or two hours after the one month or two month' (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). In this sense, access to basic needs is hampered by environmental and political/developmental factors. All these environmental issues lead to health hazards and decreased quality of life.

4.3.5 Spatial sustainability

The last dimension of the New Urban Agenda is spatial sustainability. Regarding this dimension, there currently exist many problems in the informal areas of Karachi. Once more, however, major differences exist between settlements. As Hasan says: *'There are those who have homes who want their homes improved. There are those who are living on the street and want a piece of land they can temporarily call their own. So there are different levels of settlements'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). He goes on to say that the majority of *katchi abadis*, and this also goes for Orangi Town, are older settlements which have been here for the last 30 or 40 years. Sometimes more than two generations. More than 62% of Karachi's inhabitants live in *katchi abadis*, and of this group more than 60% fall under these older settlements (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

In Orangi Town, there exist major problems regarding access to services. It has been like this for as long as the settlement has existed, but it has improved over the years due to various reasons. In the beginning, Hasan tells us about the founder of the Orangi Pilot Project: *'The people told him [Akhtar Hameed Khan] that their primary concern was sanitation. But sanitation was far too expensive for the people to pay for it. And the government did not... had no plans of developing it. And people had to survive without a sanitation system'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Also problems exist with regard to other services, as is the case in many informal settlements all over the world. This includes water, sanitation, education, health. Hasan explains the consequences of this:

> *'If you have no sewage and bad water, you have bad health. If you have no public space and no recreation, you have bad health. If you have no security, are always worried about being bulldozed, you have bad mental health. Your settlement is just far away from places of work, so you have to travel and everyday pay the cost of it, spend four hours coming and going. So you are constantly under stress, especially if you are a working woman. (...) Yeah, and density, very high densities. Those very high densities, again, means suffocation. It means overcrowding. It means bad household relations. So you have that problem of higher densities'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

As said before, though, perhaps a bigger problem than any other public service is land tenure. As Hasan clearly states: *'So there is a problem, their biggest problem is one of tenure. One of ownership, one of security, and we have noticed that when you have security, the settlement improves'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). The constant uncertainty about whether you will be evicted in the near future or not is perhaps the greatest factor causing stress and hampering development in the *katchi abadis*. Sirajuddin also speaks about this: *'And everywhere the people is facing the uncertainty, uncertainty, because when the people… when the government will come will evict by the name of megaproject? The uncertainty it is, is the main thing in like this kind of areas'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). Due to political reasons outlined earlier (corruption, patronage and privatisation), the regularization of *katchi abadis* is still a slow process.

'...in theory, we have the laws in place for regularisation. In practice, no, it's something that over the last 15 years, 20 years, I would say, has gone on a back burner. Before, these were priorities with the government, but with neoliberal policies, the poor really don't count. (...) It [the government] doesn't regulate katchi abadis. No, it's not being addressed. The laws are there but it's not being addressed.' I: *'Not at all?'* Arif Hasan: *'No, not at all'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

According to Hasan, there are three primary ways for the land tenure issue to be addressed in practice. The first way can only work for very large settlements, of which Orangi Town is one. Here, simply because of the size of the settlement, the government is hesitant to go ahead and completely demolish it. According to Hasan: *'So it's too big, so it's frightened, so it lets it be. Which is the... which is the case in Karachi of many settlements'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). The second method of security is by going through the official legal system and getting your house leased: *'If it's a katchi abadi and you have... it has the right to acquiring a lease then you pay the lease money and you pay the bribe money and you get your house leased for 99 years. That gives you a security'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). This method is quite difficult, however, since sometimes it takes over one year to attain and sometimes it is not even granted after this time. It is very time- and energy-consuming for inhabitants of informal areas to face these government institutions (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). Lastly, the third method of providing security is through political patronage: *'That you get the protection of some political party. And, you know, the roots of that political party are securing that settlement so that political party prevents you from demolition'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

Figure 12: Leaking sewage in a lane in Muslim Nagar, Orangi (V2, A. Jamil, 2021).

This first chapter of the empirical findings started by briefly laying out the context the research took place in and some of its historical background, and then described the situation in Karachi's informal areas. The results were presented in accordance with the dimensions of the New Urban Agenda. It appears that Karachi is a divided city on many grounds: income, ethnicity, length of stay in Karachi and gender. Moreover, development seems to be largely driven by corruption, patronage and private investment expressed in speculatory development projects. The main problems of residents of informal settlement concern land tenure and lack of public services. The next chapter is a

continuation of the presentation of the empirical results. This second chapter dives into the presence and potential effectiveness of processes of participatory planning as executed in Karachi, as well as how the experience in Karachi might be extrapolated to other Global South cities. As such, it serves to help answer the second and third research subquestions.

