

Why Cities? Informality as a Way of Life: Challenges to Sustainable Urban Development

April 24, 2019
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Perry World House
3803 Locust Walk
World Forum



Today, cities of the Global South are experiencing annual growth rates sometimes exceeding three or four percent. In the next three decades, they are expected to absorb an additional 2.2 billion people. The accelerating urbanization of these places is following a pattern not unlike what sociologist Louis Wirth observed in Chicago in the first two decades of the 20th century, except for one key difference: today's expanding metropolises are coinciding with the proliferation of informality in all aspects of life.

This roundtable will look to align current research and initiatives being undertaken to guide the course of the coming decade and beyond. We will consider how the varied interpretations of informality (e.g. a form of marginalization from formal society, a semi-integration into formal society, or a rational form of survival within state-sanctioned institutional arrangements) are shaping the efforts to pursue sustainable urban development over the next three decades, as expressed in global to local responses. We will also analyze different methods for measuring urban informality and examine how national to neighborhood decision-makers are incorporating informality in their policies and programs. The results of this roundtable will be presented at the UN-Habitat Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 2019.

For more information and to register, visit <https://informality-2019.eventbrite.com>.



Roundtable Schedule

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Opening

Speaker: **Janice Perlman**, author, *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro*

10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

How Do Global Agreements Approach Localization and Urban Informality?

Speakers: **William Burke White**, Richard Perry Professor and Professor of Law, Penn Law, Inaugural Director, Perry World House; **Rose Molokoane**, Deputy Vice President, Slum/Shack Dwellers International; **Victoria Beard**, Associate Professor, Cornell University, Director of Research, Ross Center for Sustainable Cities, World Resources Institute; **Patricia Holly Purcell**, Head of Partnerships, UN Global Compact Cities Programme

Moderator: **Eugénie Birch**, Nussdorf Professor of Urban Research, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design, University of Pennsylvania

Discussant: **Michael A. Cohen**, Professor of International Affairs, The New School

11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Break

11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Where are the Data to Measure Informality? What's Missing?

Speakers: **Jane Katz**, Director of International Affairs and Programs, Habitat for Humanity International; **Chandan Deuskar**, PhD Candidate, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design, University of Pennsylvania, formerly World Bank; **Ariadna Reyes Sanchez**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Global Shifts Program, Perry World House, University of Pennsylvania; **Joann Vanek**, Senior Advisor, Statistics, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO)

Moderator: **Susan Wachter**, Sussman Professor and Professor of Real Estate and Finance, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Discussant: **Erick Guerra**, Associate Professor, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design, University of Pennsylvania

12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch

Speaker: **Martha Chen**, Affiliated Professor, Harvard Graduate School of Design, Senior Advisor, WIEGO

1:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Case Studies: Programs and Policies Incorporating Informality

Speakers: **James Kwame Mensah**, Chief Resilience Officer, Accra Metropolitan Assembly; **Maisy Wong**, Associate Professor of Real Estate, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania; **David Gouverneur**, Associate Professor of Practice, University of Pennsylvania, Weitzman School of Design; **Jane Anyango**, Founder and Director, Polycom Development; **Theresa Williamson**, Founding Director, Catalytic Communities

Moderator: **Kimberly Noronha**, PhD Candidate, City & Regional Planning, Weitzman School of Design, University of Pennsylvania, formerly Center for Policy Research, New Delhi

Discussant: **Marja Hoek-Smit**, Adjunct Professor of Real Estate, The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Break

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Student Lightning-Round Presentations

Jessica Arias, Street Vending in Johannesburg
Kirtana Contractor, Informal Real Estate in Mumbai
Emily Galfond, Innovation in Education, India
Jennifer Gutierrez, Water Security in Mexico City
Heike Jacob, Heat Vulnerability
Shravanthi Kanekal, Informal Economy Bangalore
Danielle Lake, Women and Food Security
Ellyse Murphy, Mobile Banking in Nairobi
Cokie Nanka, Social Enterprise Incentives, Monrovia, Accra and Kigali
Benjamin Palevsky, Motor Bikes in Jakarta
Ami Patel, CBOs (SDI) in Nairobi
Yonathan Woldemariam, Informal Employment in Addis Ababa
Yuchen Wang, Urban Village Redevelopment: Real Estate and Land Markets
Zeng Zhongyuan, Urban Villages in China

5:00 p.m.

Dinner for participants

Penn IUR also invites you to participate in a photo contest on the theme of urban informality. Photos might highlight one or multiple aspects of informality—in housing, work, transportation, food production, education, etc. To enter, tweet your image to @PennIUR with a short description of the photo, the date and location of photo, and the hashtag #IURPhotoComp. (If you do not use social media, email your submission to penniur@pobox.upenn.edu.) Submissions will be accepted until April 18, 2019.