

Co-op Housing Experiences in Sub-Saharan Africa

ICA Housing - Cape Town 2013


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Rooftops Canada - Abri International



Rooftops Canada Abri international



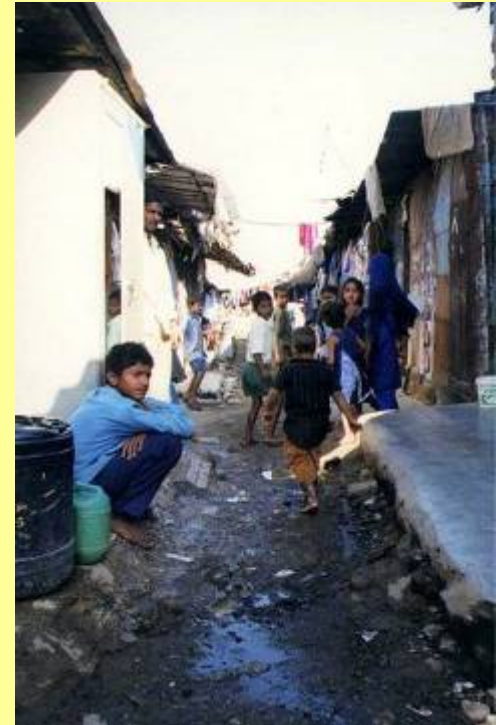
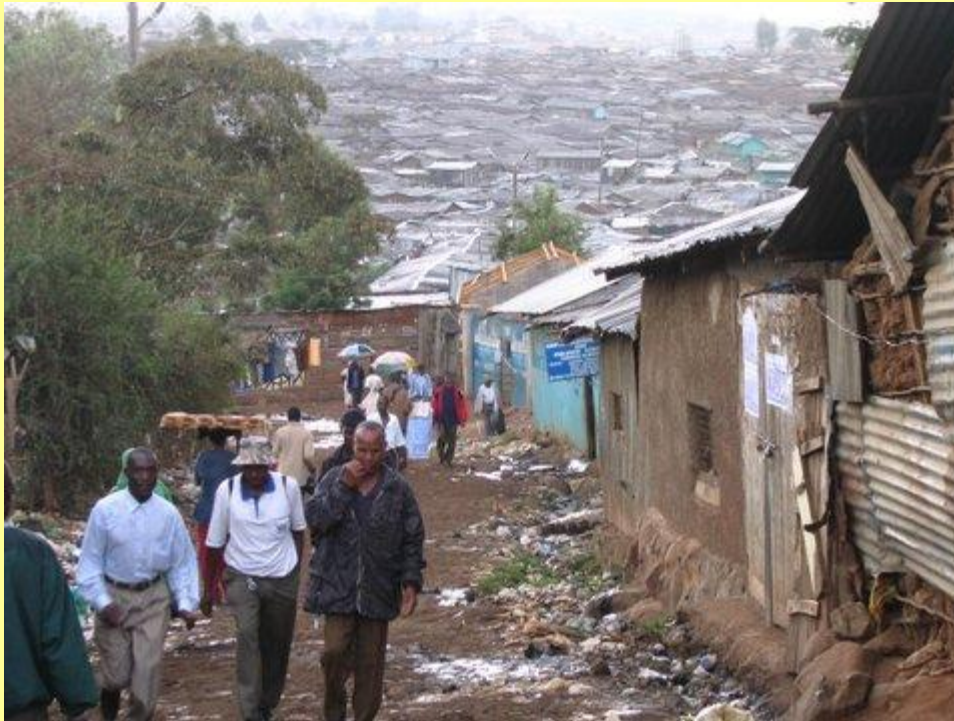
...the international development program
of cooperative and social housing groups
in Canada since 1984



Our Canadian partners house over 650,000 households...