5. Community participation in Karachi and elsewhere

In this second empirical chapter, the research findings regarding the second and third subquestions are presented. The chapter begins with findings concerning what might be learned from the processes of development of the informal areas of Karachi and the way participation by the local community was used or not used in this process. Hereafter, findings are presented with regard to the knowledge and experience from Karachi, and the potential application of community participation in the development of informal urban areas in other cities in the Global South with a similar presence of urban informality.

5.1 Learning from participatory planning in Karachi

> *'What is sustainable is when the community takes over the ownership of what is being done and partially funds it. And has the leadership that can negotiate with the state'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

For answering the second subquestion '*What can we learn from participatory planning processes as implemented in Orangi Town, Karachi?',* the information coming out of the in-depth interviews will be the main source of data. First of all, the way participation is being or has been applied in Orangi Town will be laid out. Then, the importance of communication between stakeholders to facilitate successful participation is emphasized. Finally, the problems, barriers and pitfalls of participation as identified by the respondents are summarized.

5.1.1 Application of participation by NGOs

In Orangi Town, several NGOs are active which use various forms of participatory approaches to development. The respondents were knowledgeable about and involved with the Technical Training Resource Center and the Orangi Pilot Project respectively.

The Technical Training Resource Center (TTRC), which Sirajuddin founded in 1997 and still runs, is an NGO which gives community youth training to aspiring urban planners. Most of its activity takes place in Karachi West district, where Orangi Town is also situated. They provide a technical education regarding engineering for quality low-cost housing, and also give classes on community involvement and participation, as well as area mapping (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). Moreover, the TTRC has conducted surveys and mapping projects such as the documentation of flood management solutions since August 2020. In recent years they have also become involved in community-based sanitation development in Orangi. When discussing the kind of education the TTRC provides, Sirajuddin says about the balance between technical and communicative education:

> *'Both are mixed up. Mixed up, because we started the technical education thing, but now, like community based organization, we are linking each other. This is not technical. This is purely social and community development related work. So since last three or four years, we are involved in this kind of work. Like since last year, three major nala: Orangi Nala, Gujjar Nala and Mehmoodabad Nala, we call the Manzoor Colony Nala. So these are totally technical and social both'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

One of the main problems facing inhabitants of *katchi abadis* is attaining land tenure rights and building permits. The TTRC helps local communities by making maps of the area and specific housing units. Sirajuddin explains how this process works, some problems faced and the solution they came up with:

> *'In housing we provide to the community, the low income community the housing survey, basic map, basic architectural map and designing and and trying to support them. But the people, when... they don't understand the map. So usually we involve, we interact with the masons, local masons who are involved in the construction on. So, in this side... our involvement is on both sides, like house owner... and, if the project is going to execute and started the construction. You also involve... our involvement with the interaction of the local masons, local labour, trying to convey the map'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

He goes on to explain the importance of the maps the TTRC makes:

> *'So the map is very important because after the construction. They cannot change their plan. It will take time, they waste their money usually. So this is very important before construction, before they are housed, they can find the problem in the paper. So this is very important. So where should be the placement of the room, the kitchen, the toilet, the bathroom, the living area. So this is very important for them. This is also after the mapping, they can conclude that there... or they can estimate their cost of construction.'*
> I: *'And so it can also be used, like the map can be used to prove that the way the house is built is legal and proper as well to the government?'*
> R2: *'Yeah, as I say, yeah. As I said, if you're making the RCC, the RCC reinforcement cement concrete building. So before they started paying the government, the people they come. Well, where is the lease document? Where is the map? OK. So they ask from them,...'*
> (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Apart from housing, the TTRC also facilitates the construction of sanitation. They do this as requested by a particular community, or on their own initiative depending on the project. They create a map of the existing infrastructure, height differences, number of homes, etc. Then they collect money from the community and they provide the construction labour, map and planned costs. Sirajuddin expresses the necessity of continual community involvement for a successful project: *'Because without the community involvement, community contribution, no project is success. Because if they invest their money, their pocket money, they will care, they will maintenance and they will use that'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). The main sewer lines are constructed by the government, and the TTRC together with the community lays down the smaller pipes in the lanes and to the houses. Sirajuddin says that this model is quite successful in Karachi: *'OK, so this is the component sharing: the government is doing in main and secondary and the community is doing the work. So this is not the cost-sharing work, this is the component sharing work. It is, the successful model here, particularly in Karachi'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Another NGO, which the TTRC actually originated from, is the Orangi Pilot Project. This project uses a set of principles to guide their development approach, generally based upon community self-organization, self-help and self-management. In the OPP, the community is more directly involved

than with most TTRC projects, which are more facilitating in nature. *'The Orangi Pilot Project is essentially a project of supporting communities to take control of their lives, manage and build and finance their own neighborhood infrastructure. Improve their schools, improve their homes. It's more about community empowerment and control of its life than it is about anything else'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). He goes on to explain that when the project started, its founder noticed a shift in society. This societal shift called for a new way of doing things, Hasan says: *'So new rules, regulations of human relations, new relationships had to be created.' (...) 'All this was done by communities earlier under a caste system and under a class system. Now, all that had gone so it had to be replaced by new ways of doing things.'* Through conversations the founder had with the local community (at this point participation was already a core part of this new approach), he discovered that the main issue the community in Orangi Town was facing was sanitation. He came up with a participatory solution to this problem, which is clearly explained by Hasan:

> *'So he told them that if you get together. And you finance... collect money and finance and technical and finance, the sewage system will give you the technical know how to do it and the tools to do it. Well, the conventional system was very expensive. That is when he brought me into the picture and he said, what can we do? And I said we will have to make the system affordable to the people. So we made it affordable by challenging the conventional engineering theory. Changing standards, changing the way things were done, that was my job, and it brought down the cost to a level that people could pay for it themselves. (...) It's more about the people coming together to do their own thing. And our job was basically to produce an affordable technology. And a methodology that would strengthen the community and bring them closer together'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The last part of the quote is perhaps the most important. The primary intention of the Orangi Pilot Project was empowering communities using the self-financing and assisted self-organising principles. *'It is a way of empowerment. What we learnt and what Akhtar Hameed Khan already knew was this, if people can raise money, if they can access money, and if they can decide on how to use it, they are already empowered'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Hasan further highlights the major successes of the project, but explains that the current political and economic climate in Karachi is an obstacle to the project's further success: *'It's a very special project, and it has changed the lives of about three to four million people. (...) And it and it would have gone much further and it still can go much further. It needs a little bit of fighting back to find its place and it can go much further'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). He also talks about participation nowadays, especially the limited but present amount of participation with official government development plans: *'I don't think that they participate, but they can participate in the annual development plan of the katchi abadi, or the union council. They can ask for certain types of projects, they can lobby for money for those projects. Yes, they can do that. That possibility is there'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

5.1.2 Communication is key

One element of development that is of crucial importance in the eyes of the respondents is communication. Sirajuddin explains the importance of communication in all development processes taking place in Orangi Town: *'Yeah, because, because when the government is trying to evict them, so we TTRC, and URC also are trying to communicate with each other to the people in the different settlements, community leaders that we are trying to communicate with each other'* (Muhammad

Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). Besides this communication between NGOs, community representatives and communities in different settlements, Sirajuddin explains that the organization is also continually involved with the local governments of various districts. The areas the TTRC works in are situated in three different districts, so communication with all these institutions takes up a lot of time. A wide social network and many connections are very important to get work done: *'First city level we are trying to communicate with each other like URC, is doing very good work... Urban Resource Center, the communication work. So we always engage in the different type of the meeting, different types of the workshops. So we are trying to expand our network, our communication through this channel'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Apart from striking connections with government actors, Sirajuddin also states the importance of connecting with community leaders and actors within communities. Here, it is essential to make these groups understand that the TTRC is an NGO and not a government institution. Oftentimes, people confuse the TTRC for being an organization working for the government, but, Sirajuddin says: *'After the meeting, after the communication, after the community leader conversation, they understand that no, this is not a government and this is an independent that they are working for the people or for the…'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

5.1.3 Problems and pitfalls

Though the strategies laid out by the respondents above seem effective, respondents indicated that there exist many problems with this approach. Notwithstanding these issues, they still support implementing a tinkered version of it. Hasan summarized four barriers: a psychological, social, economic and technical barrier. He explained that it is the job of the OPP to overcome these barriers. The psychological barrier means that local communities believe that services such as sanitation ought to be provided by the government. There exists a lack of feeling responsible and empowered to improve your own settlement. Secondly, in some cases a sense of community did not exist yet, since many inhabitants were recent immigrants from various places. Thirdly, It was very expensive to self-finance a sanitation system built according to the regular method. Lastly, most communities did not possess the technical knowledge to build a functioning sanitation system. He says:

> *'One was the psychological barrier. People said, why should we do this? This is something the government should do. So that psychological barrier had to be overcome. Second was the social barrier. People had to come together to do this work. Individually, a household could not do it, so they had to overcome a social barrier, the third barrier was the economic barrier. It was far too expensive to build a sewage system. So the costs had to be brought down to a level that was affordable. And the fourth, was the technical barrier that once you brought down the costs you needed technical know how you needed managerial guidance'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

He further goes on to explain that the psychological barrier was initially the largest one, but after some of the work was finished people saw the effects and the barrier disappeared: *'I think the biggest barrier was getting people to agree to doing the work themselves and funding that work. I think that's what the biggest barrier was, but once it fully developed and people saw, look, the world has changed just by making the sewage system in these few lanes, then the barriers were removed'*

(Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Moreover, in the beginning people were investing their own money. The problem that arose here was that they had no technical guidance, and nobody could tell them what to do or not to do since it was their own money. *'So in the beginning, they took a number of decisions that did not work out. That created problems for them. And so our job was to tell them, look, these problems you are encountering because of A, B and C. So once we tried to... explained that the other people did not create those problems for themselves'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Finally, practical problems were also present in the implementation of Orangi Town. An obvious one being the absence of water in Orangi, making the construction of a working sewage system more difficult. *'So we had to devise methodologies whereby we could separate the solids from the liquid and let just the liquid go into the system. So all these innovations, technical innovations had to be carried out'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Another technical barrier was elaborated on by Sirajuddin, who said that the hills in Orangi Town created problems with sewage in some parts. The TTRC provides solutions to this practical barrier: *'So where we are involved, we are trying to provide a level machine. We are trying to level properly, we guide them and somewhere we use the hand level for the proper'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Another problem with participation is that it is simply very hard for low-income people to find the time to actively participate in the planning process. The daily struggle for income, long commuting times and other stresses make it hard for the inhabitants of informal settlements: *'they're so busy that they hardly find time to do this. Get up in the morning, you know at 7:00, you come back at eight o'clock at night, you can't do very much'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Furthermore, self-financing is a nice principle, but it can be very precarious and can create a lot of uncertainty. Sirajuddin explains: *'Because when the people are building their house. So they invest their whole life money. OK, and sometimes they save their money, sometimes they took the loan from their relatives. Sometimes they invest... they sold, after they sold their goods and maybe then or before they saved'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). Building a home is an enormous investment for many people in informal areas and it comes with a high risk. That is why NGOs are necessary to assist and facilitate to make sure less things go wrong. As Sirajuddin also states, it is imperative that there is a strong civil society.

> *'Civil society should be strong. Because this is kind of the people that divided by the languages basis: you are Urdu, you are Pashtun, you are Muhajir, you are Pashtun, you are Sindhi first. And then some sectarian division also, Sunni, Shia, this and that. So civil society should take a stand themselves. Without the civil society, because we are paying all the... we are paying tax, we have right to ask them 'where is our money?''* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

Hasan adds a nuance to the importance of NGOs, and emphasizes the need for non-governmental organizations which involve the local community: *'You know, there are NGOs which don't involve communities that give something to the communities without involving. Those are not sustainable things, they die, when the funding stops they die. What is sustainable is when the community takes over the ownership of what is being done and partially funds it. And has the leadership that can negotiate with the state'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

Finally, a problem Hasan identifies is the need for NGOs to facilitate participation, particularly in the Karachi context. *'NGO's are rather pathetic things, unless they are big grand NGO's, which have*

regular funds of their own and who can survive on their own and work on their own, which is rare. Very rare' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). NGOs are malleable, unstable and unsustainable according to this respondent. But until today, it is virtually the only route through which any participatory development process has been implemented. A barrier to participation with government projects is the lack of transparency also highlighted in the previous paragraph. Sirajuddin says about this: *'Yeah, absolutely, because there is no any monitoring thing. OK, nobody can ask with the MNA/MPAs how, where the… how many amount you allocated, for which purposes. Nobody can ask. So this is the main problem here, yes. And even the designing/planning, they're usually not share… they are usually not interested to share with any people'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021).

5.2 Lessons for different spatial contexts

'Let it be. Let it breathe and grow. Give it support to survive' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The last subquestion '*What can the findings from Karachi tell us about developing informal areas in other cities in the Global South?'* must also be answered in order to draw conclusions to answer the main research question. The respondents were asked about informal settlements in a more general context and how they might be improved. The respondents shared their thoughts about what they think the future of informal urban areas will be like. Hasan looks back on the history of informality and projects the changes that already happened into the future. He says:

> *'At that time you used to call... the undocumented economy was known as the black economy. Then when it grew and expanded a little bit, it came to be known as the unregulated sector. When it expanded a little bit more, it got to be known as the informal economy. I think that the next stage is, it's going to be known as the people's economy. So slowly it becomes more and more respectful, respectable over time'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The increasing presence of informality has led to the discourse to change as well. Moreover, this increasing presence will lead to more and more integration of the informal sector in the formal sector. *'I think the informal sector is going to become closer and closer to the formal sector with the passage of time. And it's possible that they'll become one subsequently in the next 15, 20 years'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). According to Hasan, this integration is inevitable, and policing and regulating urban informality is neither effective nor desirable:

> *'You know, if you are obsessed by having rules, laws, regulations. Which require policing. Well, it's not going to work. The scale of need is far too long for big. You can keep crying. The attempts that have been made by successive governments of regulating things, you can't regulate things. It's too big and you have too little money or too little resources, human resources, as well as financial resources. So how can you regulate them? You can't'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

When asked what the government should do regarding informal settlements, Hasan says perhaps the best thing to do is nothing. A policy of no interference in the affairs of informal settlements, and instead a more supportive and facilitating role of government: *'Leave them! We can leave them, let them be, they're not saying anything to you. Why do you want to fight them. Leave them. Regularize*

them, make the process of regularization easy, simpler. It's the right of each neighborhood to manage itself. Over 10, 15 years these will become institutions and things will be comparatively better. (...) Let it be. Let it breathe and grow. Give it support to survive' (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). The respondent also adds that this is the best strategy, since informality is an inevitable consequence of a government's inability to provide adequate housing, jobs and services to its inhabitants. It is therefore not sustainable to fight this phenomenon.

