Norwegian Habitat Policy

Perspectives on urbanization, the city and human settlement patterns in Norwegian development aid

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Abstract

The post-war decades have witnessed an increasing urbanization of poverty, as well as the growth of informal settlements connected to cities of the global south. While the scale of on-going urban transformations pushes development actors to take positions , Norwegian development aid has received mounting criticism for acting 'spatially blind'; too conservative in its perceptions regarding urbanization, and too reluctant in its approaches to urban growth.

This thesis investigates how urbanization, the city and human settlement patterns have been conceptualized in Norwegian aid throughout the post-war era. Focusing on bi- and multilateral engagements in the periods between the three international Habitat Conferences, I exemplify ways in which urbanization has been perceived and examined, and discuss the potential path-dependencies existing within Norwegian aid. My investigation indicates that aid continues to be constrained due to historical engagements with the subject, and that historical path-dependencies have lasting implications for Norwegian habitat policy perspectives. A qualitative analysis of key documents and a set of expert interviews suggest that anti-urban bias in Norwegian aid has been strengthened on the basis of four overall factors.

Firstly, urbanization and the developing country metropolis continues to be conceptualized as a double risk: a risk to socio-environmental limits and a security risk that increases with major city growth, and a risk of benefitting urban elites or privileged groups—rather than those in need—when prioritizing cities. Secondly, even as most population growth in developing countries occurs in cities, the methods used to capture development challenges remain insufficient at describing urban forms of poverty and urban-rural linkages. Highlighted in the literature, and supported by findings urban development challenges are placed largely outside the mapped field of aid. Thirdly, with increasing urbanization and urban engagements since the millennium, Norwegian aid has considered urban growth as an 'inevitable' process involving economic growth and a transition to modern societies. From the metropolis being perceived as a non-traditional and un-natural element, urbanization has been, somewhat, re-framed as a 'natural' process of modernization—understood in isolation from countryside transformation and informal livelihood. The final factor to consider is that urban management and planning continues to exist as an academic and professional field on the side-line of development practice. Broader than the

Norwegian case, the inaptitude to critically explain urbanization and urban phenomena and the reluctance to engage in integrated urban management, leaves the task to under-funded cities, agencies, civil society organizations, and local groups.

Preface

In the fall of 2018 I was employed as Programme Management Support Intern at UN-Habitat's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP), based in Fukuoka, Japan. The project I engaged with the most concerned an intervention in Mongolia's capital, Ulaanbaatar. Flood Resilience in Ulaanbaatar Ger Areas, or FRUGA, intended to develop urban infrastructure designed to deal with issues of flooding and overwater in high-risk nodes throughout the sprawling semi-informal Ger-areas, which characterize Ulaanbaatar. I thought it would be interesting to write a thesis on the case, the unique attributes of the Mongolian metropolis, the involved Ger-areas, and the challenges involved in the policy intervention. I developed a field-work-dependent project in 2019. Shortly after, the world entered into a year-long lock-down with on-going repercussions and I shifted my attention to the Norwegian development aid complex, questioning its concepts of urbanization and engagements with urban questions.

A number of individuals are worth mentioning for their support in towing this ship ashore. David, thank you for invaluable guidance along the way, and for always being invested in the topics at hand. The summer student crew roaming the halls of Harriet Holter's Hus (you know who you are!), thank you for social support, and the occasional pass-time beer. Thank you to the interview participants, who were vital in landing and discussing the topics here. Karl Otto, who coincidentally is both my father and also quite brilliant on the topic of cities. And Erik, whose long-time engagement on urbanization and aid brought fire to my academic stove of half-baked ideas.

Abbreviations

BN = Basic needs

BCR = Brundtland Commission Report

CA = Cities Alliance

CPRD = Centre for Property Rights and Development

CSF = Civil Society Forum

CSO = Civil society organization

ERP = Economic Recovery Program

GLTN = Global Land Tools Network

GRHS = Global Report on Human Settlements

GWOPA = Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance

HDI = Human Development Index

HIC = Habitat International Coalition

HLCLEP = High-level Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor

HN = Habitat Norway

HTM = Harris and Todaro's Model of migration

IG-UTP = International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning

IDG = International development goals

ILD = Institute for Liberty and Democracy

IYSFH = The International Year of Shelter for the Homeless

KLD = The Norwegian Department of Climate and the Environment

KMD = The Norwegian Department of Local Government and Modernization

MDG = Multilateral Development Goal

MFA = The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MFIs = Micro-finance institutions

MPI = The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index

NBBL = The Norwegian Housing Cooperation

NMCA = Norwegian Mapping and Cadastre Authority

NORAD = Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

NTNU = Norwegian University of Science and Technology

NUA = New Urban Agenda

NUH = Norsk utviklingshjelp

ODA = Official Development Aid

RBM = Results Based Management

SAP = Structural Adjustment Program

SDG = Sustainable Development Goal

SIDA = The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

SN = Shelter Norway

SSU = Sites and Services Upgrading

SWCR = The State of the World's Cities Report

THB = Tanzania Housing Bank

UAT = Urban age thesis

UBT = Urban bias thesis

UDD = UN Development Decades

UiO = University of Oslo

UNMD = United Nations Millennium Declaration

UNCHS = United Nations Centre for Human Settlements – the Habitat Centre

UNGA = United Nations General Assembly

UNH = UN-Habitat – The United Nations Human Settlements Programme

UNDP = United Nations Development Programme

UNEP = United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC = United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

USAID = United States Agency for International Development

WCED = World Commission on Environment and Development

WCR = World Cities Report

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1. Research topic

Development challenges in Ulaanbaatar Mongolia are symptomatic of those facing cities worldwide, including the increasing number of people residing in informal and substandard settlements both within and outside urban perimeters. As illustrated by the literature on 'planetary urbanization' and the 'global urban condition', processes of urbanization are increasingly transforming and altering the structure of societies, globally and across urban-rural divisions.[1],[2] Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are expected to see the largest urban transformations in the coming decades.

Acquisitions and expropriation of rural resources such as water, agriculture, and energy have been connected to land dispossession, altering occupational patterns, and increasing urban migrations. The financialization of property markets globally has contributed to increasing exclusion in cities, exacerbating informal settlement growth.[3] Today, socio-spatial exclusions within cities are exacerbated by rising socio-economic inequality within and between cities, and by the accelerated rate of disasters linked to climate change, weak urban management and policies neglecting the poor—all of which principally effect residents in informal areas.[4] From once being primarily associated with housing needs, informal settlements in central and peri-urban areas today make up a complex and urgent inter-related field of humanitarian issues.[5],[6] Informal settlements are currently estimated to hold over 1 billion of the world's population.[7] Thus, urbanization trajectories represent a major challenge to the preservation of human rights, and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Even so, development aid donors and institutions seem mired in traditional ways of thinking. Few large agencies prioritize urban management or planning in their approaches, few donors include collaborations with urban-based organizations, between cities, or in research, and the

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[1] Neil Brenner, 2014, *Implosions / Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization.*
[2] Brendan Gleeson, 2014, *The Urban Condition: Questioning Cities.*
[3] Raquel Rolnik, 2019, *Urban Warfare - Housing Under the Empire of Finance.*
[4] Anele Horn, 2020, "Reviewing Implications of Urban Growth Management and Spatial Governance in the Global South," pp. 452.
[5] Anders Ese, 2014, «Uncovering the urban unknown: mapping methods in popular settlements in Nairobi."
[6] Allen Adriana, 2014, "Peri-Urbanization and the Political Ecology of Differential Sustainability," pp. 520-22.
[7] United Nations Statistics Division, 2019, "SDG report on Goal 11."

overall coordination of aid funding remains largely targeted towards established sectors. According to Joan Clos, the previous director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme – UN-Habitat (UNH), challenges of urbanization "are supranational in nature" and will "require a shared vision and responses that are more flexible than they have been in the past."[8] Yet, the discussion of how relationships between urbanization and development aid should be conceptualized, and how actors should act on the basis of this conceptual understanding, continues. Norway remains one of the most stable supporters of the multilateral framework and international collaboration on development challenges.

In this thesis, I seek to examine the Norwegian development aid effort in order to understand its policy perspectives regarding urbanization, cities, and human settlement patterns in the global south. Path-dependencies owing to historical events have contributed to shaping ideals and strategies existing within aid policy. Through an analysis of key junctures in aid history, I investigate the epistemological conceptualizations of urbanization and settlement questions in Norwegian aid, shaping what can be referred to as Norwegian habitat policy.

A number of discursive arenas have informed the case at hand, illuminated by interviews with actors in the research environment surrounding the non-governmental organization, Habitat Norway (HN). The first arena exists on the level of the United Nations (UN) and is made up of three international conferences on human settlements: Habitat I in Vancouver 1976, Habitat II in Istanbul 1996, and Habitat III in Quito 2016. The three Habitat conferences have been central in raising discussions regarding urbanization within the international multilateral framework and are arenas in which Norway, and other nations, have had a strong presence and voiced opinions.

The first conference marked the beginning of international engagement on the topic of settlements, and of Norwegian support for the new Habitat organization within the UN. The Vancouver Declaration emerging out of Habitat I would be the first international agreement describing universal challenges and principles to be followed for national governments, in terms

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[8] UN-Habitat et al., 2018, *The Quito Papers and The New Urban Agenda,* pp. 3.

of controlling urban growth and handling various urban issues such as land use, employment, and housing. The two bicentennial Habitat conferences since have each resulted in their own agendas, recommendations, and policy commitments for participating governments. Norway has been part in shaping and following-up on the international agreements, Habitat declarations, and agendas that have emerged from the conferences.

The second arena consists of Norway's historical experiences with development aid in practice and its domestic articulation in white papers, showing changes in positions regarding human settlements, their distribution, and their linkages to overall development theory. These two levels have evolved in parallel and intersect at points, illuminating ways in which settlement-challenges have been encountered, discussed, and interpreted.

The third arena, Habitat Norway (HN), represents a lasting domestic critical engagement with Norwegian development aid since the organization's establishment in 1988. The organization has linked questions of human settlement to the cross-disciplinary field of urban and territorial planning, and the experiences of Norwegian practitioners in the field to challenges in the global south. The three arenas—the Habitat Conferences, Norwegian development aid, and HN—have served as holding points in order to build an understanding of Norwegian habitat policy perspectives. To further develop a research agenda, the following sections briefly introduce Norwegian involvement with urban development aid, the establishment of HN, and the recent two-fold critiques of anti-urban bias and urban positivism within development policy practice.

1.1 Norway's involvement in urban development aid

I have utilized the term 'habitat' to describe the topic of human settlements broadly, as including conceptions of urbanization, spatial distribution, and the city. However, 'Habitat' has more often been used as shorthand for UN-Habitat, which was established as an official programme within the UN in 2001. Prior to this, Habitat referred to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), also referred to as the Habitat Centre. The UNCHS was established as an outcome of Habitat I in Vancouver 1976, along with the coordinating United Nations Commission for Human Settlements. A significant contribution of Norway and the Scandinavian countries to global development cooperation has been their long-lasting support for multilateral

organizations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme UN-Habitat (UNH).

Akin to UNH's operational activities today, the UNCHS supported national, urban, and regional development programmes through capital and technical assistance. The Centre's main tasks have been to coordinate and follow up on commitments made through policy advice, research technical cooperation, awareness-raising and capacity-building. According to Erik Berg—who was previously employed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) with responsibility for the UNH collaboration—Norwegian development actors have played an "active and at times determinant part" in the work of the UNCHS, and later UNH, since their establishment.[9]

Published in the UN-declared 'International Year of Shelter for the Homeless' (IYSH) in 1987, the Brundtland Commission Report (BCR) instigated the establishment of the Norwegian domestic non-governmental organization, Habitat Norway (HN). That same year, the National Association of Norwegian Architects (NAL) held a conference on housing needs in the developing world and the potential role of architects and planners in solving the observed global issue of housing shortage and sub-standard quality. At this point, many Norwegian architects had been employed in Norwegian aid initiatives centred on East Africa in the post-war years. Provided in an article by Erik Berg, the original conference invitation reads:

> *We have built the country after the wartime destruction. We have developed a highly qualified planning regime for the building, renewing and managing of housing and urban buildings. We have to use our experience, our professional competence and our creativity in contributing to development in the Third World."[10]*

At the conference, a task group was appointed to establish a domestic independent organization concerning Habitat questions, which became Habitat Norway. The ambition of the new organization was to raise interest and understanding of urban challenges in the developing

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[9] Interview, Erik Berg, 15.01.2021
[10] Erik Berg, 2020, "Hvorfor Habitat Norge ble til og fortsatt (over)lever," pp. 32.

world—particularly concerning urban livelihoods, local economic development, housing, local development, and environmental concerns. An ambition since its establishment has been to relate Norwegian experiences in urban and regional planning, engineering, architecture, and systems of housing provision, to challenges in the developing world, and to build domestic competence on global urban challenges.[11] The overall mandate since HN's foundation has been "promoting the interest and awareness of global urban challenges and settlement issues."[12] An explicit goal has been to influence aid and development practice to prioritize human rights challenges in cities.[13]

Throughout Norwegian aid history, development policy regarding urbanization and urban issues has made up an "elusive urban agenda."[14] Norway's only official development documents connecting urbanization and development challenges are a perspective document in 2002 and a political strategy document on migration and urbanization from 2007.[15‘16] However, as Sven Erik Svendsen, one of HN's original founders, emphasized in our interview, "Norway has nevertheless been present with urban support over time."[17]

Actors representing the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the MFA have attended the international urban forums and engaged in their follow-up work, the most significant of these being the three policy-focused Habitat Conferences. Norwegian researchers and civil society groups have likewise engaged in the topics, with varying support and public funding. Following an evaluation of the Habitat Centre made in 1998, led by Per Menzony Bakken of the Norwegian Ministry of Environment (KMD), UNH has been the primary organization through which Norway has channelled aid for "urban purposes" and Norway has, along with Sweden, been one of the programme's largest donors. UNH is recognized as the only 'city agency' within the UN and fills this role primarily as a normative programme, distributing assessment reports on urban challenges, planning guidelines towards

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[11] Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen, 29.01.21
[12] Habitat Norway, "About Habitat Norway," downloaded 07.05.2021
[13] Interview, Erik Berg, 15.01.2021
[14] Marianne Millstein, 2013, "The State of Urban Agendas in Norwegian Development Research and Policy," pp. 381.
[15] NORAD, 2002, *Norad's perspective [on] poverty and urbanisation: challenges and opportunities*.
[16] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007, *Byer - håp og utfordringer : om by-utvikling og internasjonalt samarbeid*.
[17] Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen, 29.01.21

addressing them, and following up on country commitments.[18] Among other initiatives supported by Norway is the Cities Alliance (CA), established in 1999 by UNH and the World Bank (WB) in order to coordinate donor activity in urban areas—especially regarding the improvement of informal settlements.

Support for UN-Habitat and other urban initiatives has been dwindling. Though 108 million NOK was channelled to UN-Habitat's core and programme budget in 2010 and 2012, programme support was removed in the 2019 budget and core support was fully removed in the 2021 budget.[19'20] While the examples reflect some entry points, urbanization and urban development issues have not been seen as explicit themes or primary areas of concern by NORAD or the MFA. As I will return to, primary policy perspectives over time have been more strongly connected to rural sectors and rural challenges, shaped by engagements which have taken part in shaping aid's spatial orientations. In part, this corresponds to a long-lasting rural orientation among donors as a whole. In 2001, Kamete et al's evaluation report identified Norway as reflecting "the predominant position of the international donor community up until the present."[21]

The urban age and the 2030 agenda

During the last 30 years attention towards urban challenges within the international development discourse has increased rapidly, in concurrence with the rise in urban populations and the number of slum-dwellers globally. Urbanization and a global urban transition, in economic and demographic terms, is being presented as the vehicle through which ambitions of sustainable economic growth and resource management will be reached. The concept of an "Urban Age" has been utilized by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNH, and the World Bank (WB) to

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[18] UN-Habitat, "History, mandate & role in the UN system."
[19] NORAD, 2020, "Bistandsresultater: statistikk og resultater av norsk bistand."
[20] Habitat Norge, 2020, Regjeringen kutter tilskuddet til FNs Bosettingsprogram (UN Habitat).
[21] Amin Y. Kamete, Arne Tostensen, and Inga Tvedten, 2001, *From Global Village to Urban Globe - Urbanisation and Poverty in Africa: Implications for Norwegian Aid Policy*, pp. 68.

delineate a new paradigm of human development, defined by the exceeded tipping point in the ratio between urban and rural dwellers globally.[22]

The inclusion of UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 "Cities & Communities" in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals of 2015 was a broad recognition of urban challenges and potentials. With the aim to "make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."[23] The rejuvenated focus on urban challenges followed a concerted effort by UNH, among others, to raise the profile of urbanization and the slum issue in particular. Likewise, Habitat III, emphasized the central tenet that "no one will be left behind," suggesting that explicit action is needed to combat inequality and extreme poverty in order to increase the speed of development progress for those in need.[24] The New Urban Agenda (NUA) agreed upon at Habitat III marked the adoption of global policy guidelines to improve planning practices in reaching integrated ambitions of socially inclusive, compact, and connected urban territories. The strategies for improving slum conditions in the NUA rests on a range of solutions, but, importantly, marks the return of state-centric approaches to urban planning, alongside historical legacies and donor compromises regarding the benefit of market-oriented planning tools, self-help approaches, and sector-specific interests that have marked international urban policy.

The positive new outlook regarding the potential of urban growth have been met with criticism from a number of urban researchers. Barnett & Parnell view the enthusiasm for urbanization as connected to ongoing globalization processes driven by neoliberalism and criticize urban policy practitioners for overlooking the negative consequences of urban growth—especially growing issues of socio-economic inequality and exclusion in urban territories.[25] Researchers within post-colonial urban research, including Robinson and Roy, have demonstrated how contextual differences in urban growth across southern contexts challenge ontological assumptions of

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[22] Mark Montgomery, 2007, *United Nations Population Fund: State of World Population 2007: Unleashing the Potential of Urban Growth*, pp. 1.
[23] United Nations, 2020, "About the Sustainable Development Goals."
[24] UN General Assembly, 2015, "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."
[25] Clive Barnett and Susan Parnell, 2016, "Ideas, implementation and indicators: epistemologies of the post-2015 urban agenda."

growth. The authors seek to challenge the epistemological foundations of urbanization, as conceptualized in western-based urban theory. Rather than seeing the developing city as imposed from above, the result of hierarchical planning and national strategies, the focus is shifted to how urbanity is produced and mediated through everyday life and collective organizing within a terrain of social struggle.

A growing amount of literature is targeting the complex field of bilateral and multilateral development actors for neglecting to understand urbanization at a structural and spatial level, outside of its economic benefits under current neoliberal capitalism, and for largely continuing to maintain "blind spots for the spatial realm in general, and the related effects on the built environment in particular."[26] The lack in understanding of how urbanization patterns are connected to human rights, and the potentials of socially progressive transformation, has been connected to the underfunding of aid policy solutions for managing urban growth in equitable ways across the global north and south, and among aid practitioners.[27] Integrating some of these concerns in a broader conceptualization, Brenner & Schmiid frame urbanization in its current form as larger than individual city or settlement growth. 'Planetary Urbanization' refers to globalized cumulative processes based on urban systems, mediated by modes of regulation by various state institutions at a range of spatial scales.[28] Referring to Harvey, social movements pressing for rights across unequal contexts are seen as qualitatively connected to the changing form of urban development and directly related to the projects that make up urban development.[29]

1.2 Research agenda

The objective of my research is to discuss the knowledge basis and determining factors underlining Norwegian habitat policy. The scope of the thesis as such is not to assess the quality of Norwegian or multilateral development aid practices in terms of their effectiveness at reaching goals on the ground. However, I believe this research can contribute to the current push towards

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[26] Sascha Delz, 2018, "Towards an Integrative Approach to Spatial Transformation," pp. 3.
[27] Berg Erik, 2016, "FN og urbanisering - fra boliger til bred utviklingsarena."
[28] Neil Brenner, 2014, "Introduction: Urban Theory Without an Outside," pp. 18-19.
[29] David Harvey, 2014, "From Cities to Urbanization," pp. 62-63.

broader conceptualizations of development challenges particularly related to urbanization trends and settlement challenges, with implications for the competency of development collaboration. This objective has led to two primary research questions.

Primary Research Questions (RQ)

I.   How has the Norwegian development agenda conceptualized urbanization and settlement distribution, and how does this reflect the historical evolution of Norwegian habitat policy?

II. What are the primary limitations of Norwegian habitat policy in regards to the critique raised, both in theory and by development aid actors?

Epistemology refers to the general theories of scientific knowledge regarding the world and its social practices: how knowledge is produced and how we come to know what we know.[30,31] In the first research question regarding how Norwegian development aid has 'conceptualized' settlement distribution and urbanization, I specifically seek to establish the epistemological spatial assumptions underlining practice. Epistemic processes of spatial knowledge production can be regarded as context-specific, meaning that in addition to being 'embodied' in institutions, expertise, and social norms, the articulation of knowledge is 'embedded' and defined by socio-geographical context. [32]

Within the field of urban research and urbanism—including urban sociology, urban and regional economics, and urban and territorial planning—there exists a range of epistemological assumptions that have developed through research practice and practical experience. Enquiring epistemology thus entails locating and questioning the foundations of spatial knowledge production, and the criteria utilized for establishing valid knowledge across scientific paradigms and research traditions.[33] These can relate to the causes of urban growth, what spatial forms

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[30] Norman Blaikie, 2007, *Approaches to social enquiry : advancing knowledge,* pp. 13.
[31] Tim Cresswell, 2013, *Geographic thought: a critical introduction,* pp. 277.
[32] Ahmed Z. Khan, Frank Moulaert, and Jan Schreurs, 2013, "Epistemology of Space: Exploring Relational Perspectives in Planning, Urbanism, and Architecture," pp. 289.
[33] Ibid.

urban growth can take, and what social phenomena stem from urban growth. This approach can be regarded as 'historicist.' In the Marxist tradition of the term, I seek to understand and interpret a social phenomenon by locating its emergence(s), which can hold the keys to understanding its current form and future development. As such, RQ I seeks to locate where and how questions of settlements have been encountered and in what ways these have informed development ontologies, ideals, and strategies. The ambition as such is not to claim the direct influence of experiences with settlement questions on Norwegian development aid, but to locate underlying assumptions regarding spatial relations within a cross-scalar discursive environment where ideas emerge and agendas have been promoted.[34]

Knowledge practices, ideals and strategies in the field of Norwegian habitat policy are the subject of critique from actors including HN, critical research communities, as well as aid practitioners themselves. The identified limitations of aid relate both to divisions in approaches to theory, historical contingencies, and other factors rooted in the specific practice of development. RQ II is formulated in order to discuss potential shortcomings within spatial ontologies, ideals and strategies regarding urbanization within development aid, in relation to the critique raised by actors connected to HN, and critical factors developed in a theoretical framework. The next section provides a general research approach to enquiring these questions.

1.3 Research approach

This investigation of Norwegian development aid as it relates to urbanization can be characterized as a qualitative research project. As David Harvey notes in the 09' edition to his influential work *Social Justice and the City* from 1973, his ambition then was to discuss how the profession of geography could contribute to radical societal change through a critical and in-depth understanding of socio-spatial relations and the issues and causalities behind them, in a given context.[35]

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[34] Björn Hettne, 2009, *Thinking About Development: Development Matters,* pp. 9.
[35] David Harvey, 1973, *Social Justice and the City.*

The "spatial turn" in the social sciences and humanities of the 1970s opened up for new perspectives and for incorporating the significance of the spatial realm and the built environment in order to understand social issues. In *The production of Space,* Henri Lefebvre proposes a reading of spatiality that includes its social and political production:

> *There is an ideology of space. Because space, which seems homogeneous, which appears as a whole in its objectivity, in its pure form, such as we determine it, is a social product.*[36]

Later utilized by Harvey, Brenner, and Peck among others, the dialectical proposition is that spatial structures cannot be properly read without considering their associated social structures. In connection, social structures are practiced in, and produce, spatial formations including urban locales and associated settlement patterns.

The case in question

The research philosophy of critical realism emphasizes the socially generated character of knowledge. Observable data, as it appears, is deemed insufficient to explain phenomena in full and is understood to be shaped reciprocally by underlying social mechanisms or structures at various levels.[37] Social structures or mechanisms are understood as both historical and path-dependent social products that function as frameworks of practice for actors to work within. The social mediation of knowledge, and its links to spatial production, form a basis for the questions raised in Neil Brenner's recent research on urbanization processes, which has influenced my research approach:

> *How are worldwide urbanization processes, past and present, mediated through political and institutional strategies? (…) What are their implications for spatial organization, resource distribution, power relations and political life? What, if any, alternatives to contemporary urbanization patterns have been envisioned?*[38]

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[36] Henri Lefebvre, 1991, *The production of space.*
[37] Hubert Buch-Hansen, 2005, *Kritisk realisme.*
[38] Brenner, 2014, *Implosions / Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, pp. 478.

Research focusing on epistemic ways of spatial knowledge production has been credited to a 'relational' concept of space. Relational understandings reference both the relations between historical events, or aspects of them, and their social interpretation. As argued by Khan et al, space can be seen as a co-product of historical proceedings, and the socio-political determinants of spatial form. Epistemological experiences, ideals, and strategies related to urbanization processes and cities within development aid can therefore be understood as inherently linked to the social production of space.[39]

This thesis can be considered an in-depth case study, as it takes the form of a detailed investigation of a phenomenon over a longer time-span, in order to explain the historical determinants of current aid policy perspectives.[40] The case in question refers to the differentiated agenda on human settlements present within Norwegian development aid, its epistemic fundamentals, and its ideals and strategies visible through key events and junctures in the post-war era.[41] The qualitative approach is chosen in order to understand how one nation comes to relate to human settlements and urbanization in development aid. This is done by analysing its historical contingencies, its relation to the international urban agendas, and its experiences with relevant initiatives, which connect with the formulation of aid policy.

1.4 Thesis structure

Chapter 2 builds a context for understanding the particular Norwegian aid project by briefly outlining the establishment of aid institutions, its practical organization, and some of the primary research perspectives utilized to understand 'determinants' of aid policy in the development literature. The chapter also locates a practical definition of aid and delineates areas of relevancy for analysis.

Chapter 3 conceptualizes three fields of theory relevant to understanding aid's multifaceted relationship to urbanization, the city, and human settlement patterns. Theoretical divisions

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[39] Khan, Moulaert, and Schreurs, 2013, «Epistemology of Space: Exploring Relational Perspectives in Planning, Urbanism, and Architecture," pp. 290.
[40] Alexander L. George, 2005, *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences,* pp. 5, 8-10.
[41] Jamie Baxter and Susan M Jack, 2008, "Qualitative Case Study Methodology," pp. 544.

regarding the cause and consequence of 'the urban transition' have had effects on urban and territorial planning, as well as development practices tackling urban questions. Secondly, recent critiques of 'settlement bias' among development aid practitioners have targeted both the employment of urban bias theory to understand urban growth among donors—the utilized method of capturing and locating development challenges—as well as the employment of outdated, isolated concepts of urbanization and the city in relation to other settlements. Lastly, building on critical and post-colonial urban theory, the chapter describes notable alternative and transformative conceptualizations of urbanization with potential consequences for aid.

Urbanization processes are illustrated as (i) inherently uneven and unequal, (ii) differentiated depending on context, and as (iii) conductive of transformative change. The discussed concepts provide a theoretical framework for the further elaboration of research questions and the development of hypotheses. Chapter 4 subsequently outlines how theory is applied in analysis and discussion chapters.

Chapter 5,6 and 7 consists of an historical analytical review of aid policy perspectives in order to discuss the relations between spatial theory and development aid since the second world war, with a focus on processes leading up to, and resulting from, the three Habitat Conferences. Norwegian aid perspectives are placed both in historical context, and in direct relation to evolving international developmental discourses that run parallel to the international conferences on human settlements.

Chapter 8 is comprised of a concluding discussion reflecting on the findings, potential path-dependencies and determinants of Norwegian habitat policy, and the primary identified factors limiting development aid policy. The chapter raises questions as to whether improved theoretical frameworks regarding urbanization processes could improve development aid trajectories.

Pre-emptively, it should be noted that interviews with actors currently or previously engaged as activists in Habitat Norway have been central to locating relevant events and junctures in aid history, opposing perspectives, and rationales of decision-making within a contested and often

pragmatic field. Further analytical and methodological elements are detailed under research design.

1.5 Positionality and research ethics

A commitment to writing this thesis comes both from the experience of working at UN-Habitat ROAP, and from my current role as board member of Habitat Norway (HN). The two organizations have no formal relation, but cooperate regularly on events, seminars, and dissemination of publications. Governmental cutbacks in the multilateral support for UNH and other organizations pressing for recognition of urban challenges are regarded as a setback to the work of activists in HN. According to George and Bennett, the choice of case study can be problematic if it is done purely on the basis of personal affiliations or connections.[42] I am aware of the risks to data bias both positions represents. Suffice to say, the choice of thesis topic has taken time and effort.

The enquiry of Norwegian aid is based on academic interest, professional experience and in part a political engagement to raise issues of settlement change and urbanization within the Norwegian development agenda. The HN board position has also been a door-opener to acquire participants in the study with relevant experience and backgrounds in the organization, or that have directly engaged in the field of Norwegian aid. Subsequent interviews with a variety of experts surrounding the HN organization's field have provided needed practical entry-points for research. Familiarity might enable a more reciprocal relationship with participants, potentially increasing their openness.[43] This brief disclaimer serves to inform of my entry point to the case at hand and presents a pre-emptive piece of reflexivity. Along with following the university's prescribed ethical guidelines and instructions for data management, continuous self-reflection on choices during the course of research will be key to achieving rigour. I consider the resulting approach academically relevant, and of interest to researchers and practitioners in the field.