- The Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada
- The Canadian Housing and Renewal Association
- The Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association
- The New Brunswick Non-Profit Housing Association
- la Confédération québécoise des coopératives d'habitation
- The British Columbia Non-Profit Housing Association

Slums - Challenges to Stability and Sustainability



1.2 billion people live in slums - one third of the global urban population. Includes 70% of urban Africans (225 million people) - growing at 12-15 million slum dwellers per year.

e.g. Kenya: Housing Situation

National Population: 36 million

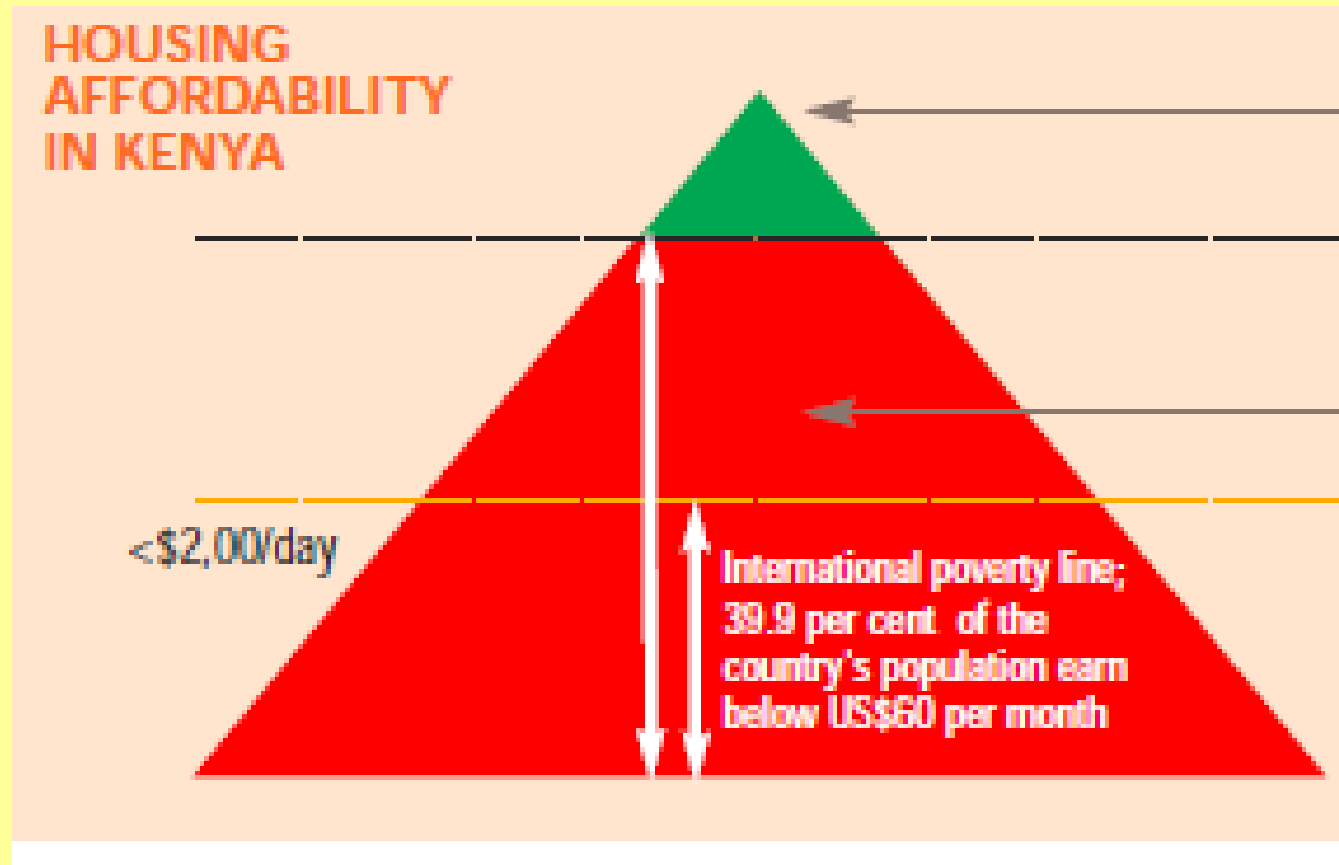
One of world's largest slums: Kibera, Nairobi

60% of Nairobi's 3.5 million population live in slums



- Overcrowding and insecure tenure tied to inadequate land and shelter delivery system
- Lack of basic services: water, sanitation, roads and drainage, electricity

Housing Affordability: Kenya



80% earn less than \$130/month.