> *'If you don't give them what they need, what they need, they acquire themselves. They needed homes, you didn't give them home, they aquired it themselves. They needed water, you didn't give them water, they found water themselves. They needed transport, we didn't give them transport, they found it themselves. And they created a whole world of jobs also. So it's a living thing, a city, it's not a dead thing'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

As previously explained, a main problem lies with the government allocating resources in an unjust and/or inefficient way. This comes forth out of the major influence of powerful interests who own the Pakistani and urban economy (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). *'The reason why we have accepted... accepted neoliberalism. It's not because we love neoliberalism, it's simply because that is how the world is. (...) The elite of Pakistan are part of the neoliberal system. The other part of the global economy. And the people of Pakistan are the victims of that economy and of the elite'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). According to Hasan this is not exclusive to the Pakistani government. He explains his experience with other countries and the problems that lower-income communities face in those countries and what barriers exist to their development. He names India, Nepal, Thailand and Cambodia among other places, and says:

> R1: *'There's strong similarities... also differences, and they all have equally bad governments. And there's not much to choose between them. They don't really care about their people.'*
> I: *'Is that the root of the problem, do you think?'*
> R1: *'They all used to... I don't know about everyone but India, they used to care about them. They stopped caring now, the market is supposed to care for people. Governments don't have to care for the people, markets have to care for the people. So the market cares. If it cares then it cares. If it doesn't care, it doesn't care'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

Another problem Hasan names regarding the development of lower-income settlements is a lack of vision regarding the future of not only how to handle urban informality or informal settlements, but a vision on the city as a whole: *'If you have no vision, then how on earth do you have a political movement? You can't. Vision is... vision is missing,... Vision is missing in India. Vision is missing in Sri Lanka. Vision is missing in Nepal. It's missing everywhere, there's no vision, it's all opportunism'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). When asked what might be a potential solution that could not only work in Pakistan but also in the other countries he named, he said a major political shift is necessary, also encompassing a changed foreign policy and a turn away from neoliberalism. *'Where we work towards acquiring an independence of the great powers who bully us all the time. We need that independence if we are to have a true people's government. Right now, we don't have that independence'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). Here again, the theme of subaltern urbanism returns. Moreover, he thinks that politicians ought to have more power and sovereignty than they have right now. That is to say, less influence from lobbying groups and private actors and more democratic

accountability. Thus, these politicians should be able to take a stance and should be *'able to make their people understand that they have to help the politicians change things, alter things. But for that, you need a vision first, you need some sort of vision'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The participatory approaches as described in the previous chapter may be applied to different contexts as well. The respondents say their experience with development practices in Karachi can provide useful insights regarding other cities with a presence of informal settlements as well. Sirajuddin explains how his organization has been involved in other parts of Pakistan, such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province when they conducted an urban flooding survey with local inhabitants: *'We worked in also, the disaster in 2010. Heavy urban flooding in the KPK. Heavy flood. And after the rehabilitation, after the rescue, we studied in three provinces the local construction. In the cyclone, which kind of houses they save, in the flooding more than 10 lakh they fazed one house and how did they save? Their construction is not damaged, we documented all the Balochistan, Sindh and Punjab'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). The TTRC nowadays is involved in surveying the *nalas* in Karachi in order to minimize evictions. In this area as well, Sirajuddin thinks other places can learn from the organization's work: *'So, nowadays we are engaged in the urban flooding for the nala survey and after that we will be able to teach them. Also different community-based organizations and my experience in how the organization runs, all the things. Particularly in technical and community-based work we will be able to teach'* (Muhammad Sirajuddin, p.c., 2021). From the Orangi Pilot Project, lessons can also be drawn and principles taken over regarding informal settlement development. Hasan says: *'[The OPP] has been implemented. Its principles have been implemented, not the project itself. It's principles yes. South Africa, Cambodia, it has yes. (...) It's not a complete blueprint, it's principles. Locally, the conditions are different, so naturally the project will be different, but the principles are the same'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021). He further elaborates that the OPP's principles have been taken over by an organization called The People's Dialogue in South Africa, by organizations such as Slum Dwellers International and by an Urban Resource Center in Cambodia. All of these were fairly successful in general, but also faced their own barriers and pitfalls.

6. Conclusion

> *'If you have no vision, then how on earth do you have a political movement? You can't. Vision is... vision is missing. (...) Vision is missing in India. Vision is missing in Sri Lanka. Vision is missing in Nepal. It's missing everywhere, there's no vision, it's all opportunism'* (Arif Hasan, p.c., 2021).