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[42] George, 2005, *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*.
[43] Robyn Dowling, 2000, "Power, subjectivity and ethics in qualitative research," pp. 36.

2. Norwegian development aid in context

Since the establishment of the bilateral aid system, Norwegian development aid efforts have consistently been at an excess of 0.7 per cent of the national GDP. From 1960 until 2020, Norway alone has contributed approximately NOK 677 billion (USD 77 billion) to bilateral or multilateral aid purposes, with the 2016 budget containing an unprecedented NOK 33,6 billion, thereby reaching the established 1% goal.[44] Similar to the "UN-norm countries"—Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands—Norway has been labelled among the most efficient participants within international development cooperation.[45,46] The rise of Norwegian development aid transfers is emblematic of the post-war period as a whole, to the extent that Jarle Simensen in a 2007 article describes development aid as "(…) the single largest form of transfer of resources from developed to developing countries."[47] The policy is also symptomatic of Norway's consistently close relationship to the UN, and the domestic cross-political agreement on the utility of development aid as a whole.

The Norwegian aid project emerged in tandem with other state-led aid systems after the formation of the UN in 1949. Norwegian membership to NATO in 1946 and the country's apparent lack of a colonial legacy contributed to enthusiasm for the engagement. Adding to this legitimacy, both the ruling Norwegian Labour Party (AP) and the labour movement saw development as taking part in the work for international solidarity through supporting the broader project of social democratic modernization. In the establishment years of aid between 1945 and 1951, Trygve Lie of the Labour Party (AP) held the position as first General Secretary of the UN. Lie played a large part in establishing the lasting political authority of the UN. Norwegian governments since have been central in advancing international collaboration through the UN system.[48]

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[44] NORAD, 2021, «Norsk bistand i talll,»

[45] Richard T Griffiths, 2008, "Development aid: Some reference points for historical research," pp. 20.

[46] Maria Bulanakova, 2016, "Norway's International Development Assistance Policy in the Current International Environment: Mechanisms of Justification," pp. 47.

[47] Jarle Simensen, 2007, "Writing the History of Development Aid," pp. 167.

[48] Gyrd Steen, 2000, "FN – en bautastein i norsk utenrikspolitisk kulturarv. En kommentar til norske holdninger til reform av Sikkerhetsrådet," pp. 225.

In the 1960s, the challenge of emerging nations in Sub-Saharan Africa, and tensions between differing donor approaches, led to the creation of the OECD's Development Aid Committee (DAC) in 1961 for the coordination of aid flows.[49] At the foundation of NORAD in 1968, development aid became institutionalized upon an international aid system that had existed for more than ten years in addition to domestic experiences.[50] A brief context is relayed here.

According to Linné Eriksen, the Indo Norwegian Fisheries Project (INFP) would set the stage for the conduction of all later aid. This is because it provided key experiences that could be taken further and a baseline upon which the first evaluation of aid, the Engen Papers, was written. The Engen Papers would subsequently serve as the backdrop to the first major development directions outlined in White paper no. 23 (1961-62), and the evolution of the India Fund into NORAD's precursor, Norwegian development aid- 'Norsk utviklingshjelp' (NUH)- in 1962.[51] The INFP was first to set out main themes of the Norwegian aid system, with its focus on rural development and related development of primary industries in fisheries and agriculture. According to Pharo, long-lasting strategies and formative focus areas of Norwegian development aid were formulated in the period between the formation of NORAD in 1963 and 1985.[52]

Following the INFP, the first major country partnerships in East Africa are understood as particularly influential—especially in regards to settlement questions. The term "Tanzaphilia" is used by Mushi, among others, to describe the enthusiastic approval Tanzania, and its first president Julius Nyerere, received from Norway—which was reciprocated with" Nordiphilia" in Tanzania. This mutual admiration is symptomatic of the period's development optimism between recently independent countries in East Africa and Nordic donors. [53] Settlement perspectives were further embellished at the first Habitat Conference in 1976. The latter period would see the

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[49] Helge Ø Pharo, 2008, "Reluctance, enthusiasms and indulgence: the expansion of bilateral Norwegian aid," pp. 60-63.
[50] Griffiths, 2008, "Development aid: Some reference points for historical research," pp. 24.
[51] Tore Linné Eriksen, 1987, *Den Vanskelige Bistanden: Noen Trekk ved Norsk Utviklingshjelps Historie*, pp. 11.
[52] Pharo, 2008, "Reluctance, enthusiasms and indulgence: the expansion of bilateral Norwegian aid."
[53] Samuel S Mushi, 1995, "Determinants and limitations of aid conditionality: Some examples from Nordic–Tanzanian Co-operation," pp. 226.

continued evolution of settlement perspectives at the international level. This was driven in part by the World Bank's increasing role as provider of aid for urban purposes, the settlement perspectives raised at the Habitat conferences, and the increasing attention towards environmental question as part the global sustainability agenda.

Between 1983 and 1987, and in close collaboration with the UNDP, Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland lead the seminal work of merging environmental, social, and economic concerns in development.[54] The WCED - Brundtland Commission Report (BCR) of 1987, *Our Common Future*, first defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of today's population, without compromising those of future generations. The report was an acknowledgement of the risks to economic and social conditions that growth presented, and included a chapter on "the urban challenge."[55]

The period since the mid 1980s is also marked by a turn towards market-based solutions at a global scale, conceptualized under the term 'neoliberalism' and processes of 'neoliberalization', with various local and regional manifestations. In parallel, between the end of the Cold War in 1989 and the Millennium Declaration of 2000, Norway would establish itself as a humanitarian aid superpower. The Norwegian involvement on cities would also increase in the period post Habitat II in 1996. Adopted in 2015, the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) of Habitat III represent an important shift in international development policy thinking on cities, with a new focus on inequality and exclusionary urban and territorial development trajectories. Increased Norwegian support for multilateral development assistance follows the 2015 agenda towards increasing collaborative efforts in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). [56]

2.1 Determinants of aid policy

A range of potential determinants for the articulation and direction of aid have been identified within development research. These include but are not limited to, domestic political norms,

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[54] Morten Wetland, 2015, "Norge i FN," pp. 262.
[55] Gro Harlem Brundtland, 1987, *Our common future.*
[56] Bulanakova, 2016, «Norway's International Development Assistance Policy in the Current International Environment: Mechanisms of Justification," pp. 50.

varied institutional interests, interests of actors in the private sector, partner country political priorities, and external influences upon aid articulation. Stokke discerns three forces as determining for the Norwegian aid project, in particular:

First is the domestic socio-political complex, outlined as an overall domestic political alignment on welfare ideology and the extension of humanistic and peace concerns to developing countries. A second force is the administrative arena of aid, with the agenda to improve established strategies and sectoral interests, and to protect these from concerns outside its jurisdiction. The third force is considerable external influence exerted over time from the international development environment. Regarding external influence, three overall factors are outlined

    i.   The main regional organizations for development aid cooperation, such as the Development Assistance Committee (DAC),
    ii.   The main international organizations and multilateral agencies concerned with aid and broader development issues, including the Bretton Woods Institutions and the United Nations framework setting standards and drawing up longer strategies,
    iii. The major recipients of Norwegian assistance, including bilateral partner countries and multilateral agencies.[57]

Svenbalrud coins the specific Norwegian relationship to the UN in terms of its historic function as 'cornerstone' and 'ornament' of Norwegian foreign policy. The UN has served as a cornerstone due to a consistent belief among governments of the positive effects the UN has had for Norwegian economic growth and security. The legitimacy and rationale of development assistance has been served both due to a domestic moral significance, and the continuously stated close relation between national development priorities and targets of aid. Engagements in development assistance have likewise preserved Norway as a relevant player within international decision-making, capable of helping to converge aid assistance and other global strategies, which subsequently serve purposes of maintaining domestic security. The UN's function as political

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[57] Olav Stokke, 1989, "The Determinants of Norwegian Aid Policy," pp. 164-66.

ornament is more symbolic for how Norway has aspired to be perceived. Support for UN policies have served to:

> (...) create and polish an image of Norway as a moral, solidary and
> responsible state domestically and internationally."[58]

The apparent stability and predictability of Norwegian policy directions over time contributes to the reliability afforded to Norway. While principles of universal values have consistently been utilized to represent Norwegian foreign interests in the UN, Svenbalrud points to two areas where, in practice, other concerns have dominated. One of these is Norway's meticulous protection of national sovereignty over resources, such as marine rights, while advocating for restrictive principles internationally. The second is bilateral development aid. In practice, Svenbalrud argues that pragmatic selectivity regarding where and how development aid was to be directed would make up a larger concern than universal values.[59]

Tvedt's conception of a "southern political system" can be useful in gaining a deeper understanding of strategic considerations and motivations within aid. The southern political system captures a development complex connecting two distinct policy fields: foreign aid and development policies. Foreign aid has historically been a vehicle to primarily serve state interests. Alternatively, the field of development policies has sought, through research and practice, to effectively create different forms of development.[60] As such, the southern political system refers both to the particular national patterns of accountability between a humanitarian political complex and its national population, the interconnected flows of cultural and conceptual capital that circulate within the 'relevant' aid agenda, as well as how these are structured by changes in international policy and foreign policy. The southern political system can be used to frame a long-term term domestic and international system of providing aid, often referred to as the "Norwegian model" in development cooperation.[61]

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[58] Hallvard Kvale Svenbalrud, 2012, "Fundament og ornament: FN som «hjørnestein i norsk utenrikspolitikk», 1970-2005," pp. 160.
[59] Ibid., pp. 169.
[60] Terje Tvedt, 2007, "International Development Aid and Its Impact on a Donor Country: A Case Study of Norway," pp. 619.
[61] Ibid., pp. 615.

The capacity of dissenting individuals—within official aid, research environments, and civil society—in raising issues and changing aid trajectories must also be considered. Subsequently, the 'development complex' cannot be described as a unified constituent but, rather, a complex network of actors, organizations, and agencies often in disagreement with each other. While overarching socio-political norms and domestic interests vary in aid strategies over time, they also have distinctive features which Stokke sees as "reflecting the predominant values of the domestic and international environments of this specific policy area."[62]

On the particular topic of urbanization and settlement-related questions, practical experiences throughout the post-war decades in relation to recipient countries and multilateral initiatives can hold significance for explaining the ideals and strategies employed, and the articulation of these, in Norwegian aid. [63‘64] I will return to the back-and-forth repercussions of aid engagements over time in Norwegian policy perspectives as part of the analysis. While analysis will mainly concern the perspectives employed in aid, it is useful to locate an operational definition of development aid, the 'Habitat' term and its relevance, and outline the administrative handling of our interest field in the Norwegian aid policy arena.

2.2 Definitions and responsibilities in the aid policy arena

DAC uses the term "official development assistance" (ODA) to describe aid flows from donor countries. The DAC has a coordinating role for most aid flows, and is represented by the OECD and the World Bank. Given Norway's consistent membership to DAC since its inception, the DAC's 2018 definition of ODA is useful here. ODA-flows are defined as:

> *Those flows to countries and territories on the DAC List of ODA Recipients and to multilateral development institutions which are:*

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[62] Stokke, 1989, "The Determinants of Norwegian Aid Policy," pp. 159.
[63] Pharo, 2008, "Reluctance, enthusiasms and indulgence: the expansion of bilateral Norwegian aid," pp. 56-60.
[64] Bulanakova, 2016, «Norway's International Development Assistance Policy in the Current International Environment: Mechanisms of Justification," pp. 47.

i. *provided by official agencies, including state and local governments, or by their executive agencies; and*

ii. *each transaction of which:*
    - is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective; and
    - is concessional in character (...) [65]

As already touched upon, the domestic Norwegian administrative structure of aid policy responsibilities has continuously shifted. At the establishment of NORAD in 1963, the directorate functioned as an independent directorate under the MFA's policy direction—responsible for the planning, application, and coordination of Norwegian public aid to developing countries. As such, NORAD operated largely as an independent unit managing ODA flows, with the MFA taking only parliamentary responsibility. The short-lived Norwegian Ministry of Development Cooperation (DUH), had responsibility for policy directions between 1984 and 1990, before the responsibility was transferred back to the MFA.[66] From a 2004 reform and up until a very recent re-organization, NORAD's primary tasks have been evaluation and quality assurance, along with the funding of civil society and NGO engagements in aid domestically and internationally. After having received a number of management tasks recently (2021), NORAD currently manages almost half of all long-term Norwegian ODA.

The term 'habitat' stems from the latin "habitare", translating to "it dwells." I have already (pp. 12) discussed 'Habitat' as shorthand for Habitat organizations in the UN. Building on longer traditions in urban studies and planning, a line can be traced to contemporary uses of the term to describe the act of building and dwelling (in) human settlements, and ways of thinking about how we should be doing that.[67] Within the context of development aid, it can be useful to consider 'habitat' as neither limited to organizations within the UN, nor the general topic of human settlements and urbanization. Rather, we can interpret 'habitat' as a distinct international

[65] OECD, 2020, "Official development assistance – definition and coverage."
[66] NORAD, 2021, "50 år med Norad."
[67] Richard Sennett, 2018, *Building and dwelling : ethics for the city*.

policy area occupied with "thinking" and 'making policy' on the topic of human settlements, within which several different actors are engaged with various interests and ambitions. Policy regarding 'habitat', or habitat policy, has been expressed, articulated and implemented in different ways by partner countries, by Norwegian development authorities, by the WB, and by UNH among others. The Habitat Conferences are one of several fields where viewpoints intersect.

The conferences make up three historical junctures, in regards to settlement-related questions, that run parallel to the overall foci of the various UN Development Decades (UDD)—which represent broader development ambitions of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).[68] In Norway, responsibilities regarding the Habitat conferences, and the cooperation with Habitat organizations, have been split between directorates. Within fields that have been perceived as related to urbanization, the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KMD) and the Ministry of the Environment (KLD) have held advisory functions to the MFA. The KMD has primarily been involved with issues regarding housing, governance, and tenure, while the KLD has focused on urban environmental issues. In practice, KMD has functioned as a technical advisor, with the MFA as the primary policy-maker handling all financial contributions. KMD has also been responsible for following up on domestic commitments made at the Habitat Conferences.[69]

Within the MFA, the primary responsibility of following up on multilateral support regarding urbanization, including the partnership with UNH, has been administered through different internal departments. The UN Department has held few responsibilities, while the Department for Climate, Energy, Environment and Research has taken primary responsibility.[70] The MFA has been organized so that one consultant has been largely responsible for coordinating both the UNH partnership and the longer preparatory processes and Norwegian presence at the two most recent Habitat Conferences. Between 2006 and 2015- an intensive period in which transfers were raised from 15 to around 80 million through a framework agreement and a program agreement—

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[68] Olav Stokke, 2015, "Et 70-årsperspektiv på FNs utviklingssystem," pp. 230.
[69] Interview, Erik Berg, 16.01.2021
[70] Interview, Marit Victoria Pettersen, 06.05.2021

the organization's portfolio of activities was divided between individual case officers.

2.3 Sectors in aid

Documents that directly reference urbanization, urban questions, or habitat in Norwegian aid are few and far between. As I will return to, these omissions partly relate to the 'sectors' utilized in aid administration. Sectors in aid refer to codes utilized in the DAC's development assistance statistics. In the OECD, overall aid sectors are divided into sub-sectors. Which sector a monetary contribution refers to is located by answering the question of: "which specific area of the recipient's economic or social structure the transfer is intended to foster."[71] Under the overall OECD Code of "430 – Other Multisector" we can locate "urban development and management" containing two sub-thematic areas. "Urban" is also mentioned under 'gas distribution' and 'basic water supply'. "Rural development and management" have the same two additional sectors. However, traditional rural sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fishing receive an additional 32 codes.

This chapter has contextualized the particular Norwegian development aid project by firstly locating it as a specific political project emerging in the post-war era, closely contingent upon the United Nations multilateral framework and the formation of the OECD, among other factors. Along with rural dispersed domestic development traditions and a welfare dimension, political considerations of where and how to target development aid geographically have been central determining factors. Policy perspectives must also be seen as the result of a network of actors operating in the field and the reigning political actors at the time. Central agreements and funding do not necessarily correspond to actors' understanding of the subject at hand and actors within aid are not always in agreement as to the knowledge basis or strategies of development aid.

To answer the question of *how* and on which terms Norwegian development aid has understood urbanization, cities, and settlement questions, we need to locate epistemological foundations of

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[71] OECD, 2021, "Purpose Codes: sector classification."

concepts regarding urban growth in territories. This includes what the process entails, what its normative ideals should be, and what the strategies towards reaching these are. These questions have been central to urban studies, planning, and development economics for a long time. Likewise, we should enquire prior research into how development aid practitioners come to understand and act on the basis of knowledge.

3. Urbanization in development research - a conceptual framework

This chapter intends to locate and discuss how processes of urban growth, and characteristics of urban-rural linkages, have been conceptualized in research, with relevance for development aid practice. Implications in regards to spatial bias' among development actors are utilized to develop hypotheses regarding Norwegian habitat policy, and revised research questions for exploring hypotheses. This chapter is structured in line with the following three theoretical conceptualizations:

  i. The urban transition
 ii. Urban-rural binaries in development aid
iii. Urbanization as transformation

In regards to the concept of 'transition' in development research, Hettne makes a useful distinction between two major lines of thought, being 'transitions' and 'transformations' as two major lines of thought. The concept of transition in development can be traced to the project of modernization highlighting rational thinking and 'objective knowledge', as opposed to religions or ideological dogma. As such, 'transitions' can be used in reference to research traditions that emphasize processes of development as linear or corresponding to an evolutionary process with "known end points." The 'urban transition' from rural to urban societies, is one of several framings of the essential components of transition, which also include the transition from pre-market to market, from agricultural to industrial societies, or from 'traditional' to 'modern' values. These relate to a long Western tradition of understanding development through concepts such as organic, linear, cumulative, or purposive. [72]

Referring to Polanyi's classic work, this traditional concept of transition can be placed in opposition to critical research traditions that emphasize development as a process of 'transformation', or the results of a negotiated social struggle with unclear repercussions.[73] While critical scholars have emphasized urbanization as a process of violent transformation—

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[72] Hettne, 2009, *Thinking About Development: Development Matters*, pp. 30.
[73] Karl Polanyi, 1962, *The great transformation.*

interlinked with a change in class structure towards capitalist urban industrial economies by way of agglomeration—reformist traditions have largely understood urban growth as in line with processes of technological change, economic growth and modernization. According to Martinussen, linear processes of transition entailing industrialization, urbanization, and democratization still form a dominant discourse of development practice.[74]

Chapter 3.1 outlines long-running divisions between critical and reformist perspectives on the social and economic implications of urbanization. Centrally, the chapter explains how urbanization has primarily been conceptualized in terms of a process of modernization, with effects for planning and development practice. The recognition of 'urban bias' in territories connect critical and reformist traditions, but is understood as resulting from dissimilar underlying factors. Chapter 3.2 clarifies some primary factors utilized in research to explain development donors' priorities in relation to urbanization. The two seemingly opposed critiques of 'methodological cityism' and 'anti-urban bias' in development understanding and policy are described as inter-connected, and as potentially targeting two sides of the same coin within the evolving development agenda.

Chapter 3.3 considers the potential of transformative spatial concepts regarding current urban growth to alter policy perspectives and trajectories. These are outlined in three segments that build on post-colonial and critical urban theory: conceptions of urbanization as inherently uneven and unequal within the present neoliberal political economy, as differentiated depending on context, and as a transformative phenomenon laying the groundwork for radical demands of rights-based participation towards more just societies. These showcase the potential for more transformational perspectives on urbanization and its relation to human rights challenges within development aid.

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[74] John Degnbol-Martinussen, 1997, *Society, state and market : a guide to competing theories of development,* pp. 36-39.

3.1 The urban transition

Establishing a baseline for critical engagement with urban growth, Friedrich Engels described urbanization as interlinked with the enclosure of the 'commons' and processes of capital accumulation. In *Die Mark* of 1882, the process is framed as historically contingent on changes in the structure of class and in the ownership of land. With the growth of towns and trade throughout the 14th and 15th century, common lands—or 'the commons'—were transformed into property through a process known as 'enclosure.' The leasing and cultivation of rural land, owned by an urban class of nobles, were characteristic traits of the feudal mode of production in Europe.[75] A point later made by Robert E. Park of the Chicago School, the German saying of "Stadt Luft macht frei" or "city air makes free" is likely a reference to an era when men could escape rural serfdom by living a year in a city and then qualifying for the privileges of urban citizenship.[76]

Engels' historical view of the enclosure of the commons directly references Marx' theory of primitive accumulation, describing the processes where rural populations are divorced from lands and means of sufficiency, laying the foundation for an urban proletariat and economic accumulation under industrial capitalism. Private property is understood as a strategic invention, utilized in order to commodify and alter the ownership over land and its resources. Social rebellions are understood in relation to this process; the Peasant War engulfing the European continent in 1525 was primarily a resistance towards the transition to feudal rule.[77] David Harvey describes practices of primitive accumulation as including, but not limited to:

> *(...) privatization of land, (...) expulsion of peasant populations; conversion of various forms of property rights exclusive private property rights; suppression of rights to the commons; commodification of labour power (...)*[78]

In Polanyi's terms, the subsequent increasing productivity of industrial capitalism in the 19th century, with the introduction of a competitive labour market and the need for cheap labour in

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[75] Friedrich Engels, 1892, "The Mark."
[76] Robert E. Park, 1984, *The city : Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment,* pp. 12.
[77] Bergmann Theodor, 1998, "Engels on Agriculture," pp. 146.
[78] David Harvey, 2004, "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Disposession," pp. 74.

cities, served as a primary instigator for worldwide migration within and across national boundaries. The transformation from feudal to industrial capitalist modes of production would involve the geographic shift from rural societies to cities between the 19th and 21st century.[79]

Two lasting movements are important from early critical development theory regarding the growth of cities. Firstly, urbanization represented a potentially violent force of restructuring in terms of land ownership and class relations. The shift to urban societies and the growth of industrial cities is then primarily seen as a historically context-dependent transformation of the class relations in society. Critically, urbanization was perceived as benefitting the privileged owners of the means of production, representing a recognition of urban spatial bias over other settlements under capitalism. Secondly, urbanization was perceived as the concentration of the working classes—the 'huddled masses'—in urban areas, which made social struggle visible, and organizing for social change possible. These makes up a lasting critical and transformational legacy in terms of understanding urban growth in relation to social challenges

A contemporary example is the major division between radical and reformist conceptions of the 'right to the city' in development thinking. First conceptualized by Lefebvre as a radical demand for access to urban space and its 'production', the idea has been adopted by critical researchers and progressive movements as a call for new urban political norms that increase democratic participation in the shaping of urban socio-economic and physical environments. Harvey has consistently employed the concept in direct connection with Engels conception of collective struggle:

> *The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the process of urbanization.*[80]

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[79] Polanyi, 1962, *The great transformation*, pp. 87.
[80] David Harvey, 2008, "The right to the city," pp. 23.

Fernandes' 2007 definition lessens its transformational aspects, but emphasizes it as a right. This involves both a right to urban habitation, to utilize its opportunities, as well as right to participation:

> *The right of all city dwellers to fully enjoy urban life with all its services and advantages – the right to habitation – as well as taking direct part in the management of cities – the right to participation. [81]*

However, among human rights scholars the 'right to the city' has translated more directly to international human-rights legislation, developed from the enlightenment tradition to legally protect the civil rights and freedoms of individuals through the capacity of the state.[82] The "right to housing" is an economic, social and cultural right to adequate housing and shelter, which was enshrined in Article 25 of the UN Human Rights Declaration in 1948, and Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1966. While often understood purely as a legal device in which to protect individual rights to property, potentially disregarding 'collective' rights, Turok & Sheba among others have defended its use at the urban level. Depending on its interpretation and institutional articulation in combination with other rights, urban amenities, and collaborative approaches, the universally-binding characteristics of 'right to housing'- approaches might also be a device towards more inclusive cities.[83]

It is sufficient to recognize here that human rights have the capacity to become embedded in legal rule and policy, and are often the primary subject of popular demands for equity and justice. Conceptions of human rights as universal also provide a foundation through which concepts in development aid have developed. The following sections explore how urbanization and settlement ideals would become conceptualized in territorial economics and planning.

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[81] Edésio Fernandes, 2007, "Constructing the `Right To the City' in Brazil," pp. 208.
[82] Susan Parnell and Edgar Pieterse, 2010, "The 'Right to the City': Institutional Imperatives of a Developmental State."
[83] Ivan Turok and Andreas Scheba, 2018, "'Right to the city' and the New Urban Agenda: learning from the right to housing."

3.1.1 Rural ideals in planning

Due to the inherent violence of the countryside transformations, and its observed urban social repercussions, many researchers would come to view the industrial city as an embodiment of society's failures—an account of early anti-urban predispositions. As opposed to the segregated capitalist city, the traditional village represented diversity, mixture, and harmony, not to mention clean air, water, and space. Within both urban planning and development practice, the village has historically been utilized as a utopian settlement ideal, a place where new societies could still be built.[84]

In this line of thought, the most notable publication might be Howard's *To-morrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* from 1898, involving the construction of new self-sufficient garden cities, with plentiful green space and high-quality architecture that houses self-reliant communities, based around cooperative working and housing institutions.[85] Patrick Geddes would further institutionalize a tradition of urban and regional analysis. An influential part of Geddes' teaching was the concept of ecological "balance" between towns and their surrounding countryside, and the maintenance of balance through plans that incorporated social, economic, environmental, and architectural considerations. Geddes' biological analysis of urban growth lead to the inferring of optimal sizes and "evolutionary mechanisms" in cities in regions. Form, size, and distribution of the built environment could in part determine social evolution and be influenced by planning choices.[86,87]

While his concept of the utopian settlement was decidedly urban—the 'Biopolis', a city based around the self-sustained agricultural community—Geddes placed it in stark contrast to the looming trend of the over-grown industrial 'Megalopolis.' High-rises, mass housing, and a downward trend would signal the next stages, the 'Tyrannopolis', and finally the 'Necropolis', a place of congestion, disease, hunger, and economic and ecological breakdown.[88]

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[84] Sarkissian Wendy, 1976, "The Idea of Social Mix in Town Planning: An Historical Review," pp. 232.
[85] Ebenezer Howard, 1902, Garden cities of to-morrow: a peaceful path to real reform.
[86] Peter Hall, 2014, Cities of tomorrow : an intellectual history of urban planning and design since 1880, pp. 147-50.
[87] Peter Hall, 1966, *The world cities*.
[88] Robert Young and Pierre Clavel, 2017, "Planning living cities: Patrick Geddes' legacy in the new millennium."

The anti-urban trend in international urban theory was supported by leading 20th century urbanists, and highly prevalent until the late 1970s. Regional development in rural areas has also been the pre-dominant model in Norway. The ideal of 'the village' has been central in building national political identity, as well as in regards to settlement planning and production patterns. Development should be achieved by government-initiated comprehensive planning and by establishing a set of "tettsteder" on a municipal level modernizing the Norwegian countryside.[89] These regional strategies also corresponded to the post-war political ideology of some developing countries.

Internationally, the practice of urban planning would emerge as a reform-based stabilizing necessity. Planning, rather than encouraging or responding to social struggle, sought to reduce the risks of major urban revolts and outright revolutions Aside from its critical analysis and utopian sentiments, the "Garden City" concept became first and foremost a practical tool in the management of settlement patterns, triggered by issues of over-population and congestion in industrial cities.

3.1.2   The science of human settlements

At a baseline, economic explanations of urbanization have derived from the central premise that with the expansion of urban sectors such as industry and manufacturing, the required labour force is 'pulled' from rural sectors such as agriculture, into cities. With the expansion of production networks across regions, the science of locational analysis, and unified territorial planning of settlement functions would develop rapidly. Urban growth was conceptualized as organic and subject to laws similar to those found in nature.

Building on location research including Von Thünen's *Der Isolierte Staat* (1826) and Alfred Marshall's 1890 groundwork,[90] Walter Christaller's 1933 Central Place Theory (CPT) envisioned how to efficiently organize settlement distribution in territories. Considering a range of assumptions regarding equally perfect markets, monopolies and rational consumers, forces of

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[89] Hallstein Myklebost, 1960, *Norges tettbygde steder 1875-1950.*
[90] John B. Parr, 2015, "Exploring the urban system of von Thünen's isolated state."

centralization would make for the emergence of a hierarchy of cities, each fulfilling supply functions, their sizes determined by their importance to surrounding areas. [91] A primary assumption was regarding the pre-existence of "flat" or "empty" space between settlements, in which market forces could play out unrestrained. This made for a well-ordered pattern of settlements that could be applied by planners.[92]

The narrative of an evolutionary transition to urban-based societies can be traced through the quantitative geographical sciences and the Chicago School of Urban Sociology. Between 1915 and 1940, the Chicago School provided the first major frameworks for understanding and scientifically modelling urban change, defining spatial typologies developing from city growth that are still utilized to this day, and providing us with a lasting modernist analytical legacy on cities and the characteristics and sequencing of urban growth.[93] Michael Dear, in particular, references the three central growth models emerging out of Chicago: Burgess' concentric zone model, Hoyt's sector model, and Harris & Ullmann's multiple-nuclei model, as laying the precepts for "much of the urban research agenda of the 20th century (…)"[94]

In Dear's analysis, the Chicago Schools quantitative models contributed to the city being understood as a "unified whole", meaning an agglomerated nodal centre which organizes its surrounding territory in an inter-connected regional system. In conjunction with the emerging theories of modernization in development theory, the school advanced an evolutionist understanding of spatial development in which "processes lead from tradition to modernity, from primitive to advanced, (…)," and from dispersed settlements to settlements emerging out of the internal relations in urban centres.[95] A lasting legacy is the scientific categorization of different settlement patterns into typologies with associated characteristics. The urban fringe, suburban, and rural typologies were described in depth, with land uses emanating from the organizational growth logic of the city nuclei.