90% cannot afford cheapest developer built house costing \$13,500.

Many Housing Related Issues

- Gender equality: Ensuring women's equal access to land, housing, finance, leadership opportunities and incomes*
- Violence towards children, youth alienation, unemployment and crime*



- 40-50% of slum dwellers are malnourished, four out of ten are children - 1/3 of urban residents in East Africa grow crops and/or keep livestock and need space, supports*

HIV and AIDS is a housing issue

- HIV prevalence rates in Kenya: Overall 7.1%, Nairobi 8.8%, Kibera slum 17%
- Cannot afford rent or loans because of medical bills
- Evicted/homeless: home based care without a home?
- Limited or no access to water and sanitation
- Over-crowding increases risk of opportunistic infection
- Inheritance practices discriminate against widows and children
- Orphans end up on city streets



Rooftops Canada's Response



We partner with housing groups, housing co-ops, credit unions, NGOs, trade unions, local and national governments, international agencies and the private sector to improve housing conditions and build sustainable communities.

Since 1984...

- mobilized ± \$40 million for overseas programs
- Current \$6,500,000 program with DFATD, 2011-16
- helped build local capacity - over 390 technical advisors and young professionals in 36 countries
- over 280 study/exchange visitors to Canada from 21 countries with support from Canadian partners



Key Focus Areas and Sustainability

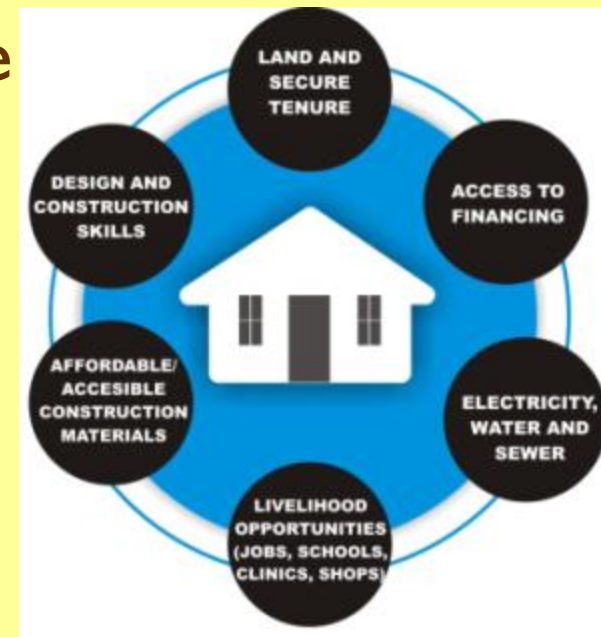
- Institutional development, capacity building
- Housing development and management
- Housing microfinance and support services
- Housing linked responses to HIV/AIDS
- Community and local economic development
- Urban food security and housing
- Human rights and governance



Housing is an Incremental Process



- Land acquisition through purchase or settlement
- Infrastructure: water, sanitation
- Core house built incrementally
- Complete house
- Rehabilitation/ improvement



Housing Microfinance (HMF)



HMF provides affordable housing loan products that support the incremental self-build approach. HMF is a series of small loans, against individual and group savings, that fit the way housing is built by the poor – progressively and over long time periods.

HMF Strategy: Sub-Saharan Africa

Focus on achieving scale:

- Pilot projects/build capacity for HMF and housing support services
- Share experiences locally and regionally – build the community of practice
- Increase access to capital and development funds
- Policy dialogue to improve access of urban poor to secure land.



National Cooperative Housing Union (NACHU), Kenya

- Apex co-op movement provides HMF and HSS services, plans for financial subsidiary
- 1100 loans in 2011, \$4 million loan book
- Platform in place for significant growth over next 2-3 years, potential for sustainability
- Partners since 1984 – TA, exchanges, operational support, loans and guarantees



Jane spent was evicted several times until she joined Amani Housing Co-op. NACHU loans helped her build step-by-step.