The quote above explains that one of the key things hampering development of cities is the lack of a vision for the future of cities in political circles in the Global South. This lack of vision results in erratic development which is not holistic in nature and mostly relies on project-based private investment. This will be elaborated on later in this chapter. This chapter serves to answer the main research question *'How might participatory planning produce alternative approaches to developing informal areas in cities in the Global South?'* A summary of the results from the previous chapter linking back to the theoretical framework will be given following the order of subquestions. First of all, a brief overview of the current situation and problems in Karachi's informal areas will be given. Secondly, the way community participation has been applied in Karachi's development will be outlayed along with barriers faced. Thirdly, the more general lessons that can be learned from Karachi and extrapolated to other cities are briefly summarized. Finally, a conclusion is given to answer the main question.

6.1 The current situation in Karachi's informal areas

The situation in the *katchi abadis* of Karachi was studied and analyzed within the framework of the core dimensions of the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda. The four dimensions are social sustainability, economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and spatial sustainability (UNHabitat, 2020). As became clear in the theoretical framework as well as from the interviews, it is quite hard to define informal settlements clearly. Part of the reason for this is the fact that they are very diverse in nature, historical origin, demographics, and so on. When one looks at the informal areas in Karachi, one can see that they face many problems regarding the four dimensions of the New Urban Agenda.

In social sustainability, there has existed a lot of segregation in Karachi for a very long time. The divide between rich and poor, old and new inhabitants, and men and women is very clear, and women and immigrants are at a clear disadvantage in Karachi, which goes against one of the core principles of UNHabitat (2020). Moreover, especially lower-income residents of the city face great difficulties obtaining tenure rights. The government system which grants these rights is slow and often only works when fueled by bribes. Furthermore, many essential public services are absent or available in limited quantities in these areas, such as sewage, water, electricity but also healthcare and education facilities. Regarding economic sustainability, the most important phenomena are land speculation, privatisation of development and the relation between the formal and informal economies. Land speculation has made land less accessible for a large portion of the population in Karachi, especially lower-income communities. The privatisation of development has shifted resources and services towards profitable schemes which are usually not aimed at lower-income communities. Finally, the formal economy in many cases employs the informal sector, but the latter group does not enjoy many labour rights. Studying environmental sustainability, we find that there exist problems in Karachi's informal areas regarding waste management and sewerage. Moreover, the impacts of climate change, which Karachi is highly vulnerable to, are not equally distributed,

disproportionately affecting lower-income people. Again, this goes against the UNHabitat New Urban Agenda (UNHabitat, 2020). Lastly, when we look at spatial sustainability, we primarily find a lack of services and uncertainty regarding land tenure as the main problems. Generally speaking, all previously named problems are in one way or another maintained or worsened by the corruption that runs through the state apparatus in Pakistan. Additionally, a lot of the development that happens is facilitated by political patronage.

Thus, development along the lines of the New Urban Agenda is to a large degree not present in Karachi. Within the informal settlements especially, development largely takes place informally on a self-help basis. This brings us back to the informal settlement as a field of habitation with major limitations on livelihoods and complex and sometimes contradictory local politics, perhaps limiting the extent of development. The holistic dimensions of the New Urban Agenda do not appear to be taken into account by state actors in government institutions concerned with urban development.

6.2 Learning from participatory planning in Karachi

There are several projects in Karachi's informal areas, such as Orangi Town, that are using or have used participatory approaches to development. One of the key findings, which confirms the efficacy of using Arnstein's Ladder of Participation for measuring the degree of participation, is that communities taking ownership over new development is essential (Arnstein, 1969). Projects, such as the ones practiced and explained by the respondents, are highly participatory in nature since they allow the community to self-organize, self-finance and afterwards take ownership of the development. This makes it higher on the ladder. According to the respondents, development works more effectively when the community it is exercised in can participate more and in the end own the result. Moreover, respondents stressed the need for communication. This, again, was a theme in the theoretical framework, which emphasized the role of the planner as a mediator and a communicator between different stakeholders (Innes, 1999).

The research also shows that the barriers to participation in development are many, and some are complicated to overcome. The barriers are diverse in nature, some being technical, some psychological and some financial. Moreover, lower-income people, which are usually the inhabitants of informal settlements, often do not have enough time, knowledge or energy to participate actively in the development process. The respondents stressed the need for a strong civil society in order to compensate for this, but this also comes with its own set of problems. NGOs often have their own interests and their source of income is not always stable. Thus, some problems still remain.