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[91] Walter Christaller, 1966, *Central places in southern Germany*.
[92] Hettne, 2009, *Thinking About Development: Development Matters*, pp. 2.
[93] Park, 1984, *The city : Suggestions for Investigation of Human Behavior in the Urban Environment*, pp. 7.
[94] Michael Dear, 2002, "Los Angeles and the Chicago School: Invitation to a Debate," pp. 16.
[95] Ibid., pp. 14.

Several urbanists at the time were aware of the limited utility of quantitative models. Louis Wirth, otherwise known for his theories concerning urban characteristics—size, density and diversity—would gradually reflect on the limitations of urban studies, the scientific view of regional balance, and the Euclidean and deterministic growth patterns. In his 1937 "Urbanism as a way of life", Wirth's reflections conform more with critical political-economic analysis, emphasizing a broader concept of urban transformation more in line with historical materialist conceptions than with the narratives of modernization:

> *The degree to which the contemporary world may be said to be 'urban' is not fully or accurately measured by the proportion of the total population living in cities (...) it is the initiating and controlling centre of economic, political, and cultural life that has drawn the most remote parts of the world into its orbit and woven diverse areas, peoples, and activities into a cosmos.[96]*

3.1.3   Urbanization as modernization

Development ideas and models in the post-war era were also influenced by the larger political divisions of the Cold War. W.W Rostow's 1959, *The Stages of Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* would merge location theory and established development theories regarding modernization at the time. Directly challenging critical theories development and class re-structuring, Rostow built on economic market modernization and narratives of transition. Western countries were to be understood as aspirational model countries in terms of their economic and civil status. Replicating the trajectories of western countries was seen as a necessity in order to advance from a state of under-development. In brief, Rostow's stages can be described as: 1) traditional societies of agricultural subsistence, 2) preconditions to take-off – development of industry and export-orientation, 3) take-off – intensive growth and geographic concentration, 4) drive to maturity – economic diversification and rising living standards, 5) age of high mass consumption – mass production and consumerism.[97]

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[96] Louis Wirth, 1997, "Urbanism as a way of life," pp. 2.
[97] W. W. Rostow, 1990, *The stages of economic growth : a non-communist manifesto*.

Modernization theory would be utilized to argue for urbanization as secular, gradual, and connected to the 'take off' stage in development, corresponding to a saturated urban labour market and no urban-rural wage inequality. Harris and Todaro's 1970 model of migration (HTM) frames rural-urban migration as the main explanation linking economic change to urban growth, framing migration as the result of perceived, rather than actual, wage gaps between rural and urban sectors. With growing urban income expectations, or decreases in agricultural productivity, the rationale for migration becomes higher.[98]

Analytically termed by Davis and Golden in 1954, 'over-urbanization' referred to how urbanization rates in Africa did not correspond to growth in urban waged employment, implying a market failure to efficiently allocate labour in territories. Over-urbanization was explained primarily by government regulations upon wage and resource prices in favour of urban areas, distorting their natural evolution.[99] This was an expression of 'urban bias' according to HTM.[100] Following this economic argument, there exists a "best degree of urban concentration" in terms of maximizing productivity depending on level of development and size, and costly repercussions in productivity depending on over- or under-urbanization. The analysis of urban centres as 'growth engines' leads the World Bank to argue for the existence of optimal sizes and territorial distributions of cities and other settlements, in order to achieve an effective sectorial transition to a higher state of development; a contemporary transitional concept of urbanization.[101]

3.2 Urban / rural binaries in development aid

Within the fields of urban studies, planning, and economics, researchers have been especially interested in the potentials of urban growth in the global south. Most actors in development aid have, instead, conceptualized the urban-rural binary through socio-economic disparities and the challenges posed by growing cities, leading to various livelihood strategies. These fields have also intertwined within the multilateral framework. This chapter looks at how the field of

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[98] Sean Fox, 2011, "Understanding the origins and pace of Africa's urban transition," pp. 3.
[99] Kingsley Davis and Hilda Hertz Golden, 1954, "Urbanization and the Development of Pre-Industrial Areas."
[100] R. Harris John and P. Todaro Michael, 1970, "Migration, Unemployment and Development: A Two-Sector Analysis."
[101] World Bank, 2013, Harnessing Urbanization to End Poverty and Boost Prosperity in Africa.

development has come to engage with urban-rural binaries and explores possible assumptions in aid regarding urban growth in developing countries.

The chapter first considers important factors contributing to lasting rural legacies in development aid, including the rationale for employment of the urban bias thesis (UBT). Secondly, the chapter explores two prominent current critiques of aid's relation to urbanization that have emerged alongside each other: (i) critiques of 'methodological cityism' in development practice within the narrative of the transitional 'urban age' paradigm and (ii) critiques of 'anti-urban bias' owing to a lineage of developmental thinking.

3.2.1   Rural disparity and urban bias

According to Jones & Corbridge, actors within development aid have been primarily concerned with establishing an in-depth understanding of rural settlements.[102] Long-running path-dependencies for understanding and measuring socio-economic challenges and potential alleviations in the field have connected development aid to rural areas.

The first factor and an important acknowledgement is that most of the population and the very poor in aid-receiving countries have remained rural in official statistics. Africa remains the least urbanized world region, while Eastern Africa, consisting of 18 countries, has remained the least urbanized within. However, the region has been considered one of the fastest urbanizing areas on the continent since 2000, experiencing growth both in major and small to medium-sized cities, leading to sprawling city regions. Tanzania is one of the least urbanized countries in Africa. In 2014, only 23% of its population was considered urban.[103] Rapid population increase in Dar-es-Salaam, the country's largest city and capitol, has occurred primarily in the last two decades, with expectations to surpass 10 million by 2027.[104] In addition, most growth in Dar has occurred as urban extension involving the growth of informal settlements.

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[102] Gareth A. Jones and Stuart Corbridge, 2010, "The continuing debate about urban bias- the thesis, its critics, its influence and its implications for poverty-reduction strategies," pp. 2.
[103] OECD, 2017, *Social Protection in East Africa: Harnessing the Future*, pp. 30.
[104] Christine Kessides, 2007, "The Urban Transition in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Opportunities."

The understanding of poverty in SSA as a rural phenomenon relates to a longer history in international poverty assessment which I will not be investigating in-depth here. Nevertheless, the arguments behind characterizing development challenges such as poverty as 'mostly rural' or 'worse off in rural areas' have been the subject of critique for relying on incomplete data to justify a lack of understanding of urban conditions and the importance of urban growth.

First described in his 1977 work, *Why poor people stay poor*, Michael Lipton's urban bias thesis (UBT) incorporated how investments made in countryside sectors in general would have higher and more rapid returns than investments in cities.[105] The argument corresponds to how rural settlements and its associated sectors in agriculture, forestry, and so on, have contained the most low-cost and most established entries for potential rapid improvement using development aid transfers. An important evolution came with the introduction of 'basic needs' (BN) measurement forms of poverty characteristics. Criticizing aid for being focused squarely on the theme of economic growth, overlooking persistent inequalities in who benefitted, Dudley Seers would introduce BN in his 1969 article "The Meaning of Development."[106] Seers, on behalf of the ILO, explored the concept further in his research on rural challenges in Kenya, Colombia and Sri Lanka. The major take-away was the most obvious one: the global fight against poverty would need to take place in rural areas lacking in consumption opportunities and take the form of rurally-based social development.[107] As we will return to in analysis, BN became an important addition to Norwegian development aid strategies in the 70s and 80s.

Even as data indices have evolved from absolute types utilizing thresholds towards broader indices which incorporate the relative dimensions of poverty, the rural condition of poverty in developing countries still remains the global consensus. The more recent Human Development Index (HD) and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) both showcase the difficulties in capturing urban forms of poverty. The HDI sought to capture the general level of social development through indicators regarding expected levels of education, years of schooling, per

[105] Michael Lipton, 1977, *Why poor people stay poor : a study of urban bias in world development.*
[106] Dudley Seers, 1970, "The Meaning of Development," pp. 46.
[107] Javier Calatrava-Requena, 2018, "Integrated Development and Basic Needs Approah: Analysis of its Application to Rural Areas (1965-1985)." pp. 7.

capita income, life expectancy, and so on. Whether or not people perceive opportunities for increased well-being in their lives does not explain heightening rates of urban exclusion of informal residents from decent living conditions, services or opportunities, increasing socio-economic inequalities, or to what degree people are at risk from various factors.[108]

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) has sought to account for the different factors that constitutes conditions of poverty, better showcasing both relative deprivations and degrees of inequality. Several of Norway's long-term development cooperation partners in East Africa—including Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Uganda, Mozambique and Tanzania—have consistently been classified as low on the HDI and characterized by rural poverty in the MPI. The 2020 MPI concluded that poverty in all developing countries was higher in rural than urban areas:

> *In Sub-Saharan Africa 55 percent of the overall population is multidimensionally poor compared with 71.9 percent in rural areas (466 million people) and 25.2 percent in urban areas (92 million people). (…) people in rural areas are almost three times as likely to be multidimensionally poor as people in urban areas (…).[109]*

One reason for poverty being characterized as 'rural' is due to the increased complexity of urban areas, with issues involving a range of different sectors and actors, often termed as 'multiple deprivations'. In addition, there are several methodological challenges in capturing forms of urban poverty. Officially distributed data on household income often refer back to measurements that do not account for differences in pricing and consumption patterns across the urban-rural divides—especially with housing, transportation, and other services increasing the cost of urban living. Residents residing in temporary and/or informal conditions are rarely included in surveys. In addition, as Rakodi notes, the utilized urban boundaries largely gloss over poverty incidences that move across urban-rural divisions. Such is often the case with peri-urban informal settlements and rural households which have been immersed by the city.[110]

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[108] Carole Rakodi, 2014, "Prosperity or poverty?: Wealth, inequality and deprivation in urban areas," pp. 301-02.
[109] United Nations Development Programme, 2020, *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2020*, pp. 27.
[110] Rakodi, 2014, "Prosperity or poverty?: Wealth, inequality and deprivation in urban areas," pp. 301.

Relying purely on officially distributed income-based poverty lines and poverty indexes runs the risk of overlooking urban informal poverty, interlinked deprivations, its causes, and its potential implications for aid practice. The comparatively difficult relationship between urban and rural dimensions of poverty are highlighted in a recent article by Berg;

> (…) The marginalization occurring in the city economies is more convoluted, uneven, and often more acute than in the countryside. There exists a vast potential for poverty alleviation in the interlinked dimensions of urban and rural spaces that has not been exploited.[111]

The second factor connecting development aid to rural areas refers to the explanations of geographical imbalances in livelihood and income characteristics between geographic areas utilized by aid practitioners: a perception of existing urban bias' in territories. In his aforementioned 1977 work, Lipton argued that development country policies had been distorted in favour of urban areas and the elite of national populations. At its core, the argument was that city-specific classes in developing countries utilized public policies to distort and under-price agricultural products in urban areas and inflate the price of urban products in rural areas. This explained both the uneven distributional differences of resources towards cities and the disposition for urban classes to regulate geographically.[112] According to Lipton, due to organizational power and monetary differences, urban classes can pressure governments to prioritize their interests:

> (…) the urban classes have been able to "win" most of the rounds of the struggle with the countryside; but in doing so they have made the development process slow and unfair.[113]

Similar ideas regarding the presence of forms of urban bias are also prevalent within critical research on the growth of African cities from the post-war era. In development research,

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[111] Erik Berg, 2020, "Jorden blir urban - om byer og globale megatrender," pp. 16..
[112] Gareth A. Jones and Stuart Corbridge, 2014, "Urban Bias," pp. 300.
[113] Lipton, 1977, *Why poor people stay poor : a study of urban bias in world development*, pp.1.

'dependence theory' represented a critique of development for continuing to serve the developed city-based nations and continuing an exploitation of the "periphery" within the capitalist "world system". Unfair trade relations between developing countries came to the fore, as did the inequality of economic growth. According to Johan Galtung's 1974 "A Structural Theory of Imperialism" of cities of nations in peripheral developing countries could continue to serve as "bridgeheads" for the interests of imperialist actors located in developed countries or, "centre" nations. [114] This relationship is characterized by corresponding interests among elites between countries, who continue imperialist exploitations of the countryside in developing countries through the main bridgehead.[115]

Gunder Frank's "The Development of Underdevelopment", issued the same year, highlights the roles of developing country cities in terms of maintaining "metropolis-satellite" relationships. "Metropoles" are seen as dominating and exploiting territorial "satellites" made up of rural settlements and territories. Major developing country cities were also themselves framed as a "satellites" with chains of exploitation going back to dominant cities in the global north, leading to "satellite underdevelopment."[116]

For Lipton however, the 'urban' was understood not in terms of exploitation, but as an expansion of economic sectors that should occur naturally in accordance with the pace of structural transition and modernization. A 'distributional urban bias' was claimed to be observed due to larger investments in urban education and health care and a higher proportion of taxes paid in rural areas. This distributional bias was exacerbated due to the noted geographical price-twisting on products in favour of urban areas, even as investments could have more effect in rural areas. According to Lipton's UBT, government policies ran the risk of halting market growth by benefitting urban populations and distorting market balance. Subsequently, governments would increase risk of over-urbanization.[117] In recent research, the 'urban bias' concept has been expanded to describe a long-running over prioritization of cities over the countryside in

[114] Galtung Johan, 1971, "A Structural Theory of Imperialism."
[115] Ibid.
[116] Andre Gunder Frank, 1966, "The Development of Underdevelopment."
[117] Jones and Corbridge, 2014, "Urban Bias," pp. 287.

developing countries among experts and policy makers. Angelo & Wachsmuth describes current forms of urban bias as "methodological cityism", an over-reliance on the benefits of 'urban' qualities within research and expert policy prescription. [118] As will be returned to, this differs from the firstly material privileging of large city populations observed in the UBT.

Poverty and social challenges have long been considered a rural phenomenon in development research, both considering country demographics, and the disparities of countryside populations, and the existence of bias' towards urban areas and classes. The city comes to symbolize better conditions, perceived higher wages and better opportunities, or the only choice left for households as a place of refuge—while 'home' remains in the countryside. In practice, consistent employment of the UBT to justify rural agendas might lead to an undervaluing of urban poverty, an overestimation on the consistency of 'sectors' as pertaining to isolated settlement types, and subsequently insufficient (spatial) notions of socio-economic inequality. Assuming these factors can also lead planners and urban policy-makers towards restricting urban-rural mobility through containment strategies, or removing citizenship benefits, in the belief that these will benefit overall development processes.[119]

More recent data also suggests that the aggregate demographic growth of developing country cities today is more so the results of natural growth than migration. While most growth in SSA has been taking place in medium to small-size cities with weaker institutional capacity and infrastructure, populations are, increasingly, urban residents.[120]

3.2.2   Methodological cityism and anti-urban bias

Polarizing perspectives on urban growth and settlements exist alongside each other in contemporary research and practice. The seemingly opposed critiques in recent research of 'methodological cityism' and 'anti-urban bias' within the multilateral development framework, and among donors and recipient countries, are briefly explored here.

[118] Hillary Angelo and David Wachsmuth, 2015, "Urbanizing Urban Political Ecology: A Critique of Methodological Cityism," pp. 377-78.
[119] Fox, 2011, «Understanding the origins and pace of Africa's urban transition," pp. 4.
[120] Michael Cohen, 2014, "The City is Missing in the Millennium Development Goals," pp. 263.

The 2007 *UN World Urbanization Prospects* first announced the arrival of an urban age. For the first time in human history, more than half of the population were considered to be 'urban.' Commonly referred to as the 'urban age thesis' (UAT) the findings propose an altered relation between urban and rural human settlements worldwide.[121] The findings have recently been strengthened. As stated by SDG 11 adopted in 2015:

> *More than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas. By 2050, that figure will have risen to 6.5 billion people—two-thirds of all humanity.[122]*

The UAT builds on established demographic research over time, as well as long-running theories regarding the global urban transition.[123] Brenner & Schmiid argue the thesis in practice has functioned in two ways within international policy arenas. Firstly, it was utilized as a rationalization for scholars and policy practitioners to focus their attention on urban sites. An important discursive change illustrating this is identified in the mid 1980s, when UN reports on settlements adopted the narrative of an oncoming "world-scale urban transition ."[124] The meta-narrative is traced from first becoming a major rationale in the *Global Report on Human Settlements* prepared for Habitat II in 1996, to constituting the justification for the 2006 research publications from the Urban Age Project at the London School of Economics. Secondly, and critically, the thesis is perceived as a "framing device" with the effects of restricting practitioners to established dogmas regarding the causes and consequences of urban growth.[125]

Chapter 3.1 outlined major reformist ideas owing to the emerging quantitative and economic science of human settlements. In short, the dominant form of urbanization thought emerging out of the 20th century is understood by Brenner & Schmiid to be one that naturalizes urbanization as part of socio-economic shifts that can be measured without the need for context, influencing "(…) most major strands of mainstream global urban policy, planning and design discourse

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[121] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2007, *World Urbanization Prospects The 2007 Revision.*
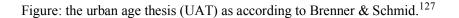[122] United Nations Development Programme, 2015, "Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities."
[123] Kingsley Davis, 1955, "The Origin and Growth of Urbanization in the World," pp. 433.
[124] Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid, 2014, "The 'Urban Age' in Question," pp. 735.
[125] Ibid.

(…)."[126] The authors connect the thesis to weaker or stronger forms of 'methodological cityism' in the international policy arena. The UAT, as described in the image below, consists of three primary factors that build on established ways of measuring urbanization and adopted norms in urban and territorial planning discourse.

Figure: the urban age thesis (UAT) as according to Brenner & Schmid.[127]

(A) Methodological territorialism: social processes are bounded and self-enclosed within clearly delineated, mutually exclusive zones

(B) Urbanization as concentration: the process of urbanization entails the *concentration* of population within a territorial space

(1) Settlement fetishism: all spaces in the world are differentiated among distinct *types* of settlement

(2) Urban-rural opposition / continuum: all spaces in the world are either "urban" or "rural" (*strong version*); the urban/rural opposition provides the analytical foundation for classifying all other settlement spaces (*weak version*)

(3) Distributional model of urban transition: spatial change entails the redistribution of population among ontologically fixed settlement types (urban/rural); the specificity, coherence and discreteness of the types are not impacted through such transformations

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Settlement fetishism, in the figure, refers to the continued etymologization of world settlements into fixed containers, which correspond to spatial characteristics with associated socio-economic and demographic classes. Secondly, urban and rural territories appear as the primary dichotomy

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[126] Neil Brenner, 2016, "The Hinterland Urbanised?," pp. 120.
[127] Brenner and Schmid, 2014, «The 'Urban Age' in Question," pp. 745.

through which the world's geography is read. Rural settlements, "whether based on criteria of population size, administrative classification or otherwise," are treated as non-urban space; what Christaller termed "empty space" un-affected by urbanization.[128] This includes accumulation processes involving the state-regulated privatization of common land and the re-structuring of class relations as discussed in chapter 3.1. Simultaneously, "the urban" might lose its relevancy as an analytical frame for discussing a 'global condition' when it is applied to continually "divergent conditions of population, infrastructure and administrative organization (…)"[129]

The 'distributional' model of the urban transition conceives the transition to a global urban population as guided along of fixed settlements units along a continuum, unaffiliated by broader change. To this last point we can add the assumed correlation between the urban transition and conceptualizations of modernization in development—which critical researchers seek to move beyond.[130,131] The WB's 2009 *World Development Report* showcases this aspect of urban exceptionalism well, noting that, "urbanization is the pathway to development: no country has developed without the growth of its cities."[132] As discussed by Angelo & Wachsmuth, this broader critique of methodological cityism differs from a general recognition of urban —for example, in food pricing—by stating that the methods used to understand and interfere with spatial questions privilege urban clusters along unilinear typologies. This accompanies an under-examination of spatial expansion, leading to an imprecise and incoherent notion of urban and rural space.[133,134]

In parallel to these critiques of "urban ideology,"[135] the post-colonial critique has targeted prominent discourses in development practice for contributing to anti-urban bias. The association between particular northern cities and experiences of modernity, along with the developmentalist

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[128] Ibid., pp. 747.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse, and Margit Mayer, 2012, *Cities for people, not for profit : critical urban theory and the right to the city*.
[131] Edward Soja, 2012, "Regional Urbanization and the End of the Metropolis Era."
[132] Breda Griffith Raj Nallari and Yusuf Shahid, 2015, *Geography of growth: spatial economics and competitiveness,* pp. 30.
[133] Angelo and Wachsmuth, 2015, «Urbanizing Urban Political Ecology: A Critique of Methodological Cityism."
[134] Neil Brenner and David J Madden, 2012, "Assemblages, Actor-Networks, and the Challenges of Critical Urban Theory," pp. 118-19.
[135] Hillary Angelo and David Wachsmuth, 2020, "Why does everyone think cities can save the planet?."

viewpoint of the urban experience are two theoretical points targeted. According to Robinson and Roy, developing cities have been largely viewed within development theory as either failures or exceptional cases—failures because the quality of development is measured by case studies representing success from the global north or exceptional in that the inherent characteristics of cities in the global south halt the expected trajectories of 'development'.[136][137]

Factors leading to failure can include a lack of functioning property markets, corruption, slow bureaucracies, or local traditions halting economic development. The neglect of functional rural livelihoods, frequently characterized as the 'natural' condition, is exemplified by the growth of urban regions with seemingly insurmountable issues in sectors like housing. Instead of going through the organic motions of urban transition, as in western countries, many countries in SSA have seen urban migration without the characteristic mass employment seen in long-term accumulative processes—urbanization without economic growth. Representations of African cities as "not working", due to chaos and disorder, inform development practitioners and policy-makers, fuelling the assumption that;

> *(...) urban development works everywhere except Africa because cities in Africa are intrinsically different and uniquely incapacitated.[138]*

In the critiques raised by Robinson and Roy among others, developmentalist theorization and policy solutions for urban growth in developing cities showcase the narrative that they are victims of globalization, and "dysfunctional exceptions from Western urban experiences"—both focusing on developing cities as spaces of deficiency.[139] As Roy points out, this narrative extends to studies of urban informality, typically seen as either symptomatic of a crisis in the urban transition or as a narrative of individual entrepreneurial heroism, taking place in spite of all odds. This has led to sprawling urban informal settlements being largely seen as homogenous territories of lawlessness, separate from the governable formal city. As argued by Millstein;

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[136] Ananya Roy, 2009, "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory."
[137] Jennifer Robinson, 2008, "Global and world cities: a view from off the map."
[138] Millstein, 2013, «The State of Urban Agendas in Norwegian Development Research and Policy," pp. 377.
[139] Ibid., pp. 374.

(...) it is still generally the case that cities in Africa are ignored, banished to a different,
other, lesser category of not-quite cities, or held up as examples of all that can go
wrong with urbanism in much of both the mainstream and even critical urban
literature.[140]

Millstein's 2013 research on the influence of international urban agendas on Norwegian
development policy places the Norwegian urban agenda in relation to Robinson's critique of a
dominant trend in development practice, splitting its narratives between cities of the 'West'—
which have the capacity to produce relevant universal theory and universal policy practices—and
those in the developing 'third world'—seen only in relation to their development progress.[141] Her
investigation leads to one primary finding:

Despite a shift towards a more open-ended understanding of urban issues in Africa and
elsewhere, there is a dominant discourse treating urbanization as a problem in
Norwegian development policies.[142]

In this chapter, I have argued that conceptualizing developing country urban-rural relations
through the UBT and established poverty-measurement methods can serve to accentuate anti-
urban bias in development practice. A developmentalist perspective on developing country
urbanization can operate in parallel with methodological cityism—unilinear concepts of
urbanization—reinforcing spatial-blindness, or perceptions of urbanization as outside the spatial
realm of development. Consequently, both the violence embedded in rural re-structuring by
urbanization, and the exclusionary urbanization of poverty, might be placed outside the sight of
development practitioners.
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3.3 Urbanization as transformation

This chapter builds on the traditions highlighted and briefly explores various points of departure
in understanding urbanization. These understandings might contribute to altering development
practice towards more transformative and open interpretations of urban growth. They are

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[140] Ibid.
[141] Robinson, 2008, «Global and world cities: a view from off the map."
[142] Millstein, 2013, «The State of Urban Agendas in Norwegian Development Research and Policy," pp. 381.

referred to here as concepts illuminating uneven and unequal urban growth, contextualizing difference and inequality, and establishing prospects for transformative democratic change towards more just cities.

3.3.1   Uneven urban growth

The re-structuring processes of globalized market-economy that have accelerated since the mid 1980s have been understood as a contemporary form of Polanyi's *Great Transformation*: highly unequal forces of accumulation operating under the guise of the human rights-based 'embedded liberalism' that has made up the central compromise of the multilateral development framework in the post-war era. [143] The new transformation also covers the theory, policies, and practice of counter-movements and civil society groups seeking alternatives to development in cities.

Harvey's concept of "uneven geography" refers to the inherent consequences of unevenness resulting from current urbanization processes in the globalized economy. The mobility of capital makes for an increasingly uneven surface where only key locales become centres of investment while others are left behind, a process described by Ferguson as "bypassing" or "hopping" across most of what lies between.[144] Referring to the Los Angeles School of urbanism, the literature on 'entrepreneurial cities' highlight this conceptional change in the governance of cities. From once being primarily concerned with welfare and service provision, urban and regional municipalities are increasingly adapted to fostering and encouraging economic growth, adopting risk-taking and profit motivating measures from the private sector in order to attract investors.[145,146]

In recent years, the 'urban turn' towards strategic cities and places within global economics, governance, and in the social sciences, is seen by Harvey and Jessop as a re-ordering of territorial space due to the uneven nature of capitalist growth, which has been strengthened by neoliberal globalization. More so than the objects of planning, flexible flows of capital enacting

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[143] Hettne, 2009, *Thinking About Development: Development Matters*, pp. 31-32.
[144] Ferguson James, 2006, *Global Shadows,* pp. 37-38.
[145] Tim Hall and Phil Hubbard, 1996, "The entrepreneurial city: new urban politics, new urban geographies?."
[146] David Harvey, 1989, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism."

spatio-temporal fixes within accumulation regimes become the determinants of spatial form and function. These processes increase, already existing, differences between countries, regions, and cities. As a consequence, the urbanization processes occurring in the global south are marked by social inequality manifested in urban areas, resulting in increasing income inequality, particularly in SSA.

In part, new growth processes entail the further deterioration and enclosure of resources in the hinterlands, altering occupational regimes of people, and shaping the structural inequalities evident between various settlements and between urban centres and associated informal settlements. The "surplus populations", located in various peri-urban and informal settlements, result from a new form of accumulation that lacks the capacity for industrial absorption, theorized by Harvey as 'accumulation by dispossession.'(ABD)[147] At its core, ABD describes how processes of accumulation and transition are enacted using state regimes, as well as global and regional networks, which enable new markets.[148] The resulting "land use-nexus" describing the occupation of new areas for urban use, is understood as a consequence of flexible accumulation economies.

The 'global land grab' identified across the developing world since the financial crisis of 2007-2008 has been analysed as conducive for new agrarian and urban property dispossessions in emerging economies like Lao, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Indonesia.[149,150]   Here, we can add the conflicts regarding agricultural transitioning to a "green economy" across the developing world. In Tanzania, the recent formation of The Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor through the Kilombero Valley has involved the clearing of livestock and pastoral dwellers for the sake of a broader project aiming to preserve and conserve natural environments. At the same time, the project's focus on investments in large-scale farming and enticing agricultural business have increased conflict with smallholder pastoralists and farmers. In a 2020 article, Bergius et al

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[147] Harvey, 2004, «The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Disposession."
[148] Ibid., pp. 76.
[149] Jonathan Rigg, 2016, *Challenging Southeast Asian Development: The shadows of success,* pp. 63.
[150] Rolnik, 2019, *Urban Warfare - Housing Under the Empire of Finance.*

criticize the approach for being conductive of land dispossessions among local people and driving conflicts over land-use across groups and geographical boundaries.[151]

Violent transformations at the root of conflict can shape increasing migration to cities, which will then absorb them into informal and precarious labour and property markets. Several researchers emphasize the need to better understand the root cause of vulnerability in informal areas—both in support of climate adaptation and to better address challenges of inequality across prior territorial divisions.[152] Furthermore, civil and political liberties and rights rarely oppose the dogmas of economic rights, that of private property, and capital accumulation through market exchange, but often serve to institutionalize and naturalize divisions that may end up furthering inequalities through the use of states to open new areas for profit-making.[153]

As a result, "urbanization" changes from being conceptualized in terms of linear modernization, agglomeration, and resultant settlement typologies, to include cross-territorial economic fabrics of form, constituted by cross-sectorial regional accumulation economies that administer processes of transformation.[154] Thus, contemporary urbanization is re-framed as a political economic transformation, re-organizing territories across the globe and moving beyond "urbanization of the countryside"[155,156] This theoretical frame would see current urbanization processes as all-encompassing, justifying Lefebvre's claim that:

> *We can say that the urban (…) rises above the horizon, slowly occupies an epistemological field, and becomes the episteme of an epoch.[157]*

3.3.2 Differentiated urbanism

Urbanization might be understood as a highly differentiated process with various characteristics according to context. Therefore, understanding urban settlements spaces requires contextual

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[151] Mikael Bergius et al., 2020, "Green economy, degradation narratives, and land-use conflicts in Tanzania."

[152] Kavya Michael, Tanvi Deshpande, and Gina Ziervogel, 2019, "Examining vulnerability in a dynamic urban setting: the case of Bangalore's interstate migrant waste pickers."

[153] Ibid., pp. 54-55..

[154] Allen J. Scott and Michael Storper, 2015, "The Nature of Cities: The Scope and Limits of Urban Theory," pp. 3.

[155] Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid, 2015, "Towards a new epistemology of the urban?."

[156] G. J. Lewis and D. J. Maund, 1976, "The Urbanization of the Countryside: A Framework for Analysis."