Zimbabwe National Association of Housing Cooperatives - ZINAHCO



- Housing co-op apex with DUs provides HSS/HMF services- exploring financial subsidiary
- Rapid growth in 2012+, “line of credit” group loans to housing co-ops roll over loans until all houses complete – subscriptions + rent
- Strong growing staff complement and systems build-up
- RC-AI helped start movement in early 1990s - TAs, operating support, regional and Canadian exchanges, links to HIV and UFS programming

WAT Human Settlements Trust, WAT SACCOS, Tanzania

- Model: NGO/HSS provider linked to SACCOS/HMF provider, now developing own FI to overcome institutional obstacles
- 600 loans in 2011, approx \$750K loan book, on track for min. 1000 loans/year
- Partner since late 1990s: TAs, operating support, “green” house and site planning, regional exchanges; work with Dept of Housing and WAT on housing co-op model which previously failed



“After repaying my loan, I will take another loan to build a modern toilet.” - Symphroza Najuka, Kupongezana Group

South Africa: Co-op Housing



- RC-AI started in early 1990s with COPE - an NGO that supported housing co-ops in Joburg inner city: TAs, young professionals - pilot experiences that collapsed, some sold to SHI



- Two ongoing housing co-ops that started with hostels upgrading programs in late 1990s: development and capacity building support - partnership with City of Cape Town, Province - ILHC completing phase 2 - 600 units

South Africa: Co-op Housing



- RC-AI continued support for housing co-ops until ± 2008 with Support Program for Social Housing (later SHF): co-op policy led to housing section in Co-op Act; support for women led livelihoods / construction co-op in Ivory Park; ongoing training support for the two housing co-ops in Cape Town (latest in 2012); documentation of housing co-op experiences.



- Political interest shifted to social housing reflecting problems in the co-ops.

Kuyasa Fund, South Africa



The Halu family is excited to have a new house

- HMF provider only, average loan is \$750; over 10,000 active clients, loan book \$20+ million
- Restructuring complete, additional equity and debt investment secured for significant growth
- Challenge is to scale up and achieve financial sustainability
- Rooftops Canada: TA providing strategic assistance, young professionals helping to build internal systems, marketing, communications, key regional example

South Africa: Social Housing



Main partners: National Association of Social Housing Organizations (NASHO), Social Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA), social housing institutions (SHIs)

Focus areas: Sector growth, housing management, community development, urban regeneration, green building, gardening, long term finance

Work with SHIs since 2002: TAs, young professionals, exchanges with Canadian/international partners



Lessons Learned - Challenges 1

- Co-op housing models need to adapt to local situation - strong preference for equity/ownership
- Progress in gender equity tempered by attitudes, laws and regulations that limit tenure, membership
- More effort needed to engage youth and generally encourage leadership succession in HC movements
- Advocacy is important, but don't expect too much from government - focus on securing land/tenure and ability to proceed with minimal political or bureaucratic interference - stay independent, non-partisan.
- Partnerships are important: with other co-op organizations especially financial co-ops/banks; other NGOs and service providers; government agencies and departments when feasible



Lessons Learned - Challenges 2

- African networks can play a key role: sharing experiences, tools and resources among pro-poor housing organizations - co-ops and others
- Take off much slower than hoped, still huge challenges to scaling up, having an impact and achieving institutional and financial sustainability both in individual countries and in more African countries. This is a long term project requiring long term commitment and support.
- The global cooperative movement should assist: eg accessing affordable capital and capacity building resources (funds, people, systems, etc.); advocacy to promote and protect the right to housing and housing co-op movements - but support must be coordinated and driven by local needs and realities.

Thank you. Merci. Obrigado.

For more information, visit

www.rooftops.ca or www.abri.ca

Contact: info@rooftops.ca



*2004: Training housing co-operators in Cape Town
Formation de membres de coopératives d'habitation à Le Cap*