All in all, perhaps the most important conclusion to draw from the research findings on community participation in Karachi, is the vital importance of communication in planning processes. Not only between government planners and community members, but at all levels and between all stakeholders: NGOs, different government institutions, community members, etc. This links back to the discursive democracy that Habermas conceived in his theory of communicative rationality, where the importance of communication to bring about successful policymaking is emphasized. The research found that government institutions in Pakistan are not always on the same page regarding development plans, so mediation and negotiation between these parties and other stakeholders is especially imperative in this context. Generally, negotiation appears to be intrinsic to virtually all

affairs in Pakistan. A more equal field of negotiation and communication is thus necessary for facilitating participatory processes that are more just and satisfactory for all stakeholders.

6.3 Lessons for different spatial contexts

According to the respondents, and reflecting on the literature study upon which the theoretical framework was based, participation is an important element of any development process, particularly in lower-income areas. The problems in Karachi regarding lack of public services, corruption and political patronage are present in many other places too. The respondents said that their knowledge and experience with participatory planning processes may be applicable to other cities as well. The research shows that participation may be an effective approach to empowering and developing communities in informal settlements. It may bring about better development outcomes and closer, healthier communities, although the same barriers named in the previous section also exist in other cities. A participatory planning approach may create a city which is more in line with the striving principles of the New Urban Agenda as formulated by UNHabitat. However, for it to truly come to fruition, political will must also be present to some degree in government spheres, as well as some sort of vision for the future of the city, as the quote at the start of this chapter makes clear.

6.4 Final conclusion

As previously said, participatory planning is a difficult and complex process, and every context requires a slightly different approach. However, community participation in development of informal settlements has shown to be quite effective in improving an area such as Orangi Town in Karachi. An important barrier to the success of development in informal settlements can be found at a greater, more geopolitical scale however. It appears from this research that international power structures and global political and economic do play a significant role in determining development approaches within countries. The research found that Pakistan is embedded in a global system which makes funds flow to private investment development projects and away from planned holistic development strategies. This links back to theories of subaltern urbanism, where especially lower-income city dwellers in the Global South are left behind in development, and where Global South states appear too weak to direct investment towards these groups instead of speculative private developments. However, still participation may be an opportunity to change this under the right conditions. If the political will and vision is there, and communities are empowered and can take ownership of the development of their own settlements, participatory planning can be a successful and just way to improve the lives of inhabitants. And not only in the Pakistani context, but it can also be applied in other cities. The NGOs that are active in Karachi have overcome many barriers they initially faced, and if other cities want to follow suit and also involve local communities more in the development process, they can learn from these experiences. However, inevitably new problems will arise, and in Karachi, many problems still have not been overcome. Notwithstanding, it is still an approach which might be more just and more effective at the same time.

7. Recommendations

This research revealed that community participation ought to be an important element of a development process. Especially in the setting of an informal settlement, having a certain degree of participation in the development process is important. However, such planning approaches are not without problems and barriers. This chapter serves to provide certain recommendations to policymakers, NGOs and other stakeholders so as to create a 'more' participatory framework for the successful development of informal urban settlements in the Global South.

First of all, an essential issue to be tackled is the rampant corruption in Pakistani politics. Working with the complex and negotiatory nature of Pakistani society, policymakers should seek to decrease corruption in government institutions. This has proven to be a hard issue to tackle, but it must be done in order to bring about a more equitable and fair society. Moreover, political patronage should be combatted since it by definition makes the allocation of resources and funds for development unequally and unjustly distributed. In Pakistan, a first step for doing this could be the abolition or reform of the Development Fund of the members of provincial and national assemblies.

Secondly, the research findings stressed the importance of communication and mediation between stakeholders involved in planning processes. Here lies a vital task for both government planning officials and NGOs. Their role ought to be a mediating one, serving to gather all relevant perspectives and attempting to bring these together in a just way. This new model of planning should be holistically implemented, and as such not only benefit wealthy or powerful actors.

Thirdly, the research has shown the importance of past NGO projects and actions for the development of Karachi's informal areas. These projects should be encouraged and expanded so as to reach more people in more settlements. In doing so, however, the principle of community empowerment must be given centre stage. From the research results, it appears that it is of vital importance that a community takes ownership of a development project. This way, the future success and maintenance of a project is safeguarded. Moreover, solutions for the barriers to participation as already identified in previous and present projects should be looked for. Here lies an important role for NGO actors who usually have a lot of direct past experience and might know how to overcome certain obstacles.

For future research concerning community participation in development of informal settlements, it would be useful to go to the settlements themselves and consult individual community members themselves. Their perspective may provide helpful insights and reveal more on the nature of social processes in these areas than an online video observation would. This was unfortunately impossible within the scope of this research, because of the Covid-19 pandemic and language barrier between the researcher and potential respondents. Furthermore, the current situation in the informal areas of Karachi, as this research describes it, can be explored much more exhaustively. Social relations, local power structures and microeconomics are all interesting and relevant topics that might reveal more regarding the (lack of) success of development and the local potential of implementing participatory planning processes.

8. Reflection

In this chapter, I evaluate the research process and evaluate what I could have done better or will do differently the next time I conduct research.