[157] Henri Lefebvre, 2003, *The urban revolution,* pp. 191.

knowledge of local practices and organization, as well as comparative theoretical tools to describe and map out phenomena.

Criticisms have gone far in inferring the continued dominance of western urban theory in development and the "othering" of urban experiences in developing countries. Several researchers emphasize the need to develop new theories from "elsewhere"—where most urbanization is taking place—in order to understand trends, places, and experiences that do not correspond with western experiences of urbanism.[158,159] In this regard, informal settlements are not simply considered the opposite of formal housing markets, planning processes, labour regulation, and the rule of law. To a larger degree, informal settlements are seen as differentiated, often close-knit communities, and "ordinary spaces" that should be understood on their own terms and should challenge the assumptions of theory. Roy's concept "subaltern urbanism" provides a way of looking at the slum that includes it as "(…) a terrain of habitation, livelihood, self-organization and politics (…)"[160]

While slums might appear to be areas of the dispossessed, they are also characterized by diverse and flexible working conditions, negotiation, local organizations, and self-made architecture and pragmatic development.[161] In several documented cases, social mobilization and insurgency in informal areas have forced local governments into negotiation and action to improve living conditions, in order to claim what can be termed a critical conception of the "right to the city."[162] Challenging the assumptions made on modern cities in urban and development theory, the ambition of Dupont et al's recent research on the politics of slums is precisely to;

[158] Roy, 2009, «The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory."
[159] Jennifer Robinson, 2016, "Comparative Urbanism: New Geographies and Cultures of Theorizing the Urban."
[160] Ananya Roy, 2011, "Slumdog Cities: Rethinking Subaltern Urbanism," pp. 223.
[161] Ese, 2014, "Uncovering the urban unknown: mapping methods in popular settlements in Nairobi,"
[162] David Harvey, 2013, *Rebel cities : from the right to the city to the urban revolution*.

(…) listen to the voices of the people living in these spaces and to map out the
way they resist attempts to be excluded from the construction and production
of their living environment.[163]

To investigate the diversity of living environments that make up "slums", the authors instead use the term "substandard settlements". This term captures different housing conditions and spatial layouts, while recognizing the existence of a level of social deprivation, inequality, socio-spatial segregation, and a lack secure tenure. This includes settlements classified as illegal, resulting from land invasion and occupation, and those legalized through formalization processes. It is also a reflection of the power dynamics between organizations working to secure various rights by demanding better recognition from formal authorities. At their core, the concepts of uneven urbanization and subaltern urbanism recognize the need for attention to spatial context—in terms of research, planning, and development aid practices that seek to change or alter urban trajectories.

3.3.3   Transformative change

Cities function both as centres of capital accumulation and localities for civil and political conflict. Deep seated conflicts over inequality sharpen as those who contribute to making urban life "livable"—construction workers, janitors, sanitation workers, and so on—are placed in highly precarious working and living situations— often lacking official citizenship papers. Conflicts often come to a head in urban areas, leaving cities as the place in which social struggle for justice remains a promise.[164]

Several rights within the UN Charter—such as economic security, the right to organize unions, and the right to housing, as well as radical conceptions such as global access to commons—have made space to consider alternative directions for human rights policies. The last 30-40 years have seen the organization of social movements from the scale of informal neighbourhoods to

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[163] Véronique Dupont et al., 2016, *The politics of slums in the global south : urban informality in Brazil, India, South Africa and Peru,* pp. 11.
[164] Harvey, 2013, *Rebel cities : from the right to the city to the urban revolution.*

international organizations, such as Slum Dwellers International (SDI), disputing social inequalities relating to the process of urban growth. As Erik Berg, formerly responsibly for the MFA-collaboration with UNH, pointed out in our interview;

> *(…) the slum population in the world has organized itself, and you also see that, in the Arab Spring and food riots around the world, there are examples of urban social movements having a greater political impact.*[165]

The most apt call for transformative commitments to urbanization has arguably emerged in relation to demands made for a 'right to the city.' After becoming prominent in participatory budgeting-reforms in Brazil, the concept is used today to argue for broad legal democratic entitlement of populations to cities and urban economies. As such, urbanization and the current urban condition take part in engendering the struggle of allied groups towards establishing more just and progressive development forms.[166] Assistance directed towards organizational capacity in supporting claims could potentially provide broader solutions than aiming social assistance at the benefit of specific groups.

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[165] Interview, Erik Berg, 15.01.2021
[166] Ananya Roy, 2005, "Urban Informality: Toward an Epistemology of Planning."

4. Research design

Two hypotheses have been added following the review of theory. The review has also led to revised and more operational research questions as the basis for an enquiry of aid perspectives. In the next sections, the collection and operationalization of data are described in relation to a modified retroductive research strategy, altering between identified fields in aid and levels of theoretical abstraction for explanation. A section on data collection and operationalization describes the practice-oriented document analysis utilizing a selection of written and oral sources. Lastly, the analysis structure is outlined.

4.1 Hypotheses and revised research questions

The hypotheses concern views on urban growth, urban-rural linkages and the potential of progressive change in aid. In addition to the ambition of placing aid in spatial terms, the hypothesis serve as ways to structure a discussion of implications.

Hypotheses

1. Norwegian development aid exhibits a considerable anti-urban bias by employing a transitional concept of urbanization, and a traditional concept of the urban bias thesis.

2. Challenges of structural and urban transformation in Norwegian development aid are often engaged on a sectoral dimension, with a general spatial blindness, a long-running anti-urban bias, and without adequate descriptions of the effects of urbanization for social livelihoods or transformative potentials

A primary focus of the analysis is to locate broader theoretical mechanisms and rationales that underline Norwegian development aid. The intention is to explain where and at what point in time different settlement perspectives have become relevant, and what arguments have supported these perspectives. As such, in addition to the scale, the dimension of time is critical to the analysis. The dimension of scale refers to the interconnected fields of the Habitat conferences, Norwegian perspectives, and the discussions raised by interview participants. In order to investigate the hypotheses, the two former research questions have been revised to focus on the interlinked fields of explanation.

Revised Research Questions

    a.   How did Norwegian aid policy perspectives relate to the policy content of the Habitat Conferences and the arguments behind the Habitat Agendas?

    b.   What general perspectives and aspects of urban spatial development theory have – at different times – become dominant in Norwegian habitat policy?

    c.   What are the limitations of settlement epistemologies, ideals, and strategies within Norwegian development aid?

4.2 A retroductive research strategy

Since an emphasis is placed on expanding and adding to existing theoretical literature, a modified retroductive research strategy is utilized.[167] In line with the foundation of critical realism, the strategy targets the examination of underlying mechanisms in order to explain and discuss regularities in empirical data, the researcher altering between theoretical study and empirical investigation.[168]

Following Yeung, theoretical mechanisms can be understood as systems of interacting parts that interlink, and inspire each other to produce an outcome. An elaboration of internal relations referred to as "process" between general interpretive concepts such as the urban transition / transformation, the urban bias thesis, anti-urban bias, methodological cityism, and expected and actual outcomes, is needed in order to identify working mechanisms. By way of elaborating the causality behind empirical phenomena and linking them to the observed theoretical structure, mechanisms become "a necessary mechanism *for* something - connecting cause and effect as identified in an explanatory analysis."[169] Identified mechanisms can instigate positive feedback, and become conditions for path-dependencies generating stability of policy over time.[170] This

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[167] Pascal Vennesson, 2008, "Case studies and process tracing: theories and practices," pp. 224.
[168] Blaikie, 2007, *Approaches to social enquiry : advancing knowledge*, pp. 83.
[169] Henry Wai-chung Yeung, 2019, "Rethinking mechanism and process in the geographical analysis of uneven development," pp. 13.
[170] Leonhard Dobusch and Elke Schüßler, 2013, "Theorizing path dependence: a review of positive feedback mechanisms in technology markets, regional clusters, and organizations," pp. 618.

process is central in explaining potential policy lock-in over time, what Sydow et al terms a "diminishing scope of action."[171]

While urbanization, the city, or human settlement patterns are seldom mentioned in Norwegian aid policies or governmental white papers, studying Norwegian bi-and multilateral engagements through the identified mechanisms can contribute to explaining different path-dependencies underlining aid perspectives. In this case, testing the theories employed in Ch. 3 will be central to answering the research questions.[172] The analysis methods employed have primarily been retroductive, working from theory to observation, in order to build an explanation. I have also wanted social experience to 'muddle' findings in order to view them in practical context. Inductive methods have then also been incorporated through interviews.[173] The triangulation of data sets can provide corroborate outcomes which may strengthen evidence and reduce risks of data bias.[174]

4.3 A practice-oriented analysis

A suitable wide definition of a document is provided in a classic text by Suzanna Briet:

> *(…) any concrete or symbolic indexical sign, preserved or recorded toward the ends of representing, of reconstituting, or of proving a physical or intellectual phenomenon.* [175]

Official documents produced and distributed by governments, legal entities or through the multilateral framework hold increased significance in this regard. Varying on where, how, and at what terms qualitative documents are made, policies/statements/explanations have the capacity to limit and open up spaces and areas of interest, and conceive of actions with material consequences. [176]

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[171] Georg Sydow, Georg Schreyögg, and Jochen Koch, 2008, "Organizational Path Dependence: Opening the Black Box," pp. 698.
[172] George, 2005, *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*, pp. 209.
[173] Blaikie, 2007, *Approaches to social enquiry : advancing knowledge*, pp. 83-84, 103.
[174] M. Bradshaw and Elaine Stratford, 2005, "Qualitative research design and rigour," pp. 127.
[175] S. Briet et al., 2006, *What is Documentation?: English Translation of the Classic French Text,* pp. 10.
[176] Kristin Asdal, 2015, "What is the issue? The transformative capacity of documents," pp. 87.

Documents are located within "document-places", understood as constituting fields of practice made up of specific knowledge, rules and regulations. Within institutions of various roles and powers such as the MFA, NORAD, the Norwegian Parliament, the Cabinet (Regjeringen), or the branches, agencies and programmes of the UN, written documents are the main method in which research is employed and translated into action. In combination, these places come to regulate the types of solutions available within the official imagination.[177] Official governmental aid documents, are also conditioned by other factors, including their relationships to international policy networks as well as the territorial relationships of state alliances and power relations in networks. Additionally, they are the product of the territorial relations and regulations which make up the sovereign state as a scalar construct. Millstein emphasizes how positions on knowledge fields such as urbanization within white papers must be particularly seen as;

> *(…) framed and shaped by (…) international discourses, national agendas,*
> *and the role and power of various spheres of government.[178]*

My analysis has mainly relied on written sources, in combination with a set of interviews. Three overall datasets correspond to the discursive arenas introduced in the first chapter; (i) documents connected to the three Habitat Conferences, their pre-work and follow-up (ii) Norwegian official documents, mainly white papers / reports to the Storting, and (iii) individual interviews with a selection of experts on the subject.

A latent content analysis was utilized for a selection of documents. The major of these were; all Norwegian white papers directly referred to, the 1967 *Arusha Declaration*, the 1987 *Brundtland Commission Report* (BCR), and UNH's *International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning* (IG-UTP) of 2015. However, the analysis has utilized these in combination with a wider range of documents including secondary readings of relevant documents, newspaper articles, and other primary and secondary written sources on the subjects.

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[177] Kristin Asdal, 2020, *Hvordan gjøre dokumentanalyse : en praksisorientert metode,* pp. 39-43.
[178] Millstein, 2013, «The State of Urban Agendas in Norwegian Development Research and Policy," pp. 379.

Norwegian parliamentary white papers are, in combination with associated documents, the main way in which the sitting government accounts for and justifies development aid policy. While white papers rarely discuss topics, they are used to argue for a specific point of view. To investigate the processes surrounding the Habitat conferences, interviews and secondary literature were vital to gain insight. In terms of both parliamentary white papers and Habitat declarations agendas, these are not seen primarily as 'reports of experts', but rather as highly political documents and the result of negotiations.[179] In addition to the documents noted, readings of conference summaries, plenary statements, perspective papers, the Habitat declarations, observations, speeches have been central troughout to develop analysis. As an example, the first analysis section utilizes essays and speeches by Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's first elected president.

How various documents semantically interpret processes of urbanization and cities in the south became imperative as a way of uncovering underlying meanings in relation to the hypotheses and my theoretical framework.[180] This more eclectic selection of data sets is in line with a practice-oriented analysis that considers the active role of documents in practices of producing space; "part in enacting, realities."[181] The interview strategy is further described in the next section.

4.4 Interview strategy

The choice of interview participants, and the resulting strategy, stems from the identification of a complex of Norwegian actors with corresponding interests in highlighting challenges of urbanization as a field of rights-based social issues interlinked with urbanism and planning. Referring to Ch. 2.3, all actors are in different ways concerned with Habitat policy. Several of the actors within this field are currently, or have at some point been, active within the Habitat Norway organization.

The interviews were conducted in order to point analysis towards white papers and other

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[179] David Satterthwaite, 1998, "Can UN conferences promote poverty reduction? A review of the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda," pp. 2.
[180] Mariette Bengtsson, 2016, "How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis," pp. 12.
[181] Asdal, 2015, «What is the issue? The transformative capacity of documents," pp. 87.

documents that articulate relevant perspectives, to supplement written sources, and to gain a better understanding of the policy perspectives discussed and the considerations underlining them. For instance, several interview participants highlighted the first bilateral engagement in East Africa throughout the 1960s and 1970s as essential for Norway's perception of settlement question. These engagements depict first official encounters with social struggles, the struggle for sovereignty and self-reliance, and to a certain extent, cites and their connections to rural territories.[182] The Norwegian-Tanzanian partnership in particular makes up an important entry point as it exemplifies the first major practical interpretations of spatial development theory encountered by Norwegian aid actors at the recipient level, with an ideologically based territorial analysis of urban-rural settlement dynamics.

Since I am analysing using a longer historical perspective, several participants were older, and policy processes were often far back in time. There is a chance of missing the mark on historical accuracy, which I have remedied by cross-checking documents and comparing interviews. As interviews were conducted throughout the research period, between 15th of January and 6th of May, they also held a central function in providing feedback loops on initial findings. [183]

The expert interview

Several of the participants are long-term development practitioners within their respective fields. Hence, the bulk of interviews can be characterized as *expert interviews*, with some transferrable characteristics to corporate interviewing.[184] While interviewing experts can involve interviewing 'up,' constituting a risk to participant control or imposing of agendas, the expert interview can also investigate the insides of strategic decision-making and where potential trade-offs have been made.

As I look to unravel where and why particular priorities have been made, in-depth semi-standardized interviews were appropriate and suited to an intensive research approach.[185]

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182 Interview, Erik Berg, 21.01.2021; Interview, Lars Stordahl, 28.01.2021; Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen 29.01.2021
183 Blaikie, 2007, *Approaches to social enquiry : advancing knowledge*, pp. 80.
184 Erica Schoenberger, 1991, "The Corporate Interview as a Research Method in Human Geography."
185 Elaine Stratford and M Bradshaw, 2016, "Qualitative Research Design and Rigour," pp., 120.

Therefore, the respondents were free to address topics they found relevant. Interviews have – due to the Covid pandemic – been done digitally via video-communication and multiple-re-turn extended conversation in text, methods labelled by Dunn as synchronous and asynchronous "computer-mediated communications interviewing."[186] Considering ethics, all participants were informed in detail pre-hand, also on the usage of ZOOM as a web-based communication tool with associated risks. All interviews were begun by establishing consent and the potential of anonymization. All quotations were presented to and agreed upon to be published in the thesis by the professionals interviewed.

As the purpose of the interviews was to obtain personal data regarding the respondents' experience, a semi-structured guide was utilized.[187] The topics were determined in advance, while the order and number of questions were determined flexibly as the interviews proceeded. The interview guide utilizes eight open-ended questions, be sub-divided into four overall categories: personal professional background and interest area, relevant entry points and historical junctures in international collaboration, theoretical and practical dimensions of international habitat work, and professional opinion.

While the lines between questions were often blurred, the format provided a degree of engagement and commitment from the participants. Accuracy and validity might also have been insured by consistently considering institutions, organizations and political actors, as agents with particular goals.[188] Transcriptions were made directly after interviews. This also opened for continuous alteration to questions and phrasing in the guide.[189] Being the primary language of all respondents, correspondence was done in Norwegian.

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[186] Kevin Dunn, 2016, "Interviewing," pp. 178.
[187] Ibid. pp.175
[188] Ibid. pp.180-182
[189] Ibid. pp.169-172

4.5 Interview participants

Criterion sampling produced a manageable selection of nine participants.[190] Since all participants operate as public figures on a frequent basis, they are given brief introductions here. Names will also be visible in the analysis and discussion chapters, per agreement. The participants are only responsible for their own statements, and have been given opportunity to verify the validity of all quotes utilized. A short list of interview participants is provided in the Appendix.

The current Board Leader of HN, Erik Berg, previously employed in the MFA with responsibility for the Habitat cooperation, provided a much-needed entrance to the subject at hand, and practical experiences with challenges. Bjørn Røe, Professor Emeritus at the Department of Architecture and Planning - NTNU, and attendee at the two first Habitat conferences, gave valuable insights into the longer lines and conflict points of Norwegian habitat engagements. Likewise, Sven Erik Svendsen who have followed the international engagement closely, introduced critical explanatory factors on the Norwegian agenda.

May Sommerfelt, previously leader of Shelter Norway, provided both an extremely valuable comparison to the Swedish engagement over time, and explained in detail Shelter Norway's civil society engagements in Tanzania, Kenya and South Africa. Marianne Millstein, researcher at the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) provided comments on theory deployment with regards to her own studies referenced here. Hans Christie Bjønness, professor at the Department of Architecture and Planning – NTNU, has written extensively on these subjects, and together with Millstein provided a sparring partner as to my own initial findings. Getting in touch with Per Menzony Bakken was paramount to locating information on and discussing the 1998 reformatory work on the Habitat Centre. Marit Viktoria Pettersen was the official MFA focal point for the preparatory process of Habitat III, and presenter at the conference.

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[190] Stratford and Bradshaw, 2016, "Qualitative Research Design and Rigour," pp. 124.

Lars Stordahl is currently employed in the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA) under UNH. As Regional Partnerships and Monitoring Officer at UNH-ROAP in Fukuoka, Lars spurred initial interest in the research topic while supervising my work. In our interview, he gave both a needed practical orientation to the case at hand and some hard-earned lessons from within the UN development complex.

4.6 Structure of analysis

In 2011, a Norwegian white paper on the future of the UN relationship acknowledged a neglect of urbanization processes within development aid. In order to increase its focus, the government made commitments to:

> (...) "lift" urban issues in the international development debate. Multilateral assistance through the UN and the World Bank and international civil society, in particular the slum population's own organizations, will be increased to strengthen cooperation (...) Measures will be implemented to promote institutional cooperation between Norwegian cities and towns in the South.[191]

Ambitions set out in the white paper recognized the need to increase planning capacities of local municipalities, and also underlined how civil society organizations and other institutions representing urban informal settlement areas would be crucial in implementing policies and projects. However, the above quote remains one of few direct mentions of urban issues and urbanization in Norwegian white papers throughout the post-war era.

In the following chapters, my intention is to locate historical contextual events and junctures, that explain relations between Norwegian development aid and questions related to urban growth, and discuss these in relation to conceptualizations of the urban transition, urban-rural bias' and views on the potentials of urban transformation. Three separate chapters investigate events through which perspectives on urbanization and settlement-related questions have been articulated. Aid is placed in historic and development-theoretical context, in order to better

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[191] *St. Meld. 33 (2011-2012) Norge og FN: Felles framtid, felles løsninger* pp. 76.

understand perspectives existing in current policy; the subject of the concluding discussion in Chapter 8.

The Habitat conferences function as narrative historical junctures that structure analysis chapters. The conferences are arenas in which various perspectives on urban growth have met and been discussed in relation to overarching development goals. In addition, the subsequent declarations and agendas might create epistemological foundations with effects on domestic and international level. Based on policy fields and topics raised by the interview participants, three main categories of Norwegian development aid policy are investigated in analysis chapters.

- The bilateral engagements in East Africa with particular attention to Tanzania and the spatial ideology of the *Ujamaa*;
- Activities leading up to and following from the Habitat Conferences and;
- Multilateral cooperation through the UN framework with a focus on the Habitat Centre and UN-Habitat.

5. Approaching Habitat I

This chapter investigates Norwegian habitat policy in the period between the establishment of the first aid agreement in Tanzania in the early 1960s and in the aftermath of the first Habitat Conference in 1976, largely the period between 1960-1980. Announced at the UNGA of December 1961, the first UN Development Decade was titled "Economic and Social Development." The acceleration of self-sustained economic growth in order to reach goals of social advancement was urgent and member states were called on to enable support for the acceleration of this process. Increasing the flows of developmental aid resources and the flow of private investment towards developing countries was seen as paramount.

In Norway, experiences from the Fisheries Project (INFP) in India were evaluated in White paper no. 23 (1961-62), summarizing the Engen Committee's work and establishing a political foundation for the development field. [192] Hans Engen, the State Secretary of the UD leading the committee's work, had witnessed the increasing focus on development aid from both the US and the UN. Norway lacked a clear management structure. The committee achieved its two primary goals: to draft a proposal for the organization and coordination of development assistance and to establish the practical forms and directions it would take. [193]

White paper no. 23 reflects the dominant modernization theories at the time, referring to a state of being 'modern' that developed nations should assist developing nations achieve. Developing countries were understood to be un-developed and lacking the essential conditions for development: institutions for education, health systems, finance, and working governmental institutions. NORAD's precursor, Norwegian Development Aid (NUH), was established with strategic directions based on recommendations in the Engen evaluation. The overall goal of development was specific for its time: "economic, social and cultural development in the Third World." [194]

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[192] Atle Alund, 2014, «Hans Engen - en utenrikspolitisk biografi," pp. 99-102.
[193] Kjetil Reithaug, 1994, «Institusjonen Norsk utviklingshjelp : organiseringen av norsk bistandsadministrasjon 1962-1968 : grunnlaget legges for NORAD," pp. 28-30.
[194] *St. Meld. 23 (1961-1962) Innstilling fra Utvalget for utredning av spørsmålet om Norges hjelp til utviklingslandene,* pp. 7.

In our interview, Erik Berg emphasized the approaches of aid, in the period between its establishment and the mid 1970s, as being largely conditioned upon priorities in partner countries.[195] White paper no. 23 prioritizes multilateral channels of aid, but emphasizes the roles of sovereign states. State planning and adjustment policies in a Keynesian tradition, policies which had seen success in Norway, were seen as pre-requisites for economic growth elsewhere. The necessary reforms would have to be taken by recipient governments. [196] This corresponds to lasting principles regarding recipient orientation, self-reliance, and sovereignty in partner countries.

Between 1960 and 1980, newly independent countries in East Africa—including Tanzania, Zambia, and Kenya—became the largest recipients of aid from the Nordic countries. A first cooperation between Tanganyika and Norway began as early as 1961, as part of the pan-Nordic development aid program, prior to the establishment of aid institutions in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Nyerere would visit with the Nordic countries in 1963. A first Norwegian-Tanzanian bilateral aid agreement was signed in 1966, with extensive follow-ups in the years after.[197] Tanzania became the largest recipient throughout the 1970s, with more than double the aid of Kenya, and has remained the overall largest recipient, having received an estimated NOK 25 billion out of the overall NOK 516 billion spent in 2012.[198,199]

The *Ujamaa*, a large-scale national development programme to transform the inherited spatial-economic system, provides insight into urban-rural epistemologies and ideals at the time.[200] The first sub-chapter focuses on the evolution of settlement perspectives in Norwegian development aid in these years, through the engagement in Tanzania, and the central white papers distributed.

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[195] Interview, Erik Berg 15.01.2021
[196] *St. Meld. 23 (1961-1962) Innstilling fra Utvalget for utredning av spørsmålet om Norges hjelp til utviklingslandene,* pp. 6, 16.
[197] NORAD, 2021, "Milepæler i norsk bistandsarbeid ".
[198] Tiril A. Skarstein, 2012, "Gevinsten har vært størst for Norge," pp. 4.
[199] Ingvil Urdal, 2009, «Det forgjettede land? : en analyse av den norske Tanzania-debatten, med hovedvekt på perioden 1971 til 1985."
[200] Geoffrey Ross Owens, 2014, "From Collective Villages to Private Ownership," pp. 208.

5.1 Urban *tamaa* in the *Ujamaa*

Written by president Julius Nyerere in 1967, the *Arusha Declaration* states fundamental principles of the TANU party and Julius Nyerere's political program for economic growth, socialism, and welfare. Main tenets were social equality, self-reliance, and the *Ujamaa*.[201] Ujamaa is a Swahili term which translates to 'extended family', 'brotherhood', or 'community.' Within the context of the TANU party's socialist-based outlook, Ujamaa was strategically utilized to express the government's ideological beliefs. In Nyerere's phrasing, ujamaa became "(…) the word we use for socialism."[202] The Arusha Declaration set out a path of development in which economic growth is the target, dependent upon the quality of its socio-geographically redistributive features, and capabilities of poverty alleviation.[203] The methods selected to reach these goals were linked to education, health, and agriculture, requiring substantial investment. Spatially, regional distribution and rural development were at the core of the policy.

The social-democratic and rural settlement features of Nyerere's policy, would attract special attention for Norwegian policy-makers.[204,205] While foreign aid, especially financial, was looked down upon, the declaration made clear that "Independence means self-reliance", which corresponded to primary ambitions of Norwegian aid and the prior Nordic collaborative engagement.[206] The broad Nordic agreement on the goals and strategies of the Tanzanian government is evident in aid budget increases. The majority of aid would be in support of the Arusha Declaration and the Ujamaa programme. In a forthcoming article, Ellefsen uses an excerpt from Juhani Kopponen's 2001 paper, one of the Finnish experts participating in the ujamaa planning processes.[207] Kopponen argues that Nyerere's policies;

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[201] Julius K. Nyerere, *The Arusha Declaration and TANU's Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance.*
[202] Black Journal, 1970, A look at Capitalism in Kenya & Ujamaa in Tanzania
[203] Hilde Beate Selbervik, 1999, *Aid and conditionality : the role of the bilateral donor : a case study of Norwegian-Tanzanian aid relationship,* pp. 20.
[204] Simensen, 2007, «Writing the History of Development Aid," pp. 171.
[205] Interview, Erik Berg 15.01.2021
[206] Nyerere, *The Arusha Declaration and TANU's Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance.*
[207] Karl Otto Ellefsen, Forthcoming, 2021, "Countryside reconstruction in postcolonial Africa: The Ujamaa experience," pp. 6-7.

(…) fit well into the Nordic mind-set, and the trust in his leadership was a decisive factor when the Nordics threw their lot behind Tanganyika.[208]

In the *Arusha Declaration,* Nyerere reflected on the primary challenges for implementing socialism in Tanzania. A major issue identified was the existence of capitalist class relations in the country, alongside traditional rural culture, perceived as contributing to inequalities and exploitative relationships. The spatial evidences were found in the relationship between town and countryside:

> *The policy of inviting a chain of capitalists to come and establish industries in our country might succeed in giving us all the industries we need, but it would also succeed in preventing the establishment of socialism, unless we believe that without first building capitalism, we cannot build socialism.*[209]

Nyerere's stance regarding cities had its roots in the colonial organization of the Tanzanian economy, organized with an administrative trade centre in coastal Dar-es-Salaam which rapidly grew to become Tanzania's largest city. In the late 1960s, the urban population of Tanzania was approximately 3,8% of the total population. An estimated 80% of the population resided in dispersed settlements around the country's perimeter.

In Nyerere's essay "Socialism and rural development"*,* the phrase *tamaa* is used to describe the envy and injustice felt by native populations towards urban growth under colonialism, and the greed and violence connected to 'the urban.' Nyerere understood the urban structures, and the culture in the cities, as an imported feature of colonialism and a vehicle through which global capitalist expansion could take place:

> *One important result of developments over the past 40 years has been the growth of urban centres and of wage employment. In fact, only about 4 per cent our people live in*

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[208] Juhani Kopponen, 2001, *Finnish aid to Tanzania: still afloat*, pp. 13.
[209] Nyerere, *The Arusha Declaration and TANU's Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance.*

towns (…) The life of these tiny minorities has become a matter of great envy for the majority.[210]

As discussed at length by Owens in his PhD, *From Collective Villages to Private Ownership*, Nyerere utilized tamaa in his writings to describe the essential spatial injustice between the colonial capital and the countryside where most of the population lived. Dar-es-Salaam had served the commercial and administrative centre-point after Germany established colonial rule in 1869, building the first railway to the interior. After the British took over a ruling mandate in 1919, the railway was extended to Mwanza and Lake Victoria to promote trade. In accordance with the highly racialized and hierarchical colonial concerns, Dar was organized into three zones: the former European area (Uzunguni) with low-density residencies for the colonialists, the middle density Indian area (Uhindini), and the high-density African area (Kariakoo).[211‘212] Two connotations of the 'tamaa' phrase are important.

Firstly, tamaa translates to 'envy' or 'desire' and was used to describe a resentment towards biased urban development in the context of colonialism. In addition to the already privileged land-owning classes that resided in the city, the late-colonial regime improved the livelihood of a select labour force of the domestic population.[213] This national minority, the urban African working class, was characterized by managed wages, availability of consumer goods, food, and basic social securities—in stark contrast to the exploitation of lands, price controls, and surplus demands that had taken place in the countryside.[214] Nevertheless, the African urban working class represented a minority in the city.

In Kariakoo, situated outside of the township, individual land tenure was largely denied. The district had congested settlements, limited green space, narrow roads, and low-rise buildings. The government building district, within the European area, enjoyed spacious green spaces, wide

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[210] Julius K. Nyerere, 1967, "Socialism and Rural Development," pp. 341.
[211] Garth Andrew Myers, 2011, *African cities alternative visions of urban theory and practice,* pp. 50-54.
[212] Ezekiel Z. M. Moshi, 2009, «Urban transformation : changing building types in Kariakoo, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania," pp. 27-32.
[213] Owens, 2014, «From Collective Villages to Private Ownership," pp. 212-13.
[214] Ibid.

roads, elaborate architecture, and high-rise buildings. While Kariakoo served as the main market area, spatial ordering by the British served to separate the commercial sector, dominated by Indian traders, from the majority African population residing in the area.[215] However, in the late colonial period, home ownership had been promoted as a way of developing an African urban middle class, which could secure political stability by increasing social order and improving welfare. In British colonies, financial loans provided through the Colonial Development Corporation became the mechanism to create new homeowners.[216] However, Nyerere considered the urban way of life among native populations as deeply connected to colonial history and a continued dependence upon the market economy.

Secondly, and connected, tamaa referred to the alien socio-spatial characteristics of the capital city, outside what was regarded as traditional Tanzanian livelihood. With independence, TANU were looking for something new. Though they found models in the existing pattern of villages, the European parts of the megacity could not be a model for future habitation.[217] The first five-year plans focused on the majority of the rural peasant population, understood as seminal in order to achieve a form of self-reliant and community-based socialism. Since colonialism, through capitalism and Western culture, had altered the gravitational pull from the "traditional" ideals of Tanzanian society towards the colonial metropolis, the challenge was to take back the country and become self-reliant outside of the capitalist system.

Nyerere's spatial ideology linking colonial capitalism to the city shows similarities to, and overlaps with, beliefs in the international critical research community at the time. Three factors can be discerned: the post-colonial metropolis represented (1) a symbol of countries' colonial past, (2) continued coordinating points for exploitative relationships with the global north, and (3) the proliferation of a trans-national class of privileged urban elite. As discussed by Galtung and Gunder Frank, the major cities represented symbols and coordination points of a continued imperialist relationships with the global north.

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[215] Luce Beeckmans and James Brennan, 2016, "In between improvisation, compensation and negotiation."
[216] Andrew Burton, 2005, "African Underclass: Urbanization, Crime & Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam 1919-61," pp. 370-86.
[217] Ellefsen, Forthcoming, 2021, "Countryside reconstruction in postcolonial Africa: The Ujamaa experience," pp. 6.

According to an essay published in 1976 by the critical urban scholar Edward Soja, the legacy of colonial exploitation—and colonial social and spatial structures with a base in urban capitals—along with the continuing presence of urban elites, can explain why Tanzania, and other new states, dedicated their attention to the re-structuring of settlement systems. On the topic of the 'Ujamaa' villagization policies in Tanzania, Soja refers both to anti-elite sentiments and the ambitious socialist program of redistribution as setting the country apart from pre-eminent growth paths:

> *Whereas Kenya has clearly followed a pre-eminently capitalist path, allowing the entry of some Africans into the dominant elite but changing little else, Tanzania and to some extent Uganda have attempted radically different courses and to a great extent have managed to weaken the structures of dependency upon foreign and domestic capital. (...)[218]*

5.2 Villagization as modernization

Nyerere's recognition of urban exploitation, urban bias, and forms of urban entitlement would be reflected in national development policies. The three central tenets of the *Arusha Declaration* created a foundation for planning of villages and regional centres: social equality, Ujamaa, and self-reliance at a national and local scale.[219] The establishment of multi-functional and dispersed regional centres was seen as integral to development, part of the Second Five Year Development Plan (1969–74).

New towns, organized in village units, were to be responsible for political representation, administration, and production. The balanced settlement structure sought to provide societal order through basic service provisions and a spatial organization for productive activities in more easily governable, stable, settlements. The programme also sought to establish, support, and coordinate forms of collectivized agriculture that would be dependent on government subsidies

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[218] Edward Soja and E. Weaver Clyde, 1976, "Urbanization and underdevelopment in East Africa," pp. 233-34.
[219] Nyerere, *The Arusha Declaration and TANU's Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance.*

and forms of welfare. All settlements should ideally be self-sufficient and equal, as described in an interview with Nyerere in 1970:

> *We are going to use the Ujamaa villages for the purpose of working together for our own good, from our own ideas of cooperation and operation, to create a modern society.*[220]

The means of production, primarily in agriculture, were to be collectively owned by farmers and managed from a central state. Accordingly, the manufacturing and finance sectors of the economy, though small in scale, changed from 90% foreign ownership in 1967, to 80% public ownership in 1972. In 1972, the government administration was decentralized to nine regional centres. In their 1973 reading of Nyerere's policies, Arrighi and Saul frame these policies as aiming to:

> *(…) restructure the country's inherited economy and (…) to redress the rigid dependence upon the international capitalist system which was inherited from the colonial period.*[221]

In line with ideas of territorial balance, establishing regional agrarian community centres would divert from the exceeding growth of Dar and increase the benefits of balanced modernization—with less congestion, better areas for investment, and more equitable growth.[222] These tenets would, in theory, lay the foundation for a community-based socialist country with equal distributions of wealth, devoid of property-owning classes.[223] From 1974 to 1977, between 5 and 11 million residents are estimated to have been subject to relocation. They were relocated to planned and more concentrated ujamaa settlements, which included the provision of basic services such as schools and safe drinking water. Several bi- and multilateral donors including Canada, Italy, and the UNDP would be involved in the relocation through financial and technical

[220] Black Journal, 1970, *A look at Capitalism in Kenya & Ujamaa in Tanzania*
[221] Giovanni Arrighi and John S. Saul, 1973, *Essays on the political economy of Africa,* pp. 20-21.
[222] Interview, Hans Christie Bjønness, 27.04.2021
[223] Selbervik, 1999, *Aid and conditionality : the role of the bilateral donor : a case study of Norwegian-Tanzanian aid relationship*, pp. 20.

aid.[224] Architects and planners from the Nordic countries, especially Finland, would contribute to developing the spatial principles for regional centres including Mtwara and Lindi, the Uhuru regional corridor, and village centres of Mbeya, Moshi, Tabora and Tanga.[225] Based on interviews with formerly relocated residents, Owen highlights how many people understood Ujamaa as a form of satellite city program, intended to create planned urban settlements in existing centres. Although collective village units were to own and operate all capital stock and properties, reminiscent of Howard's ideals, the program was understood by residents as an urban modernization of the countryside: "awarding the social outlooks associated with urbanization." Given the proliferation of waged work, this was quite the opposite of the Ujamaa's intentions for the establishment of traditional, family-based, agrarian livelihoods.[226]

The Ujamaa had direct effects on the capital city. Between 1957 and 1967, the African population in Dar grew from 93,363 to an estimated 272,821, mostly in informal settlements.[227] Aside from the fact that the native population were allowed to legally take up residency and employment in the city, the continuation of 'slum clearing' between 1960 and 1971 might be seen as an extension of colonial town planning procedures. Demolished informal settlements were to be replaced by "decent" housing, although they quickly became unaffordable for the evicted population.[228]

Between 1967 and 1985, the government would instigate the acquisition of private property, the nationalization of production, and the discouragement of private construction activity, leading to a stagnation of building construction activities in the city centre. In 1971, the government possessed and nationalized 30,000 housing units throughout Dar that had been mostly owned, and kept as second homes, by the Indian population. In order to suppress crime, governmental bodies initiated a catalogue of all inhabitants' identities, home address', and employment

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[224] A. M. Hayuma, 1979, "A review and assessment of the contribution of international and bilateral aid to urban development policies in Tanzania," pp. 355.
[225] *Nina Berre and Nina Frang Høyum, 2015, "Forms of Freedom: African Independence and Nordic Models," pp. 25.*
[226] Owens, 2014, «From Collective Villages to Private Ownership," pp. 214-15.
[227] Fikreselassie Kassahun Abebe, 2011, «Modelling Informal Settlement Growth in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.," pp. 15.
[228] Alphonce Kyessi and Tumpale Sekiete, 2014, "Formalising Property Rights in Informal Settlements and Its Implications on Poverty Reduction: The Case of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania," pp. 2356.

records. People who could not provide legal evidence of tenancy were deported to Ujamaa villages.[229]

Throughout the 1970s, The World Bank largely filled the role of international urban development provider in Tanzania. African countries including Tanzania, Botswana, Zambia and Senegal became key recipients in the 1970s. The Sites and Services (SSU) program was the largest initiative, beginning in Tanzania in 1973.[230] Its vision was to improve the basic infrastructure of informal settlements, while providing land for low income people. In what has been termed 'aided self-help', plots and infrastructure were assigned either for local development or through NGOs, rather than direct housing provisions.[231, 232] However, the amount of housing production was far behind the targeted goals. The plots developed, mainly through the SSU, would often end up among higher income residents "(…) showing that regulations regarding plot allocation only to low income people have not been strictly adhered to."[233]

The Tanzanian Housing Bank (THB), which was initiated by a Norwegian expert group under Jens L. Seip under the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development (KMD) in 1972, faced other issues. According to Sven Erik Svendsen, the central question for the Norwegian delegation at the time was:

> *(…) whether or not the experiences gained in the Norwegian housing sector were transferable to developing countries, as housing cooperatives and savings schemes in both rural and urban areas.[234]*

Yona establishes the central premise of the THB as a means through which urbanization to Dar could be halted by providing credit for low-cost housing in rural areas. Nevertheless, the THB showed considerable potential for the alleviation of housing concerns for low-income

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[229] Marco. M Burrra, 2004, "Land Use Planning and Governance in Dar es Salaam: A Case Study from Tanzania."
[230] Michael Cohen, 2001, "Urban assistance and the material world: learning by doing at the World Bank."
[231] Fortunatus Bahendwa, 2013, «Urban form through residents' practices : the unconventional transformation processes in suburban areas in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania," pp. 76-77.
[232] Branwen Gruffydd Jones, 2012, "'Bankable Slums': the global politics of slum upgrading," pp. 774.
[233] Hayuma, 1979, «A review and assessment of the contribution of international and bilateral aid to urban development policies in Tanzania," pp. 355.
[234] Interview, Sven Erik Svensen, 29.01.2021

populations across settlement types. In a seminal 1979 assessment of urban development policies in Tanzania, Hayuma notes that while the THB had admirable aims, it did not manage to provide sufficient loans in urban areas. High rates, long and difficult loaning procedures, as well as expensive building plans and permits, made informal tenure systems more attractive. With the lack of maintenance of basic infrastructure and the failure to meet conditions set by the THB, the period between 1960 and 1980 would largely lack urban planning processes that could facilitate the growing population.[235]

5.3 Shaping a rural orientation

According to Simensen, the Arusha Declaration would become a household object in the Norwegian aid administration. Books and speeches by Nyerere were translated into Norwegian, reflecting the overall interest for Tanzania. [236] In a speech held in honour of president Nyerere's visit to Norway in 1976, Norwegian prime minister Oddvar Nordli relayed the experiential linkages between the Arusha declaration's tenets and Norwegian values;

> *(…) You would be surprised to see how widely the principles of the Arusha Declaration are known and appreciated in this country (…) self-reliance (…) development of the rural areas (…) distribution of incomes to avoid the establishment of a rich powerful upper class. [237]*

This is a core argument raised in much of the literature. The Arusha Declaration's focus on rural sectors, decentralization, and the planning of regionally dispersed centres, strongly corresponded with the ambitions of the Nordic donors at this point. The regional planning ideals of Tanzania, in particular, related closely to the Nordic plan-economy based ideals at the time: a common belief in centrally organized, hierarchical planning. Broader than architectural aesthetics or the question of housing, urban and regional planning was the integrated and comprehensive method through which social, cultural, and economic concerns were met. This is perhaps most strongly evident in the Tanga Master Plan, which stipulates that the purpose of regional planning was to

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[235] Interview, May Sommerfelt, 01.02.2021
[236] Jarle Simensen, 2003, *1952-1975: Norge møter den tredje verden,* pp. 142.
[237] Oddvar Nordli, "Middagstale til Tanzanias president Julius Nyerere."

create the physical framework for a socially progressive urban environment, planning functioning as "(…) the machinery for the coordination and integration of physical and economic planning."[238]

In her MSc on the subject of the Norwegian-Tanzanian relationship, Urdal identifies two prevalent factors found throughout representations of the relationship up until 1985: the perceived progressive social development in Tanzania and ideological similarities between Norway and Tanzania.[239] Both factors are connected to the Tanzanian national development programme, initiated in the period under Nyerere, which would have repercussions on the articulation of aid perspectives within the southern development complex in Norway and on the formulation of policy.

Two white papers in the 1970s would describe and articulate experiences into perspectives on future development aid: white paper no. 29 (1971-72), and white paper no. 94 (1974-75). White paper no. 29 presented main reflections from the experience up until that point. Main principles for how aid would be distributed were outlined, based on UN-directives and domestic evaluations in the 50s and 60s. These included considerations for recipient orientation, geographic concentration, the balance between bilateral and multilateral aid, and the function of aid as unconditional 'gifts.' The outcome of these evaluations is not set in stone, and was subject to interpretation over time and changes in the political economy. The principles set out can be seen as a somewhat coordinated profile for Norwegian development aid with a broad political appeal.[240,241]

The white papers presented a change in direction, from economic growth being the primary consideration towards a broader view of social development as including poverty alleviation, distribution, and welfare, especially towards disadvantaged groups. White paper no. 29 stated aid

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[238] Rainer Nordberg et al., 1974, *Tanga master plan, 1975-1995*.
[239] Urdal, 2009, "Det forgjettede land? : en analyse av den norske Tanzania-debatten, med hovedvekt på perioden 1971 til 1985," pp. 26.
[240] Helge Ø Pharo and Monika Pohle Fraser, 2008, *The Aid Rush : aid regimes in Northern Europe during the Cold War : Vol. 1*, pp. 57-59.
[241] *St. Meld. 29 (1971-1972) Om enkelte hovedspørsmål vedrørende Norges samarbeid med utviklingslandene*, pp. 11-14.

should primarily be directed towards regimes prioritizing socially just development policies benefitting the broader population.[242] White paper no. 29 was the first to add *target groups* to direct ODA. While broad masses were still a priority, the risk of benefitting "privileged groups" at the national level lead the government to proclaim that aid should primarily benefit "the worst-off groups of the population." [243]

References to "privileged" social groups recall similar warnings of adding to inherent urban bias, the risk of aiding the urban elite, as documented in the Tanzanian experience. In order to achieve "economic development for the benefit of the broad masses of the population," social development, vulnerable groups, and the poorest population sections were to be focused on. [244] The target-group approach was elaborated as part of the 'basic-needs' paradigm in the mid 1980s. White paper no. 94 gave attention to the ambition of eradicating economic disparities and securing basic standards of living. Subsequently, the sectors emphasized for aid were education, health and district development. The white paper also established practical criteria for the selection and administering of country partnerships. Criteria regarding specialization in sectors with a basis in "Norwegian resources and business" and "recipient domestic policies" following established norms can be seen as strongly supporting aid's direction up until this point.[245]

Investment in sectors that Norway considered beneficial to poverty alleviation—including education, water-supply, and health—can be seen as supplementary to the recipient-oriented focus on investing in rural resource management capable of labour absorption, especially within agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and infrastructure, sectors within Norwegian expertise. [246] As verified in white paper no. 94;

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[242] Ibid., pp. 8, 21.
[243] Ibid, pp. 11-12
[244] Ibid, pp. 39
[245] *St. Meld. 94 (1974-1975) Norges økonomiske samkvem med utviklingslandene,* pp. 24.
[246] Olav Stokke, 1987, "Hovedlinjene i bistandspolitikken: Mål, strategier og prinsipper " pp. 42-44.

(...) development policies targeting broad social and economic development for the most popular benefit, not least through rural development, are also most apt at promoting growth.[247]

Albeit restricted in terms of ideological judgement, these factors place the white papers in line with the *Arusha Declaration* and Nyerere's views on national development. Similar articulations of the success story in Tanzania would be reflected in white papers from the 1970s and early 80s, as well as depictions of the country in media.[248] These representations can be seen as symptomatic of a broad idealization of the country as a progressive example, due to its focus on rural development, self-reliance, and dispersed village modernization.

It is important to underline that the 'rural' at this point represented answers to habitat and settlement structure questions not just in the Nordic countries and Tanzania, but broadly in the 1960-70s world of international social-welfare ideals. These ideals included a strong rural discourse partly to avoid the implications of excessive urban growth. These perspectives would meet in the first Conference on Human Settlements.

5.4 Placing human settlements on the map

The growth of informal settlements through the entire period between 1960 and 1980 in Dar-es-Salaam, came to be indicative for increasing urbanization and urban poverty throughout most of SSA. The first Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat I) was the result of internal struggles in the UN, with the intention being to put settlement questions on the agenda. In 1971, "human settlements" was prioritized as an area of concern. The question of settlements was also brought up at the UN Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972.

The Stockholm Conference built on the UN commissioned Ward and Dubos report of the same year, *Only One Earth: Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet.* The report details a consultation

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[247] *St. Meld. 94 (1974-1975) Norges økonomiske samkvem med utviklingslandene,* pp. 21.
[248] Urdal, 2009, "Det forgjettede land? : en analyse av den norske Tanzania-debatten, med hovedvekt på perioden 1971 til 1985," pp. 28-30.

of experts on the relationships between mankind and the natural environment.[249] The Stockholm Conference would bring up urbanization by highlighting the impact of cities on the use of resources. Population growth and the growth of cities were seen as root causes of global environmental degradation. Subsequently, a 'green environmental agenda' would have to deal with the observed issues that urbanization represented—over-population, over-consumption, and pollution.

The argument that urbanization had to be understood in light of this threat served as another backdrop to Habitat I. In documents formulated at the Vancouver conference, the specific frame of engagement had partly shifted. In the context of the social challenges of urbanization, Bjørn Røe emphasized, in our interview, the historic importance of Habitat I, at which he was present:

> *Vancouver was the real start of putting the challenges of the disadvantaged in the urban population on the agenda (...)[250]*

From the 'human environment' as the main concern, 'human settlements' were conceptualized as the primary object for understanding and acting on development challenges.'[251,252] Concerned with the places and communities where people lived, human settlements captured a new field within the multilateral framework which comprised both the natural and built environment of settlements and the ways that they were spatially organized and managed. As such, the term was neither restricted to the scale of the village or the megacity. As explained by Bjørn Røe, "human settlement" could open for considering all forms of human communities:

> *(...) It was termed 'human settlements', a concept that covers both rural and urban areas. It is actually a very good concept, it is about human settlements. And it can take on different forms in different situations.[253]*

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[249] Barbara Ward, 1972, *Only one earth: the care and maintenance of a small planet*.
[250] Interview, Bjørn Røe, 22.01.2021
[251] Erik Berg, 2018, "Etter et trettiårsjubileum: Hvorfor Habitat Norge ble til og fortsatt (over)lever," pp. 33.
[252] Lars Reuterswärd, 2018, "Habitat Arbetet – Från «Wildlife» til «Global City» Perspektiv," pp. 35.
[253] Interview, Bjørn Røe, 22.01.2021

Habitat I was made up of two parts: a formal meeting of governments, and a Civil Society Forum (CSF) according to Cohen "(...) largely dominated by architects and advocates of low-cost housing."[254] Developing countries were seeing urbanization and population growth coupled with a lack of progress in terms of poverty alleviation. The condition of the urban poor—perceived as victims at the receiving end of resource depletion, environmental damage, and socio-economic inequality—became an overarching topic. However, many participants perceived the growth of cities in itself as a major cause behind worsening social conditions.

The continued existence of urban bias in several developing countries, keeping production prices on agricultural resources at a minimum so as to keep prices low in cities, was recognized as a major challenge that, in addition to emerging industrialization, instigated push factors towards cities. The meeting of governments focused its attention on the need for territorial planning and management of settlements, in order to better balance growth.

In his opening remarks at the conference General Enrique Penalosa, the Conference Secretary, contributed to the view that urbanization constituted a major challenge to "civilization itself." The major concerns highlighted were urban population growth, overcrowding and resulting urban-rural imbalances, growing socio-economic disparities within and beyond spatial boundaries and "the lack of adequate control over land use and urban growth."[255] From Vancouver onwards, establishing mechanisms to control and manage urbanization processes and land-use in settlements was a main focus for policy-makers.[256] Following the notion of excessive growth, the official summary gives particular attention to rural settlements:

> *There was also a conviction that strategies for human settlements will succeed only in (...) part of wider socio-economic strategies, and great significance should be given to make rural living conditions and employment more attractive.[257]*

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[254] Michael Cohen, 2015, "From Habitat II to Pachamama: a growing agenda and diminishing expectations for Habitat III," pp. 38.
[255] Ontario Ministry of the Environment, "Summary & Observations on Proceedings of Habitat," pp. 6.
[256] Erik, 2016, «FN og urbanisering - fra boliger til bred utviklingsarena," pp. 2.
[257] Ontario Ministry of the Environment, "Summary & Observations on Proceedings of Habitat," pp. 8.

Gro Harlem Brundtland, Minister of the Environment of Norway at the time, would lead the official Norwegian political delegation at Habitat 1. The delegation used the opportunity to highlight how a balanced approach to settlement development could be beneficial to national growth and goals of equity. According to Bjørn Røe, Norway's domestic experience and the development experience primarily in East Africa were considered in support of this notion.[258] Referred to in articles by Reuterswärd and Berg, Brundtland's speech would advise socio-geographical decentralization as a strategy towards sustainable settlement patterns. Brundtland cautioned against viewing cities as an "independent sector", meaning cities and urban challenges should be understood as largely dependent on the development of other sectors of the country, and not distinguished from other settlement forms.[259] This might be read as a recognition of the multitude of functional sectors involved in managing cities. However, it can also be read as a warning against prioritizing urban planning and urban social development in a situation where other issues are more pressing.

The Vancouver Declaration refrained from mentioning 'cities' or any description of what makes up 'the urban', opting instead for the phrase "(…) both urban and rural settlements." [260] However, the declaration recognized both growing social inequities of economic growth in cities, associated environmental degradation, and the lacking capacity of governments to control the speed and scale of urban growth. As stated in the 2nd guideline for action, state planning for controlling and regulating land use and tenure should be utilized as primary tools of developing integrated 'spatial strategy plans':

> *It is the responsibility of Governments to prepare spatial strategy plans and adopt human settlement policies to guide the socio-economic development efforts. Such policies must be an essential component of an over-all development strategy (…)*[261]

The civil society forum (CSF), organized in parallel, focused particularly on the needs for public planning and financing of low-cost housing. Speakers at the forum included R. Buckminster

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[258] Interview, Bjørn Røe, 22.01.2021
[259] Erik, 2016, «FN og urbanisering - fra boliger til bred utviklingsarena," pp. 11.
[260] United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, 1976, "The Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements."
[261] Ibid., pp. 5.

Fuller, Jon F.C Turner, Barbara Ward, and Gro Harlem Brundtland. In his speech, Bjørn Røe focused on questions of bottom-up housing and the capacity of slum-dwellers. The mass failure of governments to provide decent housing and the continued practice of slum clearing, among other factors, led to increasing critique of top-down approaches to urban planning. In our interview, Bjørn Røe highlighted the value of incorporating a bottom-up dimension to planning:

> *Top-down is always a bad solution. There are many theories about bottom-up, and how to take control from below, (…) there are all sorts of varieties of this, but without those involved, it will not be ... It will never be good enough.*[262]

Resembling Turner's stance, the critique of state planning and state-centric programs in aid would find its way into the Vancouver Declaration, highlighting the broad benefits of 'self-help approaches.' In a 2012 article, Jones established that the massive diffusion of self-help housing ideas had to do, primarily, with timing. Self-help ideas were internationally embraced as they resembled existing propositions within the UN, USAID, and the WB, of 'aided self-help' as the best way forward.[263] Notably, idealistic propositions of self-help and the 'bottom-up' dimension became embedded in narratives of individual home-ownership. For the US, promotion of home-ownership had already been utilized as a stabilizing tool to prevent socialist take-over in Latin America. 'Home-ownership' was utilized synonymously with 'housing rights' for the poor.[264] After an initiative particularly by the Nordic participants at Habitat I, the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) was established in 1978, an international CSO advocating for the "(…) recognition, defence and full implementation of the human rights related to housing and land/habitat." [265,266] Upon establishment, Habitat Norway became a member of the HIC.

Financing would remain a vital challenge at a national level, and for the new Habitat Centre (UNCHS) established as an outcome of the conference. The UNCHS faced severe financial and staff-related challenges in the years after establishment. According to Cohen, Habitat

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[262] Interview, Bjørn Røe, 22.01.2021
[263] Jones, 2012, «'Bankable Slums': the global politics of slum upgrading," pp. 774-75.
[264] Ibid.

[265] Habitat International Coalition - HIC, "Habitat International Coalition - HIC - Our History."
[266] Berg, 2020, «Hvorfor Habitat Norge ble til og fortsatt (over)lever," pp. 33.

organizations within the UN would not have notable effects until its millennial transformation into UN-Habitat.[267] Nevertheless, three main accomplishments can be discerned from the Vancouver Conference.

Firstly, the conference's emphasis on balanced settlement patterns, shelter and housing issues, and their provision in planning, had the effect of highlighting settlement-specific issues and territorial linkages in development policies. It endorsed the view that 'place matters' in terms of welfare provision and planning in urban areas—in part justifying state and municipal planning approaches to planning settlements and city-specific policies to improve social conditions. It also introduced a rights-based approach to the need for shelter and urban services which was an acknowledgement of growing slum populations. Secondly, the establishment of the UNCHS and the Habitat Commission in Nairobi marked the first UN Initiatives with a particular mandate regarding human settlements. Norwegian support for the Habitat initiative increased after its reorganization into UN-Habitat between 1998 and 2001.[268] Thirdly, the conference and CSF encouraged the formation of CSOs focused on urban issues.[269]'

5.5 Summary

This chapter has analysed how the cross-fertilizing encounter with Tanzanian Ujamaa socialism might have served to reinforce Norwegian domestic belief in balanced settlement distribution, rural industrialization and village development as a prerequisite for national development, and shaped its further articulation in aid policy. While there are similarities between the explanatory models utilized to describe urban growth, the critical analysis of the metropolis' relation to the countryside evident in Nyerere's writing, is conversely obscured in Norwegian white papers from the era. This hints at only a partial influence on Norwegian perspectives.

The urban bias referred to by the 'tamaa' concept refers back to the exploitative relationship between classes in the metropolis and the countryside that characterized the colonial era—with

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[267] Cohen, 2015, «From Habitat II to Pachamama: a growing agenda and diminishing expectations for Habitat III," pp. 38.
[268] Erik, 2016, «FN og urbanisering - fra boliger til bred utviklingsarena," pp. 10.
[269] Ibid., pp. 4.

Dar becoming a primary symbol for continued exploitation through capitalist relations and north-south dependency. Tamaa was utilized as a description of the instigated individual envy created through the introduction of capitalist wage relations, home-ownership schemes, and the commodification of labour in urban centres under capitalist imperialism. In Norwegian white papers, town-country relationships are understood in isolation. The city became equivalent to more privileged groups and a dead-end for prospects of creating growth.

The need for a 'balanced approach' would be further institutionalized by Norway's strong presence at Habitat I. Growing slums were perceived as a reflection of urban bias in development priorities; increases in urban consumption, pollution, and congestion evidences of the threat to civilization that urbanization represented. Habitat I also raised the question of housing for the urban poor, making provision of 'shelter' the primary challenge to be tackled in regards to urbanization.

At this point, the WB's hegemony over urban aid through the SSU, and the underscoring of aided self-help to establish formal home-ownership and stability, would represent a challenge to more state-centric approaches to planning and housing provision. Notably, the broad support by Nordic donors for strengthening land-rights served to strengthen a growing perception that issues of housing in informal settlements were mainly due to government failure to preserve basic individual 'rights' related to home-ownership, interlinked with the malfunctioning housing markets of slums. Nevertheless, Norway's support for the establishment of the UNCHS can be interpreted as a partial recognition that urbanization and the condition of the growing numbers of urban poor required better research and tools to improve conditions.

6. Approaching Habitat II

This chapter interrogates the evolution of Norwegian habitat policy in the period between 1980 and 2000, under the umbrella of international trends. The 1980s and 1990s represented major shifts in the focus and implementation of development aid at an international and local level. Fronted by the ILO, and strongly by the WB, the basic-needs (BN) strategy was translated within Norwegian development policy as a need for 'inclusion' in terms of groups reached, and 'participation' in terms of actors involved in the development process. Further, the Brundtland Commission Report (BCR) instigated an effort towards 'holistic' and 'intergenerational' development within ecological limits that included ideals for spatial management.

While the multilateral engagement intensified in the 1980s, the decade is simultaneously regarded as a 'lost decade' of development.[270] The financial crisis following the oil shock in 1979 had vast ramifications, particularly for countries in SSA. At the expense of prior employment, redistribution, and poverty reduction achievements, several countries experienced decreasing exports and increasing unemployment in both rural and urban areas. As a contingency for giving out loans, the IMF and the WB demanded structural economic reforms to African economies, including cuts in public expenses, privatization, and demands for higher productivity in state-owned enterprises. The ensuing, and enduring, transnational dependence had implications for the types of aid awarded.

The shift in lending, from projects to broader political-economic adjustment, notably incorporated housing policy reform as part of structural adjustment policies. The enabling of growth and investment in urban land and property markets was sought through privatization of national housing institutions and financial deregulation.[271] Tanzania signed a formal Economic Recovery Program (ERP) and a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) with the IMF and the

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[270] H. W. Singer, 1989, "The 1980s: A Lost Decade — Development in Reverse?."; William Easterly, 2001, "The Lost Decades: Developing Countries' Stagnation in Spite of Policy Reform 1980-1998."
[271] Jones, 2012, «'Bankable Slums': the global politics of slum upgrading," pp. 775.