As for the research process, this went quite smoothly from the start. I have been passionate about the topic from the beginning, so I was always very motivated to continue and finish this thesis. Of course, there are days (or weeks) when progress is very slow and you are stuck at a certain chapter, but I never really got so stuck that I had to start over because there was no way out. But of course, there are things that I would like to have done differently.

For example, I would have liked to interview a wider scope of respondents. I tried to get in contact with government institutions as well as members and representatives of the local community in Orangi Town, but unfortunately there was no response after several attempts. Moreover, some potential respondents, who would have been a useful addition to the data for this research, were automatically excluded because of a language barrier. Many people, especially in the local community in Orangi, do not speak adequate English and unfortunately my Urdu is also too limited to be able to conduct an in-depth interview.

But perhaps the hardest obstacle to overcome was the fact that local 'hands-on' fieldwork was impossible due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Offline interviews, interaction with local people in Orangi and real-life street observations would have been a great experience and a wonderful addition to this research, but are sadly not possible in these times. I think the research would have really come to life and would have been more useful for academia with fieldwork on the ground, but that will have to wait until my master's thesis. Despite these limitations, I am pleased with the end result and with the way I adjusted the research to still be valid.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Interviewguide Arif Hasan

Introduction
- Conversation being recorded
- I'm Simon Janssen, human geography student at Radboud University in Nijmegen, working on bachelor thesis (+topic)

Reason I want interview
- Your work on OPP, with URC and so on.
- Explain OPP and your role in this
- Are there any other organisations working in this type of field? Initiatives with citizen participation central role?
- Problems with the OPP?

- The main topic of the interview (katchi abadis, their inhabitants and their development)
- Settlement on government land marked for regularisation
- What are the main problems inhabitants of katchi abadis (such as orangi) are facing?
- These problems, how are they being addressed right now? Who determines what priorities are and how to bring about positive change/development?

- Development: How does it go? How should it go? How can it be changed? Who play a role in these processes? Who should have more/less power in these processes?)

- A more general question about informality in cities: How should we look at it (a curse, an opportunity or just a reality to be dealt with?) How should the government deal with it? Might there be a role for other stakeholders such as ngo's?

- To what degree can/do inhabitants of katchi abadis participate in the development of their areas?
- Would more citizen participation in development be more effective in creating successful development outcomes? Why/why not?

- Your expertise obviously lies in the context of Karachi and Pakistani cities. Do you think you have a lot to teach to other cities in the world/Global South? Is your knowledge of development of informal settlements/katchi abadis applicable and useful in other places as well?

- Do you perhaps know any other people who would be useful to my thesis, who are knowledgeable on this subject. One group I am specifically looking for which is quite hard to reach, is some community representative (mosque, other neighbourhood association) to speak to. But other activists, academics, experts would also be very helpful!

Appendix 2: Interview Muhammad Sirajuddin

Introduction
- Conversation being recorded
- I'm Simon Janssen, human geography student at Radboud University in Nijmegen, working on bachelor thesis (+topic).

Reason I want interview
- Recommendation from Arif Hasan + your intense involvement with local communities in the work your organisation does.
- Explain TTRC, how it was set up? What are its goals? How does it work? What is your role in the organisation?
- Purely for technical education and training of new planners and architects, or also a social initiative to train students how to interact with communities they are helping?
- I've read that mapping katchi abadis is an important aspect of the work you do. Why is this?
- Main problems you encounter with the TTRC?

- The main topic of the interview (katchi abadis, their inhabitants and their development)
- What are the main problems inhabitants of katchi abadis (such as orangi) are facing in your experience?
- All these things, you are providing them now, but shouldn't it be done by the government?
- These problems, how are they being addressed right now? How does your organisation try to improve things?
- Who built the limited infrastructure that is there? (street lights, paved roads, etc.)

- In the development of katchi abadis here in Karachi, who decides what is done in terms of development? (Who decides what gets built and what not?). How to bring about positive change/development regarding this decision making process?
- When we think about development of katchi abadis, what does that look like? Development: How does it go? How should it go? How can it be changed? Who play a role in these processes? Who should have more/less power in these processes?)

- To what degree can/do inhabitants of katchi abadis participate in the development of their areas?
- Would more citizen participation in development be more effective in creating successful development outcomes? Why/why not?

- A more general question about informality in cities: How should we look at it (a curse, an opportunity or just a reality to be dealt with?) How should the government deal with it? Might there be a role for other stakeholders such as ngo's?

- Your expertise obviously lies in the context of Karachi and Pakistani cities. Do you think you have a lot to teach to other cities in the world/Global South? Is your knowledge of development of informal settlements/katchi abadis applicable and useful in other places as well?

- Do you perhaps know any other people who would be useful to my thesis, who are knowledgeable on this subject. So far I've talked to you and Mr. Arif Hasan. Other activists, academics, experts that you know would also be very helpful!