World Bank in 1986, under new president Ali Hassan Mwinyi.[272,273] Nearing the end of the Cold War, narratives regarding 'the end of history' and the broadly perceived failure of state-controlled economies led to diminishing expectations for the role of states in conducting development. Alongside, the Bretton Woods institutions and their donors played a larger part in influencing prevailing discourses regarding urbanization in the international policy arena. Nevertheless, prior to Habitat II in 1996, there was optimism regarding a cohesive global multilateral development agenda on cities.[274] Towards the 2000s, UN-Habitat would play a predominant, visible role in terms of establishing and coordinating the international policy agenda on cities and the challenge of slums.[275] This included a restructuring of the organization, an initiative partly financed by NORAD following the 1998 evaluation of the Habitat Centre, representing a major step towards entering the complex 'urban sector' of aid.

The next section locates the background and adoption of the BN approach in aid practice, involving the further development of a target-group strategy with distinct settlement assumptions.

6.1 Targeting countryside needs

The literature on BN largely confirms the notion that the original ambition of the approach was the development of rural areas and rural economic sectors.[276,277] According to the 1969 paper by Dudley Seers, development aid should be concerned with creating;

> *(…) measurable progress towards the elimination of poverty and a sustained expansion of rents and employment opportunities among the poorest.[278]*

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[272] Arild Engelsen Ruud, Kirsten Alsaker Kjerland, and Lennart Wohlgemuth, 2003, «1975-1989, vekst, velvilje og utfordringerl,» pp. 167-168
[273] Bahendwa, 2013, "Urban form through residents' practices : the unconventional transformation processes in suburban areas in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania," pp. 78-79.
[274] Cohen, 2015, «From Habitat II to Pachamama: a growing agenda and diminishing expectations for Habitat III," pp. 39.
[275] Jones, 2012, «'Bankable Slums': the global politics of slum upgrading," pp. 777.
[276] Jones and Corbridge, 2010, «The continuing debate about urban bias- the thesis, its critics, its influence and its implications for poverty-reduction strategies."
[277] Robert S. McNamara, 1977, "Address to the Board of Governors by Robert S. McNamara (English)."
[278] Seers, 1970, «The Meaning of Development," pp. 46.

The WB's 1981 report on "Accelerated development in sub-Saharan Africa" referenced Lipton's urban bias thesis (UBT) to justify its clear-cut settlement priorities. However, rather than identifying 'urban classes' broadly, government administrations were targeted directly for favouring cities and themselves by overvaluing exchange rates and for the increased revenue in urban sectors. The potential of deregulatory structural adjustment was to remove regulatory barriers on the free flow of urban-rural markets, in theory enabling increased growth in private agricultural industry and subsequent investments in food and crop markets.[279] Also published in 1981, the report "First Things First: Meeting Basic Needs", summarizes the WB's BN approach as one that "enables the poor to earn or obtain their basic needs."[280]

Measured using a threshold of absolute poverty regarding the minimum amount of resources or consumption goods required for well-being, the WB targeted the provision of loans for the 20% poorest of populations. Not surprisingly, these were located only in rural areas with lesser access and/or longer distances to consumption goods.[281] Crucially, by providing resources for the poorest groups, the strategy sought to incentivize demands, savings, and investment, prompting larger positive effects on local market growth. In theory, support for the poorest groups would add more efficiency to the structural transition from subsistence agriculture, than what could be achieved by supporting further consumption and demands in upper-income groups.[282]

Norwegian white papers from the period document two additions that outline a domestic interpretation of the BN approach: 'inclusion' and 'participation'. From a general recipient-led rural welfare-based strategy, inclusion involved the further specification of intended recipients of ODA. While White paper no. 29 had added target groups consisting of the 'poorest population', White paper no. 94 in 1975 would highlight *women* specifically, as women were observed as having less access to formal education and employment. *Children* were first added in Report no. 34 in 1987, with *youth* being added in the 1990s.[283] Participation meant the involvement of new

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[279] World Bank, 1981, *Accelerated development in sub-Saharan Africa: an agenda for action.*
[280] Paul Streeten, 1981, *First things first : meeting basic human needs in the developing countries,* pp. 9.
[281] Ibid., pp. 26-29.
[282] Louis Lefeber, 1974, "On the paradigm for economic development."
[283] Stokke, 1989, "The Determinants of Norwegian Aid Policy," pp. 176.

actors in terms of the planning, conducting, and implementation of aid programmes with official NORAD support, strengthened by the movement towards 'governance' in the 1990s.

The BN approach would become the primary basis of the Norwegian development strategy in the 1980s, formally institutionalized through "Grunnbehovssatsningen" in White paper no. 36 (1984-85) under the conservative/centre Willoch Government. Incorporating parts of modernization critique, the white paper promoted the increased participation of volunteer or private non-governmental organizations. The addition of an 'inclusive' target group-approach was justified by the crisis engulfing developing countries. Resembling the WB's analysis, the starkest asymmetries affecting groups' access to BN, within the labour market and within cultures, were framed as primarily rural issues. Increasing the productivity of vulnerable groups was highlighted as a path to national development:

> *It is the opinion of the Government that our assistance must be directed towards poor*
> *strata of the population in the developing countries, and to increase their abilities to*
> *satisfy their basic needs (...) increased efforts within agriculture, water supply, health*
> *and education (...) are considered especially important (...)*[284]

The white paper intensified a target-oriented development aid strategy that built on prior tenets, including the development of primary sectors with a focus on agriculture, fisheries, forest management, and soil preservation, but with the addition of a targeted-group approach to incorporate more value generation. However, all target groups were specified as within pre-existing focus areas of aid, meaning delineation to more specific target groups mainly occurred in line with the previous directive of targeting the 'worst off.'[285]

At the time, the Norwegian government condoned the WB's BN approach as one which domestic orientations built upon. This followed support for both SAPs and ERPs. In 1986, the Norwegian government issued a statement in full support of the ERP in Tanzania. By 1988,

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[284] *St. Meld. 36 (1984-1985) Om enkelte hovedspørsmål i norsk utviklingshjelp,* pp. 8.
[285] Stokke, 1989, "The Determinants of Norwegian Aid Policy," pp. 176.

support for the ERP was agreed-upon as the primary objective of bilateral aid to Tanzania.[286] In 1989, the *Country Study of Tanzania* was commissioned in Norway to gain an overview on trends following the economic crisis, and to examine aid practices. In the same vein as the WB, the Country Study criticizes the centralization of government power in management and planning processes. Urban bias was interpreted as leading to the entrepreneurial government elite neglecting the local district level. This is surprising given the large-scale Ujamaa programme and neglect of Dar-Es-Salaam, but corresponds to the WB's anti-government focus and the idealization of decentralized management forms. Focusing less on economic structure, and more on administration, the study suggests that the national government's mandate should end at the regional level of administration, with district-level administration being strengthened.[287] The study repeatedly emphasises the district level of government, positioning it as:

> *(...) the only available viable institution to reach economic self-reliance.[288]*

Later, it suggests that Norwegian aid approaches ought to be in line with a prior focus on the agricultural sector, with additions towards local government, the environment, and women.[289] Selbervik notes a strong continuity of perspectives between white Papers no. 36 (1984-85), no. 34 (1986-87), no. 51 (1991-92) and no. 19 (1995-96) in regards to core objectives, approaches and targets highlighting target-groups, human rights and local district administration. These were combined with a new acceptance for the necessity of interreference in recipient countries internal affairs in order to achieve good governance and economic reform.[290]

6.2 Eyes on sustainable urban management

The Norwegian engagement on cities would be furthered following the publication of the Brundtland Commission Report (BCR) *Our Common Future* in 1987, the year declared International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSFH) by the UNGA. Responsibility for the

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[286] Selbervik, 1999, *Aid and conditionality : the role of the bilateral donor : a case study of Norwegian-Tanzanian aid relationship*, pp. 37-38.

[287] Kjell J. Havnevik, 1988, *Tanzania : country study and Norwegian aid review,* pp. 102-03.

[288] Ibid., pp. 105.

[289] Ibid., pp. 342.

[290] Selbervik, 1999, *Aid and conditionality : the role of the bilateral donor : a case study of Norwegian-Tanzanian aid relationship*, pp. 17.

year-initiative was given to the UNCHS. The assessment of the year's various initiatives commended the contributions of NORAD in terms of improving water supply, sanitation, and the involvement of women in aid policies. Nevertheless, the major evaluation of the IYSFH displayed that the number of homeless people and slum-dwellers living in "unworthy living conditions" had increased to one billion people [291]

The BCR made unmistakeable the linkages between economic growth, urbanization, resource depletion and social conditions. It's mandate clearly states that 'human settlements' should be understood as interrelated with other concerns;

> *The Commission focused its attention on the areas of population, food security, the loss of species and genetic resources, energy, industry, and human settlements - realizing that all of these are connected and cannot be treated in isolation one from another.[292]*

Recalling prior warnings, but on a larger scale, "Chapter 9: "The Urban Challenge"" perceives increasing urban land coverage, and the related pollution and consumption patterns, as one of the core sustainability challenges faced by the international community. Resembling the positions stated to restrict the effects of urban bias in the *Tanzania Country Study* and by the WB, the BCR advises governments to;

> *(...) Avoid policy interventions that increase the attractiveness of the major city, particularly subsidies on food and energy, overly generous provision of urban infrastructure and other services, and excessive concentration of administrative power in the capital (...)[293]*

Referring to the BCR-committee's preparatory work, the chapter makes a clear distinction between large metropolises and "smaller cities" in the extent to which they exploit rural resources. The concept of the "smaller city" seems highly similar to prior collectivist visions in town planning history, under the pretence of a longer tradition of anti-urban bias;

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[291] Arcot Ramachandran, 1988, "International year of shelter for the homeless: Activities and achievements," pp. 158.
[292] Brundtland, 1987, *Our common future*, pp. 27.
[293] Ibid., pp. 205.

Large cities by definition are centralized, manmade environments that depend mainly on food, water, energy, and other goods from outside. Smaller cities, by contrast, can be the heart of community-based development and provide services to the surrounding countryside. [294]

The BCR highlights the positions of local organizations in creating change and how aid for local efforts could achieve development ambitions through 'self-help'.[295] The need to strengthen local authority involvement, include citizens in decision-making, and the acute need for housing and urban services were all raised in this chapter. While the chapter neglects to discuss the broader political-economic underpinnings causing 'large cities' to engender socio-environmental exploitation, it veers close in highlighting how urban economies in many developing countries already at this point were:

(…) part of the national (and global) urban-industrial system, with the effect that "the countryside is being 'urbanized.'"[296]

Resembling Owen's analysis of the experienced effects of the Ujamaa, the BCR confirms that both government and donor-led approaches targeting 'balanced' settlement growth have served to strengthen agglomerative dynamics and the growth of centralized markets. As I have discussed, this can also be attributed to how BN development approaches were designed to enhance rural transitions towards market-based economies, which are no stranger to agglomeration. As speculated in the BCR;

(…) Investments supported by governments and aid agencies have followed the same centralizing logic as private investment.[297]

The broadly defined 'sustainable development' functioned as an overarching discourse that connected economic and environmental concerns with social dimensions regarding governance and human rights. Provided in an article by Berg, a 1988 government note on Norway's contribution to the international work on cities highlights strengthening efforts to balance rural

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[294] Ibid., pp. 203.
[295] Ibid., pp. 206.
[296] Ibid., pp. 196.
[297] Ibid., pp. 204.

settlement patterns alongside efforts to reduce urbanization, confirming established positions. According to the government at the time, international cooperation on cities should:

> *(…) seek prepared plans for a rural settlement development in the countries with central development and varied employment, and an ecologically responsible economic growth; In accordance with such plans to increase efforts for district development to reduce the flight to cities (…)* [298]

The recently developed White paper no. 37 (2014-14) reverts back to this UBT-risk that the metropolis represents to development management. Leading developing country politicians and civil servants are perceived as largely "corrupted" due to the influence of "groups associated with terror, urban violence or cartels with territorial ambitions."[299]

Given the BCR report's emphasis on urbanization, it also encouraged new engagement on cities in aid, demonstrated by Habitat Norway's (HN) establishment. The Norwegian document highlights the need for better knowledge and capabilities on habitat questions. Efforts at strengthening capacities of local organizations was emphasized and the note explicitly highlights the further importance of the UNCHS:

> *;Contribute to strengthening the UN Settlement Centres (HABITAT) competence and role in assistance to strengthen urban communities, and for planning and implementation of an appropriate regional development; Stimulate increased efforts for slum improvement in developing countries from Norwegian and local private organizations.*

According to Berg, between its establishment and Habitat II, HN worked to increase public attention towards urbanization and slum growth. The organization did not manage to penetrate sentiments regarding urbanization and cities held within NORAD and MFA. [300] Nevertheless, a government note disseminated prior to the Habitat II conference, provided in Kamete et al's

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[298] Berg, 2020, «Hvorfor Habitat Norge ble til og fortsatt (over)lever," pp. 36.
[299] *St. Meld. 37 (2014-2015) Globale sikkerhetsutfordringer i utenrikspolitikken,* pp. 46.
[300] Interview, Erik Berg, 15.01.2021; Berg, 2020, «Hvorfor Habitat Norge ble til og fortsatt (over)lever," pp. 37.

evaluation, reflected on the lack of priority given to urbanization. It considered increases in urban development aid to be reasonable:

> *Urban projects have not been given priority in Norwegian development assistance. (...) With the increasing emphasis on environmental conditions and institutional development, it is reasonable to assume that aid to urban development will be more extensive in the future.[301]*

At this point, NORAD was heavily invested in various rural development strategies in partner countries. While the government assumed increases in urban development aid to be reasonable, transfers to the Habitat agency remained small through most of the 1990s and are not noted in NORAD's result charts. The major initiative that can be discerned from this period involving political administrative presence is Norway's presence at Habitat II in 1996.[302]

6.3 Identifying urban capabilities

The second Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in 1996 in Istanbul, followed and took inspiration from the Rio Conference in 1992 and the Cairo 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. Both conferences presented evidence on the scale and implications of urban growth. Adopted in Rio, Agenda 21 contained a separate chapter on "Sustainable Human Settlements", documenting the growth of megacities with over 10 million inhabitants and the lack of sufficient planning across government administrations which contributed to a concentration of urban poverty, growing slum areas, and increasing pollution. [303] Habitat II sought to develop programs in support of Agenda 21.[304]

According to Secretary-General of the UN at the time, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, two established and overarching themes for Habitat II were "adequate housing for all" and "viable human settlements in a changing world; full urbanization."[305] Firstly, to combat urban poverty, Habitat

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[301] Kamete, Tostensen, and Tvedten, 2001, *From Global Village to Urban Globe - Urbanisation and Poverty in Africa: Implications for Norwegian Aid Policy*, pp. 69.
[302] Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen, 29.01.2021
[303] United Nations Division for Sustainable Development, 1992, "AGENDA 21."
[304] Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen, 29.01.2021
[305] United Nations, "United Nations Conference on Human Settlements: Habitat II."

II sought to contribute to solving the housing provision challenge for urban poor populations. The discussion between 'enabling' and 'providing' approaches became central—with the WB arguing that governmental institutions should seek to establish regulatory frameworks that enabled private investments in housing markets.

In order to achieve the right to adequate housing, the Habitat II Agenda identified several entry points—including a sustainable housing policy, functioning institutions, markets, land policy, and housing financing that facilitates access for vulnerable groups. 'Vulnerable' groups, including women and youth, were perceived as requiring extra attention in order to achieve 'market inclusion.'[306] Primarily, housing and poverty alleviation were sought through enabling – strategies.[307] Secondly, the conference emphasized global urbanization as an inevitable process that all modernizing countries would necessarily experience. The Habitat II agenda prioritized sustainable resource and energy management in cities— to enable cities to function as "efficient engines for growth"— reflecting a discourse stipulating 'urbanization as modernization'. The UNCHS second *Global Report on Human Settlements,* published in 1996 prior to the conference, re-iterated this fact in its pre-word.[308] As elaborated in Ch. 3.2.2, Brenner & Schmid trace modern conceptions of the urban age thesis (UAT) to the institutionalization of an international understanding regarding urbanization that occurred at this point.

The Norwegian delegation of Habitat II consisted of 38 participants who took part in shaping the "Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements" and the "Habitat Agenda: goals and principles, commitments and global plan of action." The latter contains a program for action and strategies for implementation, sections on goals, and principles, along with agreed upon commitments among participants. The Agenda added over 100 commitments and 600 recommendations, centred around shelter for all and sustainable urban development. It was adopted by 171 participating countries.

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[306] Satterthwaite, 1998, «Can UN conferences promote poverty reduction? A review of the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda."
[307] Habitat II Secretariat, 1996, "The Habitat Agenda. Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements."
[308] UNCHS, 1996, *An Urbanizing world : global report on human settlements, 1996,* pp. 21.

While the Habitat II conference was the first major UN conference to include participation of non-state actors in the drafting of results, several researchers point out that neither of the first conferences provided adequate mechanisms to alter national urban policy trajectories: to monitor the commitments made, or to hold governments accountable for urban development.[309] According to Bruckner, Habitat II had largely failed to overlook the chief trend affecting urban livelihoods at the time: processes of economic re-structuring which involved several of the major actors in urban development aid, potentially increasing exclusionary forms of urbanization. As such, the conference:

> (...) did not dare to pose the crucial questions to the challenges of human habitat at the time that especially originated from neoliberal policies causing a rise of social segregation. [310]

Urbanization was kept distant in Norwegian development language in the years leading up to Habitat II, but the new Agenda led to the drafting of white paper no. 28 (1997-98). The conference's main results are described, but the white paper primarily reviewed implications for domestic policies. [311] Nevertheless, in chapter 9, titled "International cooperation in the settlement sector", the white paper states that the Habitat Agenda corresponds well to targets and ambitions within Norwegian aid, and references sectors in which Norway could make positive change. These are: poverty alleviation, gender equality, environmental concerns, health, and local capacity building.[312] The white paper also references planned increases in support for the UNCHS and the WB's work. It also references efforts within the existing, distinctly rural, agenda as evidence of support for the Habitat effort.[313]

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[309] Cohen, 2015, «From Habitat II to Pachamama: a growing agenda and diminishing expectations for Habitat III."; Satterthwaite, 1998, «Can UN conferences promote poverty reduction? A review of the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda."
[310] Anna Bruckner, 2018, «The United Nation's New Urban Agenda: The long Journey to Commitment on Global Urban Policy," pp. 24.
[311] Kommunal-og moderniseringsdepartementet, *Oppfølging av HABITAT II*.
[312] Ibid., pp. 13.
[313] Ibid.

6.4 Entering the 'urban sector'

Together with financial distress, the failure of governments to follow up and remain committed to the Habitat Agenda would lead to a full evaluation and subsequent revitalization of the Habitat Centre. The revitalization was part of the 1998 UN Reform, which resulted in the UNCHS becoming the official UN-Habitat Programme in 2001. Actors responsible for conducting the evaluation were appointed by Norway, a long-time supporter, along with South Africa, Great Britain, and Northern Ireland. Norway contributed NOK 2 million to the UNCHS revitalization. The team effort was led by Per Menzony Bakken of the Norwegian Department of the Environment (KLD).

Klaus Töpfer, General director of the United Nations Office in Nairobi and Executive Director of UNEP at the time, had insisted on Bakken's leadership in the evaluation and travelled to Oslo to get him on board as his "alter-ego in UN-Habitat." [314] A 1999 Commission Report on the reform work refers to the evaluation as a:

> *(….) frank assessment of the current state of the organization, based on wide-ranging interviews with staff members at all levels and with the staff association (…)[315]*

According to Per Bakken, the assessment was widely distributed among stakeholders in the UN's offices, as well as in Norway, which led to trust in the re-structuring work. The working group consisted primarily of Per Bakken and Billy Cobbett, who had held several administrative positions in South Africa, including Director of Housing in Cape Town. Cobbett would continue as a long-time Director of the Cities Alliance (CA) organization—a collaboration between the Habitat Centre and the WB, established as a direct result of the working group's reform.[316] A core endeavour of the working group was a proposal for the new strategic vision of the UNCHS. According to the 1999 Report, the changes envisioned by the evaluation group would require drastic alterations to the UNCHS:

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[314] Interview with Per Menzony Bakken, 27.04.2021
[315] United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, 1999, *PROGRESS REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*, pp. 3.
[316] Interview with Per Menzony Bakken, 27.04.2021

(…) the Habitat Centre is in a critical stage of transition as a result of the revitalization exercise begun in September 1998, resulting in a new strategic focus, (…) organizational structure and methods (…).[317]

Due to the increased international attention on cities, the working group argued that the Centre should shift from technical implementation tasks to positioning itself as the United Nations "only advocacy agency" on cities and human settlement challenges. Its attention should focus on "maximizing its impact through human settlements programmes that would lead to urban poverty reduction." A new organizational structure was developed in order to centre finances and activities on implementing the work programme connected to the Habitat Agenda:

(…) shelter for all and sustainable urban development and their respective global campaigns."[318]

The area of 'shelter' is identified as a major gap which the UNCHS failed to fill. No clear progress on providing adequate housing for 1 billion slum-dwellers globally had been detected since the IYSTH in 1987. According to the evaluation, the main task for the revitalized Habitat should be to build:

(…) greater global awareness of the deterioration of housing conditions of the poor majority. [319]

In addition to (1) shelter, the principal topics in which Habitat could make significant contributions were outlined as: (2) direct contact and collaboration with urban authorities and leaders for promotion of human settlement legislation, (3) building governance capacity by distributing "norms and standards to guide policy", and (4) acceleration of Habitat Agenda implementation.[320] In our interview, Bakken mentioned that the evaluation had been well received among UNCHS staff and the permanent country representatives in the Commission. [321] This is emphasized with added implications in the 1999 report, which states:

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[317] United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, 1999, *PROGRESS REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*, pp. 15.
[318] Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[319] Ibid., pp. 6.
[320] Ibid.
[321] Interview with Per Menzony Bakken, 27.04.2021

(...) the revitalization team helped to create a more positive outlook for UNCHS (Habitat). By the end of 1998, several significant donors felt confident enough to signal their positive financial responses to the progress already made.

Since re-structuring, UNH has had a mandate in the Habitat Agenda to coordinate settlement-related activity in the UN and to centre expertise on urban development issues and aid. As I will return to (5.3.4), its activities have also been dependent on the priorities of donors.

6.5 Norway draws up the boundaries of development aid

Reflecting on the debates and engagements in the 1990s, Sven Erik Svendsen relays a growing frustration with official aid approaches in the period. Among interview participants, he is not alone in recalling being met with direct vocal remarks from members in the aid administration on the irrelevancy of urbanization and urban questions in aid, disregarding the city as "an irregularity one should rather have been without."[322] Referenced as part of an informal chat between friends, the citation below points to a way of engaging with urban questions which seems to have been prevalent within the Norwegian aid complex. The spokesperson, a higher-up in the administration of aid at the time, has been kept anonymous at request:

Urban questions? You can be sure of two things (...); NORAD will never engage in snow melting in the Arctic, or urbanization in Africa.[323]

According to Erik Berg, Jonas Gahr Støre, previously Minister of Foreign Affairs and currently leader of the Labour Party, characterized urban development aid in 2005 as "another sector" on an already strained budget.[324] The former subject director (fagdirektør) at NORAD, Arve Ofstad, relays some longer lines of aid in his 2019 comment on the lack of perspectives regarding urbanization in aid:

We need fewer, not more priority countries, sectors, and themes in development assistance.

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[322] Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen, 29.01.2021
[323] Interview, Sven Erik Svendsen, 29.01.2021
[324] Erik Berg, 2020, "Utviklingspolitikken må endres på grunn av Covid-19."

The title of the article by Ofstad is even more suggestive, stating it is "good with a little 'blind' development policy."[325] The direct establishment of urbanization as a geographical, administrative, social and sector-specific outside to the primary fields of Norwegian development aid, can be traced to the turn of the millennium. Before this point, Norway was in good company in prioritizing rural development and identified rural groups for support. However, in the wake of Habitat II, the reluctance to discuss urbanization's implications for development challenges and practice would set Norway apart from other donors.

A central topic in Kamete et al's 2001 analysis, comparable donors—including Sweden, Denmark, UK, France, Canada—would agree on central components of the links between urbanization in developing countries and development challenges. Referring to Kamete et al's discussion, corresponding factors are outlined here to distinguish Norway from other donors at the time. Broadly, the scale of the urban challenge was agreed upon, with urban management and planning being lifted as part of the solution. In addition, several of the corresponding traits correspond closely to the UAT (3.2.2), meaning they explain and emphasize urbanization as an irreversible linear process between settlement typologies defined by administrative and sector-specific boundaries, and involving the growth of markets and economic modernization:

- *The urbanization process is unstoppable and irreversible;*

- *Urban areas are engines of economic growth;*

- *Rural-urban linkages are strong and could be exploited for mutual benefit; (...)*

The factors also showcase the integration of environmental discourses regarding urbanization within limits:

- *Urbanization leads to congestion and causes severe environmental problems of sanitation, and of air and water pollution; (...)*

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[325] Arve Ofstad, 2019, "Bra med litt «blind» utviklingspolitikk."

In another evolution, the factors rebuke the notion of poverty as largely a rural phenomenon. The increasingly urban populations is perceived as key to poverty alleviation across sectors:

- *An increasing number of the world's poor live in towns and cities. Hence, poverty reduction efforts must increasingly be directed towards urban settings (...)*

- *The concentration of people in urban centres enhances the reach and effectiveness of interventions in most sectors;*

Additionally, the factors emphasize the potentials of further participation of groups, devolution, and better inclusion of civil society groups in decision-making;

- *; Urbanity is associated with democratization processes;*

- *(...) A comprehensive multi-sector approach to urban development is required (...)*

- *Devolution of decision-making authority to urban municipalities could go a long way towards establishing workable management. [326]*

6.6 Summary

This chapter has identified three key movements in the period between 1980 and 2000 which accentuated Norwegian habitat policy perspectives: the promoted inclusion of rural target groups and district administration as part of the BN approach, the BCR's attention to urban management in terms of social and environmental sustainability, and the added attention to urban growth management as a participative process involving the establishing of markets, highlighted at the Habitat II conference.

The BN-paradigm constituted a new rural orientation with an explicit poverty-dimension and a reframed account of urban bias, targeting the centralization and urbanization of government

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[326] Kamete, Tostensen, and Tvedten, 2001, *From Global Village to Urban Globe - Urbanisation and Poverty in Africa: Implications for Norwegian Aid Policy*, pp. 68.

power in developing country management and planning processes. Similarly to the WB's rural development strategy, the Norwegian government justified a rural focus on the assumption of risks of benefitting central governments and bloated government administrations when aiding urban sectors. Simultaneously, the district level of administration and its associated target groups were emphasized as the ideal units responsible for administering funding, both socially and environmentally.

A shift can be noted between Habitat I and II: from the previous explicit focus on social development issues particularly 'placed' in cities, towards the establishment of functional and competitive markets in different sectors that agglomerate in urban markets. Habitat II increased multilateral attention towards urban growth, but did so partly on the presumption that economic growth in cities formed the basis of development in an urbanizing world. One potential implication was the normalization of growth-based policies that did not necessarily correspond to the interests of the urban poor.

Thought to be outside of Norwegian aid's primary concerns in the 1990s, NORAD might have considered it sufficient to place the responsibility for urban questions, and the building of knowledge and capacity on urban trends, on the Habitat agency within the UN. Supporting the revitalization of UNCHS might have functioned as a proxy for assessing the situation at a safe distance. This is supported by the white papers at the time, considering urbanization, the urbanization of poverty, and the need for urban approaches as tendencies which might become more relevant in the future.

7. Approaching Habitat III

Since 1976, an international focus on the social, environmental, and economic effects of urbanization have positioned urban settlements and urbanization as the key to solving development challenge.[327,328,329] From becoming a component of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) included a specific urban goal, SDG 11, targeting the attainment of "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" cities. The SDGs were the main topic of the latest conference on Human Settlements, Habitat III, and the resulting New Urban Agenda (NUA). White paper no. 24 (2016-17) establishes the universality and integrated nature of the SDGs alongside poverty eradication as aid's main objectives:

> *The sustainability goals are universal and commits all UN member states. Together, the world community has bigger opportunity than ever before in history to reach the goal: Poverty must be eradicated by 2030.[330]*

This final analysis chapter targets the evolution of Norwegian habitat policy in the years between 2000 and the immediate aftermath of Habitat III in 2016. The topics discussed here will, to a larger extent than prior chapters, correspond to recent directions and initiatives in aid policy. The adoption of the MDGs and the SDGs represent recent landmark historical events in multilateral cooperation, with extensive documentation on the processes leading up to and following their adoption. These events engage large critical literatures regarding the actual measurability, attainability, and implications of targets. This chapter's engagement with the development goals is mostly reserved to aspects that have been discussed, considered, and/or implemented in Norwegian development aid in relation to ideals and strategies regarding urbanization.

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[327] Montgomery, 2007, *United Nations Population Fund: State of World Population 2007: Unleashing the Potential of Urban Growth*, pp. 1.
[328] Angelo and Wachsmuth, 2020, «Why does everyone think cities can save the planet?," pp. 2202.
[329] Edward L. Glaeser, 2011, *Triumph of the city : how our greatest invention makes us richer, smarter, greener, healthier, and happier*.
[330] *St. Meld. 24 (2016–2017) Felles ansvar for felles fremtid — Bærekraftsmålene og norsk utviklingspolitikk*, pp. 5.

The chapter firstly targets the adoption of Result-Based-Management (RBM) in aid—introduced together with in the MDGs with implications for aid's orientations, targets, and goals. Secondly, the formulation of the MDG 'slum target', Target 7D, is linked with the WB's and the Cities Alliance's (CA) position regarding informal settlement upgrading at the time. Thirdly, the chapter elaborates on the increased ODA engagement between Norway and UNH, a collaboration involving considerable negotiation in order to put urbanization on a mutual agenda. In 2006, Norway and Sweden were the largest multilateral donors to UN-Habitat's core administrative work.[331] Lastly, the chapter discusses the implications of Habitat III and the New Urban Agenda (NUA). Building off the SDGs, Habitat III and the NUA represent a recent international juncture of policy perspectives specifically regarding urbanization and cities.

7.1 Stream-lining effective development practice

In 2004, the Centre-Right Bondevik government advanced White paper. no. 35 (2003-04) with the aim of establishing a consistent and holistic development policy. Three years had gone by since the international agreement on the United Nations Millennium Declaration (UNMD) and the adoption of the eight MDGs. According to the white paper, progress was underway towards "a larger global consensus on development policy."[332]

Among the principal documents influencing the MDGs, the 1996 OECD DAC report "Shaping the 21st Century", pioneered the integration of prior declarations into a list of seven international development goals (IDGs). Together with the IMF and WB progress report "A better world for all", the IDGs were enticing for donors as it provided specific indicators of human development for specific groups and a fundamental target of eliminating 'extreme poverty' while preserving the ambition of economic growth.[333,334] As such, the adoption of the MDGs represented a consensus between donors, the UN, and the Bretton Woods Institutions. As documented by Hulme, the IDG Report fronted a Result-Based-Management (RMB) approach to development

[331] Stein Erik Kruse and Don Okpala, *Review of the Cooperation Between UN-Habitat and the Government of Norway: A Report to UN-HABITAT and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,* pp. 7-9.
[332] St. Meld. 35 (2004-2005) Felles kamp mot fattigdom: En helhetlig utviklingspolitikk, pp. 9
[333] OECD, 1996, *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Co-operation*
[334] IMF and World Bank, 2000, *A better world for all : progress towards the international development goals : 2000.*

aid practice. As a concept, RMB had travelled from the private sector to public administration practice—particularly visible in the late 1990s UK administration under Tony Blairs 'third way' approach. RMB became particularly attractive in the management of ODA among donors such as USAID, SIDA, and NORAD, as it ensured targets were being met 'efficiently', and provided a way of quality-assuring performance of aid funds in a period of generally declining faith in public institutions.[335]

In practice, a calculative foundation was laid for the MDGs. This involved the sorting of socio-geographical target-groups as either more vulnerable and less integrated into development, or as groups with increased responsibility for carrying out development practices. Vulnerable target-groups included women, along with the 'poor' and 'workers', were separated from one another on the basis of their group-specific needs—in terms of income, education, and/or access to services. As conceptualized in the IDGs, RBM involved the further classification of socio-geographical target-groups into statistical form and a stream-lining of aid management processes. Ilcan and Phillips argue these 'calculative practices' served to:

> *(…) privilege particular imagined spaces and relations as the sites for social transformations.[336]*

The authors use the example of the UN Millennium Project's idealized 'millennium villages.' Villages were positioned as a place in which dwellers had the capability to combat poverty, and better their livelihoods, by choosing more apt technologies and practices for their situation.[337] Likewise, target-groups perceived as most responsible for the advancement of goals were assumed to be contained within specific spatial regions or employment sectors: female owners of agricultural facilities, village dwellers, private sector partners, and so on .[338] White paper no. 35 (2003-04) reflects a tangible optimism from Norway and other donors, for the reinvigorated target-oriented approach:

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[335] David Hulme, 2010, "Lessons from the Making of the MDGs: Human Development Meets Results-based Management in an Unfair World," pp. 18.
[336] Suzan Ilcan and Lynne Phillips, 2010, "Developmentalities and Calculative Practices: The Millennium Development Goals," pp. 845.
[337] Ibid., pp. 859.
[338] Ibid., pp. 858-59.

The Millennium Goals are directed towards concrete, time-specific and measurable results, and point towards the large unsolved tasks when it comes to exterminating poverty and hunger (...)[339]

7.2 Targeting the city without slums

Target 7D of the MDGs targeted the improvement of living conditions for 100 million slum dwellers by reducing the overall number of people living in slums in developing countries by 9%. The ambition resulted from an approach developed the Cities Alliance (CA).[340] The CA organization emerged from the 1998 Habitat evaluation as a collaboration between UNH and the WB. Since establishment, NORAD has supported the CA by NOK 86.9 million.

In its first major report, 1999's "Cities Alliance for Cities Without Slums", the CA's core mission was stated as promoting the upgrading of 'slums', defined as inner city or fringe-based "squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights (...). [341] Its plan targeted the improvement of the 100 million slum dwellers lives by 2020.[342] The relatively modest target in the MDGs must be seen in combination with the overall slogan of 'Cities Without Slums'. The ambition became popular during the first decade of the millennium. A major evolution, White paper no. 35 (2003-04), established that urbanization now represented challenges for the practical operationalization of development aid:

The world must prepare for an increasing urbanization of poverty, (...) [343]

The government made a commitment in regards to the fulfilment of Target 7D, promising to:

(...) increase attention towards urban-based challenges, and promote policies in development aid to alleviate urban poverty as part of the MDGs.[344]

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[339] *St. Meld. 35 (2004-2005) Om samarbeidet i Organisasjonen for sikkerhet og -samarbeid i Europa (OSSE) i 2004,* pp. 9.
[340] Cohen, 2014, «The City is Missing in the Millennium Development Goals," pp. 261.
[341] Cities Alliance, 1999, *Cities Alliance for Cities Without Slums: Action Plan for Moving Slum Upgrading to Scale,* pp. 1.
[342] Ibid., pp. 6.
[343] *St. Meld. 35 (2004-2005) Om samarbeidet i Organisasjonen for sikkerhet og -samarbeid i Europa (OSSE) i 2004,* pp. 7.
[344] Ibid.

Together with the ambition of making cities more economically and culturally 'competitive' at a global level, as discussed by Harvey and Sassen among others, the adoption of MDG Target 7D in national development priorities has had adverse effects on the growing urban informal populations in SSA.[345] Since the adoption of the MDGs, market-driven evictions have been connected to an overall agenda of economic competitiveness.

Huchzermeyer uses the example of South Africa, where the ambition of slum-free cities was adopted after 2005. This included increasing the state's legal capacity to evict people from settlements and to prevent them from returning.[346] In 2006, the country was praised by UNH for its ability at keeping slum rates down.[347] The policy initiatives taken to increase urban attractiveness in connection to mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics have involved mass slum clearance and infrastructure investments.

The perception that slums represent social insecurity, criminal behaviour, and a destabilizing element, has been present in more recent white papers. White paper. no. 33 (2011-12) frames informality, and informal settlements, as being at the root of social insecurity, and a destabilizing element of national development. This can lead to the assumption that informal settlements, or the slum *in itself,* is conductive of unemployment, criminality, or in its worst scenario, is a breeding ground for criminal networks or international terrorism. The white paper sees cities in general as a risk to youth and children:

> *Children and young people under the age of 30 make up upwards of 70 percent*
> *of the world's population. Many of these are living in the cities. There they*
> *most often encounter poverty and great degree of unemployment. The risk of*
> *conflict, violence, crime and drug problems are great. [348]*

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[345] Harvey, 1989, «From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism.";
Saskia Sassen, 2000, *Cities in a world economy*.
[346] Marie Huchzermeyer, 2010, "Pounding at the Tip of the Iceberg: The Dominant Politics of Informal Settlement Eradication in South Africa."
[347] Marie Huchzermeyer, 2013, "'Slum' Upgrading or 'Slum' Eradication? The Mixed Message of the MDGs," pp. 300.
[348] *St. Meld. 33 (2011-2012) Norge og FN: Felles framtid, felles løsninger* pp. 17.

On the topic of security in post-conflict states, the white paper exclusively frames the city as a place of mass unemployment which leads to 'criminal violence':

> *Conflict prevention must be given much stronger priority. Examples of prevention can be (...) measures to create jobs in cities where criminal violence has run rampant."* [349]

White paper no. 37 (2014-15) on security challenges first touches on cities and settlements characteristics in a section on organized crime in the Middle East:

> *In many areas, criminal networks have territorial control. They govern cities, districts and border areas. They collect tax or protection money, provide public services and have their own security forces and judiciary"* [350]

In a section on urban violence and the territorial control of criminal gangs in Mexico:

> *The criminal groups infiltrate the police and border guards at various levels (...) They also infiltrate political circles and local authorities. (...) They act as de facto security forces, by infiltrating local civil protection groups. (...) criminal groups can act as a state within the state."* [351]

Returning to 2003, a primary approach to decreasing urban poverty highlighted in White paper no. 35 (2003-04) was the formalization of urban property rights and enabling access to housing finance—'freeing' the potential revenues of informal sectors. The white paper describes fields in which Norwegian aid could lend support and consideration as to which initiatives were liable for funding upon application. The registration of land rights for the poor became a cornerstone of Norwegian development assistance:

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[349] Ibid., pp. 43.
[350] *St. Meld. 37 (2014-2015) Globale sikkerhetsutfordringer i utenrikspolitikken,* pp. 19.,
[351] Ibid.,

(…) legal frameworks for property and tenure, support for microfinance, initiatives for small and medium enterprises (…) the energy supply, sector support for health and education (…) [352]

According to the white paper, the WB had at this point taken:

(…) a vital responsibility in monitoring what measures are best suited to promote the MDGs and subsequently the Norwegian agenda on human rights.[353]

In 2006, the Bondevik government would take the lead in establishing the independent High-level Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor (HLCLEP) in New York, an international commission with its main ambition to "strengthen the user and property rights of the poor."[354] A board of advisers was represented by the WB, the Inter-American Development Bank, and UNH, while the commission was made up of 28 members—including former US Foreign Minister Madeleine Albright, Minister of International Development of Norway Hilde Frafjord Johnson, as well as Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto. One year after a visit by de Soto in Oslo, the NMCA established the Centre for Property Rights and Development (CPRD). Since, the CPRD has functioned both as an information service, a network for shaping and conducting Norwegian development projects relating to property rights, and as professional input to the work of the MFA and the HLCLEP.[355]

It is not possible to investigate the CPRD's activities in-depth here, but it is important to emphasize that a singular methical focus on property formalization, land registration, titling and privatization has been identified as conductive of land dispossessions in SSA. The role of the ILD has been scrutinized for advocating a pro-poor legal empowerment strategy that, while serving to protect land access, has been connected to the commodification of complex local property jurisdictions. Discussions continue over the extent that formalization approaches in SSA have served to increase the authority of real-estate developers with adverse effects for informal

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[352] *St. Meld. 35 (2003-2004) Felles kamp mot fattigdom: en helhetlig utviklingspolitikk* pp. 65.
[353] Ibid., pp. 9.
[354] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006, *High-level Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor*.
[355] Peris Sean Jones and David Jordhus-Lier, 2008, *Review of the Centre for Property Rights and Development*, pp. 4.

dwellers.[356] Nevertheless, across urban and rural areas, land grabs following from formalization processes can accelerate dispossession and negate non-market access to land, as evidenced by Bergius et al in the case of the green growth corridor in Tanzania.[357,358]

White paper no. 35 emphasized UNH as the most important partner in global work on slums. Due to the failure of previous attempts at land titling and property commodification, UNH's GLTN has recognized the wider range of land rights that exist, in parallel, in many developing countries. The GLTN emphasises that there are alternative approaches to formalization, especially regarding access to right of use, housing provision, and agreements on kinship land relations or traditional land holding groups. Subsequently, the network highlights the need for a "fit-for-purpose land administration" in order to "meet the needs of people and their relationship to land".[359] While apparently adopting a more socially progressive approach, the GLTN, in collaboration with the WB, have been connected to large-scale enclosure of rural lands. As argued by Makki in her article on current land reforms in Ethiopia promoted by the GLTN and the WB:

> *In conditions where 55 percent of smallholders subsist with less than a hectare of land, patriarchal gender relations and the further (market-based) subdivision of farm plots have combined to increasingly exclude women and the young from access to land.[360]*

2007 review note on the Norwegian UNH contribution emphasizes a few key interest areas: economic development for poor urban populations, ecologically sustainable usage of natural resources, and increasing focus on women and youth to achieve development. The foremost endeavour of the UN Programme is stated to be "housing rights and good governance."[361] In the same year, a governmental brief paper on the collaboration raises similar attention towards "urban poverty and environmental degradation as part of the follow-up of the Millennium

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[356] Rolnik, 2019, *Urban Warfare - Housing Under the Empire of Finance*.
[357] Bergius et al., 2020, «Green economy, degradation narratives, and land-use conflicts in Tanzania."
[358] Faustin Maganga et al., 2016, "Dispossession through Formalization: Tanzania and the G8 Land Agenda in Africa."
[359] GLTN, "About GLTN."
[360] Fouad Makki, 2014, "Development by Dispossession: Terra Nullius and the Social-Ecology of New Enclosures in Ethiopia," pp. 88.
[361] Kruse and Okpala, *Review of the Cooperation Between UN-Habitat and the Government of Norway: A Report to UN-HABITAT and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*.

Development Goals."[362] Among a range of UNH programmes and initiatives, Norway, Sweden

and the UK supported the establishment of UNH's Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF). The

programme begun in 2004, with a pilot phase between 2009 and 2011. A central component of

the programme focused on finance. According to the seminal SUF publication "Land and Slum

Upgrading", launched in Oslo, the central mission was:

> *(…) to test and develop new financial instruments and methods for expanding*
> *private sector finance and public sector involvement in slum upgrading on a*
> *large scale.[363]*

The ambition was to secure finance in order to upgrade the physical environments of slum areas,

from area-based upgrading to that of single houses.[364] The slums were assumed to require

investment from private market actors in terms of broadly understood area or home upgrading

and it was also assumed that areas needed to become legally viable, or "bankable", in order to be

attractive for investments:

> *SUF works with local actors to make slum upgrading projects "bankable" –*
> *that is, attractive to retail banks, property developers, housing finance*
> *institutions, service providers, micro-finance institutions, and utility*
> *companies. [365]*

SUF has since been connected to the financialization of property markets globally and heavily

criticized by Jones, among others. In a review of the facility, the adverse social consequences of

establishing "bankable" slums are highlighted, as they further the commodification of landed

resources in informal settlements of developing countries.[366] Suffice to say, SUF made up only

one of several initiatives between Norway and UNH at the time. Nevertheless, the Norwegian

government's 2011 profile sheet views the SUF experience of financing pilot projects as an

unconditional success, reaching the one-sided conclusion that:

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[362] Utenriksdepartementet, *Norsk samarbeid med UN-HABITAT.*
[363] UN-Habitat, 2009, *Slum Upgrading Facility: Land and Slum Upgrading*, pp. 1.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Ibid., pp. 1.
[366] Jones, 2012, «'Bankable Slums': the global politics of slum upgrading."

The social and economic development effects of housing and infrastructure are great. [367]

7.3 Negotiating aid in the urban field

As a whole, NOK 1.1 billion has been disbursed in Norwegian support for UN-Habitat's efforts throughout the period of 2000 and 2020, peaking in the years between 2006 and 2015, and seeing gradual cuts in support after. Norway was also a consistent member of UNH's governing board between 2002 and 2017. Multilateral funding was primarily disbursed as direct programme support, which made up an estimated ¾ of yearly transfers. Remaining support was dispersed as multilateral core support—meaning it broadly targeting the program's main administrative areas of operation, without specific sector priorities.[368] The Norwegian government's capacity to influence UNH's priorities has been unique. It has been a long-standing supporter of the UNCHS, involved in the revitalization work, member of the UNH governing board, and among the largest funders. As documented, UNH's mandate, to integrate the various dimensions of development sectors towards sustainable urbanization and urban management, makes a distinct frame of engagement that has rarely been engaged directly in Norwegian aid.

In our interview, Lars Stordahl emphasized the increase in UN-Habitat support as firstly dependent upon the negotiating role of Erik Berg, who was responsible for the programme within the MFA at the time. Given Norway's track record, it seems likely that Berg "(…) fought that case in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that time." Secondly, it was possible because it was linked to specific problems and focus areas that UN-Habitat had and could continue to contribute to, with relevancy from a Norwegian perspective:

> *I think what Erik Berg managed was to link UNH's themes back to sectoral topics and focus areas that Norway prioritized.[369]*

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[367] Utenriksdepartementet, *Norsk politikk overfor UNHABITAT.*
[368] NORAD, 2021, "Statistics and results - UN-HABITAT - United Nations Human Settlements Programme."
[369] Interview, Lars Stordahl, 28.01.2021

These especially included sectors of water and sanitation, youth (a flagship issue for the Norwegian Church Aid and at the level of the Crown Prince), and climate initiatives, along with:

> (…) land rights that touch back on the issue of 'the most vulnerable' and the 'slum issue'; that people do not have the right to their own place of residence, or their own land.[370]

In Berg's conception, the increase in support for UNH after 2006 was primarily made possible through a process of negotiation and the making of an internal political alliance between Erik in the MFA and five other individuals within the MFA, KMD and KLD on urban challenges.[371] Suffice to say, directing the attention of aid towards urbanization required networking.

A large part of UNH's normative work has been the dissemination of Flagship Reports. From 1979 to 2001, the Global Report on Human Settlements (GRHS), was published approximately every five years to monitor global housing conditions. Between 2002 and 2014, the Flagship Reports were published yearly, alternating between the expert-oriented Global Report on Human Settlements (GRHS) and the publicly oriented State of the World's Cities Report (SWCR). In this period, Norway was the only donor funding the production and publication of flagship reports.[372] According to a 2014 internal evaluation, a main rationale behind re-organizing the entire Flagship Report dissemination process was:

> (…) repeated requests by the Government of Norway, the flagship reports' donor, for increased accountability, effectiveness, efficiency and evidence of use by target groups.[373]

The evaluation identifies the single-donor dependency as a vulnerability. This is not surprising given the increasing RMB-practices within the domestic aid management since 2000, involving stricter demands for accountability, measurability, and evidence of results of aid projects in the short term. Prominently, the Norwegian representative enquired evidence of the reports' ability

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[370] Interview, Lars Stordahl, 28.01.2021
[371] Interview, Erik Berg, 15.01.2021
[372] Michael Cohen and Willem Van Fliet, 2014, *Evaluation of UN-Habitat's Flagship Reports*, pp. 12.
[373] Ibid., pp. 9.

to deliver on results through its dissemination. It is neither surprising that areas in which Norway wished to see increased accountability and evidence of effect regarded the Reports' effects for identified target groups; women and youth in cities.

On one hand, the Norwegian support for Flagship Reports reflects a considerable interest in building competence and knowledge on urbanization within the multilateral system, and actually reaching social groups in urban areas. On the other hand, the Norwegian focus on accountability regarding effects for specific groups might have also placed donor-priorities above the mandate of the UNH to consider urbanization trends broadly. [374] While urbanization gained a somewhat stable foothold in the MFA through the period, there is little evidence that NORAD paid much mind. May Sommerfelt witnessed a gradual increase in interest from the early 2000s, followed by a decreasing interest post-2016:

> *(…) For a period, there was a person in NORAD who knew something about urbanization and settlements. Then there was half a person. And then there were none.[375]*

Bjørn Røe agrees with point, but sees the lack of competent personnel in line with the sector-based focus of aid at the international level. Contributions Norway has made to various sectors might have aided in alleviating urban settlements-based issues, but urbanization has rarely been considered as broadly shaping sectors, or as illustrating the need for new kinds of development aid that considers urban and territorial planning or informal environments:

> *In official Norwegian development aid policy, there may well have been contributions in infrastructure projects and sectoral initiatives within the health sector, water and sewage, etc., but few of these can be considered holistic, or directly considering urbanization or the need for planning.[376]*

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[374] Ibid., pp. 24.
[375] Interview, May Sommerfelt, 01.02.2021
[376] Interview, Bjørn Røe, 22.01.2021

The long-running phenomena has had repercussions in how UNH organizes its work. Due to varying core program support for the agency's main tasks, it has become more dependent on national donors' priorities for the achievement of results within specific sectors. In 2006, the Executive Director of UNH, Anna Tibaijuka, raised a similar point in arguing the issue that integrated urban planning:

> *(...) continued to fall between the cracks and were hardly reflected in discussions, even at the international forums.*[377]

As Lars points out:

> *We must always meet the donors' wishes for a specific angle. Instead of focusing our activities on the core issues of urbanization, we target water and sanitation – in cities, or transport - in cities. These sectoral approaches… It's not just Norway's fault.*[378]

There is a notable difference between UN-Habitat and other international development actors in the field. This is the agency's direct link to the United Nations and the multilateral framework of aid—conditioned by sovereign nation states who hold the main responsibility for achieving commitments. A primary challenge for the organization is to showcase how focusing on government, state planning, and the urban poor, can be beneficial in a situation where most of the transformations occurring at urban and regional levels have less to do with state-initiated planning. In Lars Stordahl's point of view, the challenge of internationally powerful economic actors in urban aid goes back to the need for stronger state capacity in planning and the need for vertical integration of mandate and capacity to the city level:

> *Gaining a complete political understanding of urban development and urbanization in the UN context, touches on a lot of national and sub-national politics (...) vertical integration thus becomes very exciting. (...) The increasing status of cities at the international level has unfortunately not led to increased support for actors such as UNH.*[379]

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[377] UN-Habitat, 2005, "Implementation of Conference on Human Settlements, Strengthening of UN-Habitat." pp. 6.
[378] Interview, Lars Stordahl, 28.01.2021
[379] Interview, Lars Stordahl, 28.01.2021

7.4 Urban planning on the development agenda

This last section looks at the recent adoption of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) as the primary outcome of Habitat III in Quito 2016, as well as the Norwegian presence at the conference. Two questions are interesting at this point. First, in what ways does the NUA's conception of urbanization and the role of urban aid differ from previous agendas? Secondly, what implications did the NUA and its preparatory work have for Norwegian positions at the conference?

The primary background of Habitat III was the three-day United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, held in New York in 2015, which led to the unanimous adoption of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda. While several SDGs touch on challenges relevant to urban areas, SDG 11 was added to directly to address the topic: "Cities & Communities: make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."[380] Gathering 35,000 participants, including policy-makers and civil society organizations, Habitat III is considered the largest UN event to date. The agreement on the implementation of the NUA can be said to renew a global commitment to sustainable urbanization as a condition of, and important factor of sustainable development at a national level. Together with the SDGs, Habitat III represents a third shift in international development thinking that acknowledges increasing social inequality as a consequence of economic growth. For perspectives on urbanization, the central promise of the SDGs, the 2030 agenda, and Habitat III, 'leave no one behind,' has different repercussions than 'cities without slums.'[381]

The NUA's ambition is outlined as the integration and institutionalization of planning approaches and tools at a national and municipal level to meet sustainable development needs. It was shaped by three main documents and agreements issued in 2015: the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and UNH's "International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning" (IG-UTP). Importantly, cities are no longer interpreted primarily as arenas where economic growth can be enabled. As identified by Watson,

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[380] Nations, 2020, "About the Sustainable Development Goals."
[381] Habitat III Secretariat, 2017, *The Conference - The United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III)*.

the city is re-framed as the determinant 'vector' for addressing issues of sustainable development, reorienting policy approaches towards government-led urban and territorial planning.[382] Within the NUA, cities and the city government are envisioned as important entities in pursuing human rights. Among other ambitions, The NUA envisages cities that;

> *(...) fulfil their territorial functions beyond the administrative boundaries, and act as hubs and drivers for balanced sustainable and integrated territorial development' including the promotion of disaster risk reduction and reduced environmental impact.*[383]

The quest for a universally accepted agenda also led to contested planning ideals and objectives. One example was the heated debate over the inclusion of "the right to the city," a sticking-point in the conference's preparatory work and a priority for several delegates. Due to the phrase's radical connotations and a strong reaction from US delegates, the phrase 'cities for all' is utilized in the final publication. Still, as documented by Turok, UNH, among several donors and CSOs, would celebrate the overall emphasis given to a 'right to the city' as a victory for slum-based social movements.[384] 'Cities for all' envisions inclusive cities in terms of land-use, providing "the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing." It also emphasizes equal access to urban social and physical infrastructure such as decent labour markets, food access, and cities that are participatory and democratic.

According to Watson, the NUA promotes styles of planning that are "far from what today's planning theorists would recommend", due to its severely contested nature and fixation on strong state actors."[385] The critique targets discrepancies between ambitions and realities in urban development and planning, as well as approaches adopted for being outdated. The IG-UTP refers to planning as consisting of a hierarchy and system of spatial plans at the level of the region and city municipality, which are integrated in national plans. Long-term and integrated urban and territorial planning is perceived as having the capacity to optimize the 'spatial dimension of the urban form', which, together with effective finance frameworks, can enable sharing of urban

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[382] Vanessa Watson, 2016, "Locating planning in the New Urban Agenda of the urban sustainable development goal," pp. 438.
[383] UN-Habitat, 2017, *New Urban Agenda*, pp. 7.
[384] Turok and Scheba, 2018, «'Right to the city' and the New Urban Agenda: learning from the right to housing," pp. 494-95.
[385] Watson, 2016, «Locating planning in the New Urban Agenda of the urban sustainable development goal," pp. 435.

development value. [386] Similarly, the NUA commits to ensuring a top-down hierarchical division of plans determining local planning frameworks. Within the NUA's "Transformative Commitments", the roles of state led development policies and "urban planners" are prominent in driving and controlling economic growth. Urban planning, design, and broader territorial spatial frameworks are seen as conducive to:

> (...) trigger economies of scale and agglomeration, strengthen food system planning and enhance resource efficiency, urban resilience and environmental sustainability.[387]

A version of the historic concept of territorial balance is prominent throughout the NUA, along with associated discussions of optimal size and distribution of settlements, and concepts of urban primacy. At the regional scale, the agenda references the IG-UTP in paragraph 80 and 81, the first aiming for the implementation of "polycentric and balanced territorial development plans" which increase the role of small to medium cities, [388] the second aiming to:

> (...) encourage synergies and interactions between and among separate urban areas, and (...) develop regional infrastructure projects that stimulate sustainable economic productivity (...) with an aim of promoting equitable growth across urban-rural partnerships.[389]

As such, the NUA's concepts of territorial and urban planning are also applicable to the critiques emanating from proponents, who are highlighting that forces of global capital are seeking profitable locations and expanding markets. In some ways, the NUA proposes a conservative concept of the urban transition, a process managed by the planning regulations in nation states and affected by the traditional locational dynamics of urban industry and the pull of urban culture. However, as we have seen, regional power dynamics and networks of influence can often explain the restructuring of the form and function of settlements—which is why the field

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[386] UN-Habitat, 2015, *International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning.*
[387] UN-Habitat, 2017, *New Urban Agenda*, pp. 15.
[388] Ibid. Paragraph 80
[389] Ibid. Paragraph 81

of planning has shifted to analysing economic regions of study with associated hinterlands, rather than city and village as isolate units. The view of the city as a measurable, bounded size of inter-connected land parcels might not aptly describe cities where primary units ordering spatial change are linked to global and regional value chains and the state regimes of regulation within them. This point is also raised by Watson, who highlights how, today, global city regions often "plug the nation-state into the global economy rather than the other way around."[390]

In parallel, throughout the NUA negotiations several donors prioritized establishing tools to control and regulate urbanization—for instance, by establishing barriers or urban borders as part of 'containment strategies.' This paraphrases the longer history of development actors weighing the costs of prioritizing urban or rural sectors.[391] The Norwegian plenary statement places Norway closer to the established international rhetoric regarding urbanization and economic growth:

> *Urbanization is a complex, cross-sectorial issue with enormous potential for alleviating global poverty and generating growth and prosperity.[392]*

A Norwegian statement made during the conference regarding goes further in inferring the dominance of sector perspectives. Health, climate change, the environment and youth receive added attention:

> *Both climate change and air pollution are serious threats to health (…) These environmental challenges are primarily urban challenges – and they need urban solutions. (…) We need Clean and Healthy cities.[393]*

While some development challenges, observed as 'urban challenges', require approaches that are specific to cities, the statements do not point to the implications for mainstream development aid to benefit urban informal populations or incorporate the perspectives of those living there. While

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[390] Watson, 2016, «Locating planning in the New Urban Agenda of the urban sustainable development goal," pp. 444.
[391] Interview, Lars Stordahl, 28.01.2021
[392] Tone Skogen, "Norway Statement — Habitat III Plenaries," pp. 1.,
[393] Marit Viktoria Pettersen, "Norway Statement – Open-ended Informal Consultative Meetings."

the Norwegian statement highlights an understanding of urban growth that corresponds with the UAT, it also argues in favour of the approaches adopted in the NUA:

> *Urbanization is inevitable and we must address it constructively. I am confident that if we are successful in implementing the New Urban Agenda in our cities, we will also be able to achieve sustainable development.*[394]

The clear-cut division between rural and urban settlement types is increasingly irrelevant to several population groups that aid seeks to reach. Many of these groups are mobile, 'straddling' urban and rural lifestyles and workplaces, as well as formal and informal arrangements. While the plenary statement's call for addressing urbanization constructively is timely, the document fails to mention any need for urban management in achieving this. It also does not mention how Norway might contribute to solving urban challenges in developing countries through its aid budgets. 'The rest' still seems to be left to UNH's expertise in monitoring the NUA, an agreement already limited in scope and heavily reliant on countries' national capacity for enacting change.

7.5 Summary

This chapter has identified three movements in international development practice which had implications on Norwegian habitat policy between 2000 and Habitat III in 2016: the proliferation of RMB-approaches to increase the efficiency and accountability of aid, the agreement on the illegality of urban squatter settlements involved in the 'cities without slums' ambition, and the relationship with UNH since revitalization involving a negotiation of Norwegian priorities in the urban field.

The adoption of RMB-practices, in addition to clear-cut measurable development targets, served to strengthen the statistical analysis of poverty and its extreme variants, as a measurable phenomenon which could be solved by adapting existing policy approaches towards specific population groups, primarily in rural areas. The added dimension of prioritizing the groups most

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[394] Skogen, "Norway Statement — Habitat III Plenaries," pp. 2.,

responsible for creating economic growth was agreed upon in White paper no. 35 (2003-2004). As such, the WB's approaches are argued to be best suited to estimate what approaches are needed to reach the MDGs.

The Cities Alliance initiative, developed out of the UNH revitalization, was seminal to the formulation of the problematic 'cities without slums' ambition and the goal of MDG 7 Target 7D on reducing the absolute number of people in slums. The WB's strong lead on the housing issue, led to significant Norwegian support for the legalization and formalization agenda at the international level—evident in the Bondevik government's support for establishing the HLCLEP as well as NORAD's support for the formalization agenda through the ILD and the NMCA. On an urban level, the formalization agenda has been connected to increasing dispossession among inhabitants of informal settlements.

The increase in interest for urbanization also served as a stepping stone for Erik Berg, among other actors in the political bureaucracy, to bring about larger support for UNH's work. particularly through negotiating for the relevance of the settlement-based agenda within sector entrances that Norway already prioritized. An important point to emphasize here is that support for UNH in this period made it possible for the organization to disseminate Flagship Reports globally and organize research conferences such as WUF, documenting urbanization trends throughout the world. Both of these contributions have thoroughly showcased the depth of the current status of urbanization, and proposed policy entrances to handle these at an integrated national and urban level.

8. Concluding discussion

The ambition of this thesis has been to explain and discuss Norwegian development aid's policy perspectives regarding urbanization, the city and human settlement patterns by elaborating on epistemological experiences which have taken part in shaping and articulating the spatial perspectives present in Norwegian habitat policy. Evidently, some factors have been investigated more than others. In part, this is due to the volume of the material investigated. It can also be attributed to a lack of prior studies on the subject, as well as pandemic restraints on field-based work and physical interviewing. The datasets consisting of documents and interviews have nevertheless provided valuable and different findings to answer the research questions. The datasets have also been complimentary to each other.

This concluding chapter firstly reflects on RQ a) by elaborating how the Habitat conferences and other documented events have played a role in conceptualizing urbanization, the city and human settlement patterns in Norwegian development aid. The following answers are an attempt at elevating the points highlighted in the three summaries, to elevate their combined relevance. Secondly, in order to reflect on RQ c), four overall factors are suggested that elaborate the two hypotheses. Building on both analysis and theoretical study, the factors might further explain contemporary limitations in aid. The outlined limiting factors also answer the thesis' objective of retroductive theory-building, and can provide entrances for further research. The second section also includes further examples from white papers issued between 2010 and 2020, showcasing the contemporary relevance of findings. Lastly, the conclusion ends with a note on policy recommendations.

8.1 How the Habitat conferences inform policy

My first research question asked how Norwegian aid policy perspectives have related to the policy content of the Habitat Conferences, and the arguments behind the Habitat agendas and declarations. The conferences and their resulting documents have played a minor, but not negligible, role in Norwegian habitat policy perspectives. Their roles also differ from one another.

Largely, Norway's relationship to the conferences' agendas, as well as the Habitat agencies, seems to reflect aid's internal aptitude to frame international development agendas around Norway's existing priorities in the development field. Corresponding to Svenbalrud's notion of UN policies as 'cornerstone' and 'ornament' of Norwegian foreign policy, the Habitat conferences may have further solidified Norwegian positions in the field of habitat policy. This holds true especially for Habitat I. The Norwegian delegation's positive views regarding decentralization and balanced settlement distribution are reflected in the *Vancouver Declaration*. Likewise, the conference's overall focus on prioritizing sectors instead of city-specific approaches as a means of combating growing slums and the ecological threat of uncontrolled urban growth echoed the Norwegian delegation's positions.

Habitat II to a larger extent challenged Norwegian positions, and made evident the increasing differences in perception between Norway and other donors at the time. The two primary perspectives adopted at Habitat II can have contributed to placing the urban at the wayside of Norwegian aid. The agreement on 'enabling strategies' to solve challenges of housing provision in cities strengthened the belief that the 'urban sector', and alleviating urban poverty, was primarily linked with establishing functional housing markets—securing home-ownership rights and 'enabling markets to work.' The conference's emphasis on urbanization as an irreversible process of modernization—defined by the transition between settlement typologies, administrative, and sector-specific boundaries—placed the city in perceived opposition of development's target: the poorest, the most vulnerable, the most in-need of market-integration. This anti-urban attitude was reflected in the attitudes of higher-ups in the development complex at the time

It can also be argued that the conference's core focus on adequate housing for all as the prime challenge of urbanization, and 'enabling' approaches as the main solution, would strengthen the rationale behind the 'slum goal', Goal 7D of the MDGs. 7D must also be seen as an outcome of the first report of the CA between UNH and the WB, an initiative resulting from the revitalization effort. Subsequent Norwegian initiatives on formalization followed from these engagements among others. Nevertheless, Habitat II showcased the urgent need for a stronger UN-Agency on urbanization and urban social challenges The conference led to the revitalization

of the UNCHS towards becoming UNH, a process in which Per Bakken representing the KLD played an extensive part.

It is still too soon to decipher what effects Habitat III, and the interlinked adoption of the SDGs and the NUA, has had on Norwegian habitat perspectives. This is also due to the stability of the conservative government since 2013, up until the currently on-going parliamentary election. At the current moment, Parties with more ambitious plans for orienting development aid around the urban question have gained a majority. Still, as I will return to, the idea that urbanization represents an 'inevitability' following from modernization has certainly gained a stronger foothold. At a domestic political level, the three Habitat agendas have nevertheless played key roles as negotiating pieces to establish support for urban initiatives within the MFA on the side-line of dominant approaches.

8.2 Spatial path-dependencies in aid

My second research question asked what general perspectives of urban spatial development theory have, at different times, become dominant in Norwegian habitat policy. The investigation Norway's historical attainment of spatial development theory has revealed notable epistemological entry points to understanding Norwegian ideals and strategies regarding habitat policy. The identified path-dependent influences correspond to explanatory mechanisms that may influence the formulation of Norwegian habitat policy perspectives, and structure the policy-based scope of action in aid.[395]

A first identified influence are the benefits to overall social development perceived in prioritizing the countryside over the metropolitan city. The early engagements in Tanzania encouraged the moulding and institutionalizing of knowledge practices regarding development aid as a whole, and a new orientation towards cities and human settlements in developing countries. The first period showcases an idealization of the rural operating together with a traditional UBT-analysis of urbanization to justify priorities. First evident at Habitat I, slum growth and social challenges

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[395] Sydow, Schreyögg, and Koch, 2008, «Organizational Path Dependence: Opening the Black Box," pp. 698.

in growing cities were answered to by Norway among others arguing for 'settlement balance', and the advantages of dispersed settlement patterns and rural sector support. Settlement balance was promoted as a remedy to the excessive metropolitan growth and its toll on resources, and as a way of creating comprehensive territorial development outside 'privileged' areas. The positively evaluated engagements in Tanzania and East Africa became proof of the model's success.

At the time, Norwegian aid perspectives referenced a risk of benefitting 'privileged' groups, yet did not sufficiently analyse what factors influenced the observed socio-geographical inequalities. The dismissal of the developing country metropolis and informal settlement growth became based on an assumption of the non-traditional and socially biased elements of the African metropolis in relation to the countryside, a geographically deterministic understanding of urban bias that differed from Nyerere's critique of 'tamaa' and market-based exploitation. The UBT would be present at Habitat I in 1976 as a critique of government policies towards price regulation and urban prioritization reflecting the power of urban elites, seen as a major cause of urban migration. Throughout the 1980s, the Norwegian government would fully condone the WB's BN analysis, which similarly targeted governments for favouring cities by overvaluing exchange rates and for increased revenue in urban sectors. Enabling market integrations of rural poor groups became a priority on the assumption that urban sectors and dwellers were disproportionately state-privileged. Hence, 'inclusion' and 'participation' in Norwegian development aid operated on the basis that urban areas were already more included in market-based growth, disqualifying for aid.

A second identified influence are the long-term environmental benefits of prioritizing rural areas and small towns over major urban areas. The premise of sustainable growth within environmental and social limits was thoroughly established with the BCR of 1987, explicitly differentiating between the developing country metropolis on the one hand, and 'smaller cities' on the other, a concept shared with the Norwegian 'tettsted'. The urban metropolis was conceptualized as a phenomenon heavily dependent on subsidies and the excessive exploitation of rural resources, food, water, energy, and so on, without adding much back to development processes. On the opposite end, smaller cities were seen as having the potential to provide

opportunities for sustainable environmental practices. The growth of major cities in SSA was, again, perceived as the result of government-manufactured attractiveness and over-prioritization of the metropolis. Rephrased, the BCR further solidified the notion that prioritizing major cities in aid policy risked environmental deterioration and ecological disaster, justifying placing resources elsewhere. Within Norwegian aid, the idealized understanding of rural district development and balanced employment became elemental parts of policy to reduce urban flight, and achieve growth within limits. Thus, urban bias was broadened from a social standpoint, and re-purposed within the international environmental agenda.

Thirdly, and adding to the perceived social and environmental benefits of decentralized and balanced development, the 1980s and 90s were concentrated on achieving sustainable and effective administration of development in partner countries. From the BCR highlighting potentials for 'community-based development' and service-provision in small towns, to White paper no. 36 (1984-85) and *The Tanzania Country Study*, the district level of administration was thoroughly idealized in development language. The district level of government was positioned as "(…) the only available viable institution"[396] to reach economic self-reliance, under a presumption of urban bias regarding centralization and ineffectiveness of government power in management and planning. The position might be derived from Norwegian domestic models of district development, which employ local and regional administrations in settlement planning and development administration.

A fourth influence is the predisposed conceptualization of urban informal settlements present at the outset of the millennium. The CA's conception of slums reflected the notion that informal settlements existed not only outside the city, but 'outside' the development question as a whole pre-formalization. The MDGs directly adopted the CA's slum improvement goal into Target 7D. While the question of 'human rights' received less space in the MDGs, the establishment of functional property market was raised as the main vehicle through which individual housing rights, and the challenge of informal settlements, could be alleviated. White paper no. 35 (2003-

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[396] Havnevik, 1988, *Tanzania : country study and Norwegian aid review*, pp. 105.

04) reflected a broad Norwegian agreement on the substance of the goal. Lifting people from "lawless" informal sectors, into formal sectors through finance mechanisms was stated as an area which would receive added attention. [397] The formalization agenda subsequently became one of few larger urban engagements Norway has taken part of. The MDG-agenda may have contributed to justifying adverse policies such as slum demolition, impediments to urban migration, and further land dispossessions, while also preventing donor countries from further investigating the complexity and transformative potentials of urban informal settlements.

Norway's considerable support for UNH since 2000, and the higher overall support for urban initiatives up until Habitat III, marks the last twenty-year period as one in which urbanization has been given a more prominent role. Simultaneously, recent decades have been marked by an ambition to increase the efficiency and accountability of aid through RBM-practices. At the moment, this recent evolution has served as another push towards achieving measurable results more rapidly within existing frameworks. The consistent employment of time-based measurements utilizing 'most effective' policies in order to reach 'worst-off' groups might itself be regarded as a notable path-dependency that might steer aid away from its holistic ambitions.

Still, Norway's considerable support for the Habitat revitalization and the mostly continued support for the agency's work since, seems to reflect a consistent comprehension within the development complex for the need to integrate settlement-based approaches. It is not an over-statement to argue that Norwegian support for the UNH's normative work in this period might have been vital to bringing about a global research-oriented conversation on urbanization and the city—a less measurable and perhaps more valuable attainment in the end.

8.3 Limitations of Norwegian habitat policy

My third research question asked what limitations exist in the settlement epistemologies, ideals, and strategies of Norwegian development aid. The question might most precisely be answered by elaborating on the two hypotheses. Three critical factors were suggested as underpinning and

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[397] *St. Meld. 35 (2003-2004) Felles kamp mot fattigdom: en helhetlig utviklingspolitikk* pp. 160-61.

limiting Norwegian aid's relationship to habitat policy, these being (i) the employment of a transitional concept of urbanization, (ii) the utilization of a conservative concept of urban bias to explain the linkages between urban and rural settlements, and (iii) a 'spatial blindness' or inability to describe or engage urban trends directly outside of established approaches. Building on the findings, it is possible to suggest a selection of factors which can help explain the implicated anti-urban bias identified in the case of Norwegian development aid. The factors also serve as suggested entry-points for further research.

8.3.1   Urbanization and the developing country metropolis as a double risk

The theoretical framework theorized longer running lines of anti-urban bias as involving an idealization of 'the rural', in opposition to growing urban centres and connected social issues. In development thought, a recognition of urban bias in developing countries was seen as potentially leading donors to deprioritize cities. The post-colonial critique has targeted the implied developmentalist notion that developing country cities in particular are uniquely incapacitated to add to national development, and represent failures compared to their Northern counterparts. Building on these conceptions, a predominant finding of my thesis is that urbanization, and urban aid, constitute a perceived double risk to the Norwegian development project.

The intertwined risks have involved (1) the perceived social, environmental, administrative and security-based risks urbanization has posed to the development question, as well as (2) the perceived risks faced by governments, donors and agencies when prioritizing major urban centres, urban population groups and urban sectors over the countryside. Importantly, conceptions of 'risk' have exclusively concerned the growth of major cities and metropolises, which have been separated through various characteristics from 'small towns', 'districts', and 'rural' villages—fields which correspond to aid's specialization.

Regarding environmental risks, contemporary white papers have continued to frame urbanization as broadly among the megatrends causing the deterioration of natural environments, increasing risk, and contributing adversely to climate change. Reminiscent of prior warnings, White paper. no. 33 (2011-12) presents urbanization as a threat to existing ecosystems and climate stability:

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*We are facing a situation where ecosystems and a stable climate (…) are
threatened as a result of population growth, production and consumption,
urbanization and globalization. [398]*

White paper no. 37 (2014-15) broadens the argument, connecting the growth of urban informal
settlements directly to social and environmental deterioration:

*The urbanization of poverty (…) leads to enormous pressure on water and sanitation
facilities, transport, food supply, health services, the housing market and social,
economic infrastructure. The development threatens the lives and health of those
poorest.[399]*

Early in the millennium, urban social challenges encountered in informal settlements were also
sub-divided from the metropolis as a whole to become perceived as a specialized area outside the
general development question on the basis of its 'illegal', 'criminal', or otherwise 'insecure'
characteristics. As detailed, White paper. no. 33 (2011-12) perceives the slum in spatial isolation
as a settlement unit conductive of social deterioration, poverty and potential crime and global
security threats across borders. With reference to the history of town planning, apprehending the
risk of social unrest and revolt in cities of the global south might however contribute to
increasing attention for urban questions and practical solutions that involve meeting the demands
of urban dwellers.

Regarding the risks involved in prioritizing cities in aid, evolutions upon the UBT have been
consistently employed to justify placing the developing country metropolis outside aid's fields of
relevance. As pointed out by Millstein, the MFA has continued to target how subsistence farmers
do not receive benefits from globally increasing food prices, due to governmental price
regulation on agricultural resources in cities and urban subsidies in order to keep social unrest
down. This traditional conception of a social urban bias is similar to the one adopted in white
papers throughout the 1970s, based on the first bilateral experiences, and involves the presumed

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[398] *St. Meld. 33 (2011-2012) Norge og FN: Felles framtid, felles løsninger* pp. 17.
[399] *St. Meld. 37 (2014-2015) Globale sikkerhetsutfordringer i utenrikspolitikken,* pp. 76.

risk of aid benefitting urban elites or privileged groups rather than those most in need. Tied along is the presumption that the metropolis represents a risk to development management, which is present in the recent White paper. no. 37 (see pp. 89). With the issue of informal settlements and criminal networks increasing in scale, the notion that cities are becoming 'ungovernable' holds a far stronger place in Norwegian policy perspectives than the alternative: that informal urban networks and dweller organizations can provide solutions in collaboration with governments.

Perceptions of urban risks have historically contributed to consolidating perceptions of Norway's engagements as correct and proven, preventing motivations to alter perspectives. Within the contemporary fields where urbanization or cities are engaged or described, the phenomenon continues to be conceptualized as a double risk. The perspective overlooks the fact that, even as cities face management challenges, many informal dwellers have the city as their primary source of income and livelihoods. Likewise, many depend on back-and-forth migration to countryside areas and sectors. The perception of the city as representing managerial risks overlooks the underlining rationales behind slum growth, social conflict, and lawlessness, often centred in the very same transformations of 'rural' land and resource rights—processes of accumulation by dispossession which have characterized developing country economies post donor-supported political-economic re-structuring. Most importantly, the utilization of a 'risk-to-management' narrative in isolation thoroughly erases the different experiences of informal dwellers and the socio-political agency of informal dwellers in their everyday life.

8.3.2   Compartmentalizing measurements

A factor based primarily in theory and supplemented by findings is that the risk-based perception of urbanization has been strengthened by the utilization of forms of measurement that do not sufficiently capture urbanization trends, urban challenges, or urban forms of poverty. Elaborating on the first factor highlighted in Ch 3.2.1, anti-urban bias in aid has been reinforced on the basis of estimated country demographics and the analysis utilized to locate which sectors and groups development aid should benefit.

Neither of these factors are exclusive to Norwegian aid but Norway, unlike other donors and agencies, has not incorporated methods and data sets which capture urbanization trends and

metropolitan social conditions, such as a more robust set of multivariate poverty indexes, or research into the interdependencies between urban and rural livelihoods. The analysis historically used to locate groups considered most in need, the actors most effective in realizing development, the sectors most vital to support, and engagements Norway considers within its areas of specialization, have all but confirmed its largely rural orientation

Bias towards 'measurability' can result in policy approaches that are less integrated and multisectoral. The recent White paper no. 17 uses a combination of methods to measure the status of social development, including BNP per capita, percentage of population under the current extreme poverty line, degree of economic growth, employment by sector, HDI, gender inequality, malnourishment, and percentage with access to energy.[400] As discussed, the subsequent categorization of poverty as mostly a 'rural' phenomenon reflects a longer running statistical fallacy which continues to neglect aspects of well-being that transcend spatial proximity to services or general income levels—such as the right to participate or shape collective action

Established poverty measurement methods run the risk of losing sight of the urban poor in the informal economy, the interconnected urban-rural mobility of livelihoods, and the complexity of informal settlements at large. Even as natural growth is currently larger source of urbanization than migration, urban and rural sectors and population groups remain highly dependent on one another through back-and-forth mobility. While Norwegian perspectives have become more concerned with migration post the 2015 refugee crisis, no reviewed documents reference the fact that most refugees end up not in crowded camps, nor in Europe, but as displaced migrants in medium to small cities of Asia and Africa.

Additionally, the closer proximity of urban dwellers to various basic services and generally higher relative income can give a misleading account of the accessibility of urban consumption.

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[400] *St. Meld. 17 (2017–2018) Partnerland i utviklingspolitikken,* pp. 37.

As Satterthwaite among others have pointed out, when urban informal dwellers answer "yes" to a questionnaire regarding latrine access, it neither reflects

> (…) the quality of the latrine, the ease of access, the cost (many urban dwellers only
> have access to local public toilets with charges they cannot afford) or the provisions for
> hand washing.[401]

Compartmentalizing measurements of well-being and prioritizing 'most-effective' policies in the short term can serve to remove the more complex situations of slum dwellers globally, and overlook major trends with ramifications for overall well-being and social conditions. The focus on 'poverty alleviation' in development practice might then itself contribute to urban areas falling off the map.

Support for the only major multilateral agency attempting to integrate concerns within a settlement-based agenda (UNH) has been consistently decreasing in the years since Habitat III. Within the partnership, the rural target group and rural sector focus of Norwegian development aid may have contributed to side-lining part of UNH's core mandate—that a rights-based approach to urban and territorial planning can have positive ramifications for social challenges in urbanizing countries and is a main condition of a more holistic national development trajectory that interrogates various sectors in different levels of governance. This challenge transcends the partnership with Norway and is a constant challenge for UNH, particularly when facing the sector perspectives and specific interests of donors.

8.3.3   Urbanization as inevitable

As theorized in Ch. 3.2.2 using the urban age thesis (UAT), conceiving urbanization as an 'inevitable' phenomenon involving economic growth, and traditional fixed notions of urban and rural settlement types, can contribute to strengthening anti-urban bias. Both the processes surrounding Habitat II and the MDGs seem to have strengthened a perception among donors that

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[401] David Satterthwaite, 2003, "'The Millenium Development Goals and Urban Poverty Reduction: Great Expectations and Nonsense Statistics'," pp. 186.

the transition to a global urban society has been inevitable, involved a transitional process of modernization, and represented increasing opportunities for economic growth. If managed correctly, the modern metropolis has represented a contemporary 'end-point' of successful development.

On the basis of findings, it is not possible conclude that a 'transitional concept' of urbanization has directly contributed to historical anti-urban bias within Norwegian aid. In part, this is due to the lack of attention the field has received. Outside from the multilateral support for UNH's normative work, there does not seem to have been any concerted effort to understand the intertwining parts of what makes up the developing country metropolis, or its consequences for aid's implementation. In short, urbanization has been overlooked to such an extent that, until recently, it was not considered a significant part of development processes. However, this does not mean that Norway has operated 'blindly' in the pursuit of human rights, as some internal practitioners would have it.

Rather, it confirms the lack of analysis for both the larger transformations involved in urbanization processes and its adverse social implications. More than a transition to be managed, most instances where urbanization has been described directly in Norwegian aid since the millennium, interprets it as a general condition. The tendency to generalize urbanization as an overarching phenomenon, similarly to climate change in previous decades, might contribute to placing it mostly outside aid's influence and overall political relevancy. The overall omission in part betrays the active engagements Norway has taken since the millennium within the discussed formalization agenda.

Omitting urbanization from development aid perspectives concerned with social development in rural areas exposes a lack of understanding for how urbanization processes represent a major causal force behind transformations occurring in the traditional countryside—not only the inevitable result of development, but part of the socially produced factors underpinning processes of change. Removing the phenomenon from its associated social transformation' of land and labour relations across urban-rural divisions, also risks removing any agency towards understanding and acting upon it. Inequalities, and the parallel existence of growth and

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deprivation prevalent in urban regions, must be seen as part of current development processes. The overall omission has however been challenged in various accounts within aid. Erik Berg, with others, were able to negotiate consistent support for a multi-sectorial approach through UNH, resulting in various normative initiatives at the international level including the dissemination of Flagship Reports. Recent developments can be considered important steps in a more transformative direction. The Norwegian statements in support of the NUA showcases an understanding that urbanization represents a multi-sectorial issue and has to be considered in order to achieve sustainable development. Similarly, while viewing 'cities' in isolation, recent white papers also perceive urbanization as a trend that forces prior trajectories of aid to change;

> *Until now, aid has largely had a rural focus, but at the centre of this century, 2/3 of the world's population will live in cities, and up to 90 percent of the population increase of 2 - 3 billion in the world will come in the cities of developing countries.* [402]

Norway has also become a greater supporter of young people and women as agents of change in informal settlements. Norway has previously been a supporter of Slum Dwellers International (SDI), and has recently supported UNH's disbursement of sanitation equipment in slum areas, in some cases led by slum-based organizations. Norway has been an accentuated supporter of the roles of cities and urban planning in achieving the global climate agenda, highlighted at the Habitat III conference. In a chapter titled "a new approach to development", White paper no. 24 (2016-17) , refers to the need to view all the SDGs combined as holistic, integrated, and dependent upon one another. The paper calls for an "altered approach" to development practice given current urbanization trajectories:

> *The urbanization of poverty is accelerating in a pace one has never seen before, too as a result of climate and environmental changes, financial crisis, increased food and fuel prices.* [403]
>
> (…)

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[402] *St. Meld. 37 (2014-2015) Globale sikkerhetsutfordringer i utenrikspolitikken,* pp. 21.
[403] Ibid., pp. 76.

The fact that the majority of the world's population will reside in cities
demands an altered approach to development and poverty reduction, including
climate and the environment. (...)[404]

These developments have not been sufficiently analysed here. However, recent acknowledgements do not yet appear to have been followed up in any official documentation. While we know that urban environments are immensely diverse, that the coping mechanisms of poor population groups lead to many forms of living, and that many living in informal settlements are organized and working for positive change, the overall depiction is that of malfunction and disorganization alongside economic growth—somehow not seen as connected to the exclusion occurring next door. Possible associations between urbanization and more sustainable lifestyles, housing, transport, and production patterns are likewise glossed-over. As Bjørn Røe pointed out, there is an urgent need for better contextual knowledge of place in development practice:

(...) the most important thing is to know where you are, when you are there. And those who
know best are those who are there. If you conduct planning without talking to those
concerned, then you are 100% sure to miss.[405]

8.3.4   Urban management as outside development practice

Lastly, and definitional for the challenges of writing this thesis as a whole, the different academic traditions which make up the canon of urban management and planning continue to exist on the side of development research, development assistance, and the practices of 'conducting development.' Highlighted in all interviews, and perhaps most evident by its omission from official documents, there seem to be a lack of understanding for urbanization, but also lack of knowledge as to how more progressive forms of participatory planning can inform and alter policy directions.

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[404] *St. Meld. 24 (2016–2017) Felles ansvar for felles fremtid — Bærekraftsmålene og norsk utviklingspolitikk,* pp. 7.
[405] Interview, Bjørn Røe, 22.01.2021

With a few notable exceptions at an academic level, most educations in planning are associated with architecture and engineering practices—while educations that end with a career within the development complex or the multilateral framework have been persistently connected to political sciences, economics, and the field of development research. While development aid previously incorporated planning professions, among many others, within practices of conducting development, the field has become far more specialized with its own set of practices.

The problem is also connected to issues of coordination among donors, within the multilateral system, and on the ground in aid-receiving countries. At one level, as positive engagements for international agreements and conferences has showcased, there is strong ambition at the multilateral donor-level for development aid to conceptualize and act on development challenges as inter-connected, integrated, and holistic. At another, aid funding must navigate from the outside-in within a given country context to achieve results. In the policy documents reviewed, rural is synonymous with agriculture, energy extraction, and other primary themes which correspond with the ambitions of aid.

An ideal within urban management and planning has been to conceptualize the questions of development as integrated, holistic, and dependent upon one another. However, urban sectors are almost entirely absent from the DAC's categorization. The 'sector' challenges present in metropolitan cities represent most of the development challenges in combination, and the successes of livelihoods in surrounding countryside areas often depend on major cities delivering basic services, infrastructure, education, and other benefits. The broader themes of the Norwegian development agenda are all relevant within the context of urban growth. With aid's reluctance to engage in urban management, the task is again left to under-funded cities, along with local movements and civil society organizations which create new mechanisms of governance, independent of governments.

Urbanization and the challenges of cities in developing countries have persisted as a 'fuzzy' field of perspectives within aid. As such, it is natural to reach the same conclusion as Kamete's 2001 assessment: "(…) the urban project portfolio does not reflect a coherent urban strategy."[406] The issue is not that the urban conceptualizations employed by Norway have been completely wrong, but that engagements with the subject on the precepts of risks, measurement, and general inevitability have placed urban transformations, with socio-economic repercussions on a global scale, largely outside the frame of discussion development aid.

As the world becomes increasingly organized around urban economies, and the majority of current population growth occurs in urban areas, it seems paradoxical for actors in development aid to continue to neglect urbanization and urban actors in their work. This thesis has made evident that resilient spatial path-dependencies continue to limit aid's engagements with the urban question. A primary challenge remains the utilization of modes of spatial analysis in aid which separates urbanization and the growth of informal settlements from development issues, in turn, halting development aid's capacity to discuss and approach urban policy solutions.

The argument that, because poverty is rural, development spending should be utilized towards rural areas and sectors lacks, in my view, an analysis of the complexity of settlement types, and the extent to which residents of rural and urban areas rely on moving between them. Deterministic perspectives regarding the interlinkages between urban growth and environmental challenges likewise do not provide agency for change or space for alternative conceptions of the role of cities. Likewise, the existence of criminal networks and government corruption do not justify overlooking civil society engagements struggling for a right to the city. Cities and urban-based organizations, more so than nation-states, are currently the closest entities to the complex and interrelated development challenges that development aid actors are seeking to solve.

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[406] Kamete, Tostensen, and Tvedten, 2001, *From Global Village to Urban Globe - Urbanisation and Poverty in Africa: Implications for Norwegian Aid Policy*, pp. 70.

Policy recommendations

The findings of this thesis hold several propositions for Norwegian aid policy. Development assistance should better integrate urban areas as targets of their aid policies, but the quality of urban aid might depend upon a more structurally transformative understanding of urbanization and its associated changes in land-use patterns. Current urbanization processes are deeply linked to political economic re-structuring of state economies and state facilitation of market-based accumulative processes. A better concept of urbanization should recognize the increasingly interdependent socio-economic interlinkages between different forms of human settlement, the unevenness of urbanization, and the potentials for progressive change in cities of the global south.

While my thesis has mostly engaged the knowledge basis underlining development aid, there is a dire need to 'learn from the south' for actual change to occur in practice. More contextually sensitive spatial concepts and transformative approaches might be achieved by engaging municipalities and policy makers, academia, civil society actors, and city dwellers, across the north-south divide. If the slogan to 'aid them where they are' is to be taken seriously, it should motivate a more global collaboration towards better integration of urban knowledge and urban governance. In order to both understand and act upon urbanization as a process interlinked with, and altering, other development challenges, looking the other way is no longer an option.

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Appendix: List of interview participants

- Erik Berg, Board Leader. Habitat Norway (HN), 15. January 2021

- Bjørn Røe, professor Emeritus, the Department of Architecture and Planning,
Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), 22. January 2021

- Lars Stordahl, Programme Officer, Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance/UN-Habitat
(GWOPA), 28. January 2021

- Sven-Erik Svendsen, Architect MNAL, 29. January 2021

- Marianne Millstein, Researcher, Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR),
1. February 2021

- May Sommerfelt, CE of Shelter Norway, 1. February 2021

- Per Menzony Bakken, Independent Environmental Services Professional, 27. April 2021

- Hans Christie Bjønness, Professor, the Department of Architecture and Planning, Norwegian
University of Science and Technology (NTNU), 27. April 2021

- Marit Viktoria Pettersen, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 6. May 2021