Analysing Policies and Politics to Address Urban Inequality: CSO Networks and Campaigns on Sub-Standard Settlements in Metropolitan Areas

Literature Review

By Catherine Sutherland, Einar Braathen, Véronique Dupont, David Jordhus-Lier, Liliana Miranda, Rommy Torres

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1 Introduction

This literature review presents the theoretical framework for research which examines, through the lens of sub-standard settlements, the politics and policies shaping urban inequality in ten cities in Brazil, India, Peru and South Africa. The development of this theoretical frame requires comparative reflection, as the theory chosen reveals how cities (usually north-south and in this case south-south) and spaces within cities (wealthy, middle class and poor) are positioned in relation to each other. Sub-standard settlements invoke a recognition, understanding and sometimes even a tacit 'acceptance' of poverty, inequality, poor quality of life and lack of development in developing world cities. They generally lead researchers to the theory and spaces of cities that have not achieved 'modernisation'. Robinson (2010) however, argues for a more open, comparative approach, where theory on cities, which has predominantly been developed in relation to cities in the north, challenges the assumptions made about the ordering of cities, or spaces within cities, along modern and non-modernist lines. She suggests that questions should be asked about processes in cities across the world, thinking more critically about similarities and differences and challenging the usual divides which order cities.

However, before this can be achieved it is first necessary to develop theoretical ideas about the main components of this research. The first theoretical frame consists of ideas that explore and challenge concepts about urban modernity. Here questions are asked about the ordering of cities and the assumptions that are made about cities

and 'spaces in cities' that are contained in our imaginations and our knowledge of what constitutes a modern city, or quality of life in a city, and which enhance the dominance of capital and the neo-liberal order. Jenny Robinson's (2006) work on 'ordinary cities', Nuttall and Mbembe's (2008) research on Johannesburg and Roy's (2011) paper on subaltern urbanism provide useful ideas which challenge the inherited assumptions about cities in the 'north and south' or in 'wealthy or poor' countries. This challenge can be extended further to reveal the extent to which neo-liberalism has captured urban space, creating the "urbanization of neo-liberalism" (Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p 367) where cities have become dominant and instrumental in entrenching this economic order (Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003; Dupont, 2011). Swyngedouw, through his concept of 'glocalisation' argues that relations between cities and inter-urban competition have become a key dynamic through which the neo-liberal growth strategies of urban regimes are framed and legitimised (Lier, 2009; Dupont, 2011). This implies that sub-standard settlements form part of the strategy of capital to ensure flexible labour, the withdrawal of the state from service provision and housing, and the social reproduction of class, that serve the interests of the neo-liberal agenda. Already in the late 1980s, Harvey (1989) argued that the rationale of urban governance was changing its emphasis from provision of local services to an 'entrepreneurialism' where city managers acted as entrepreneurs fighting for investments in competition with other urban centres and this has had serious implications for sub-standard settlements (Lier, 2009; Dupont, 2011).

The second theoretical frame focuses on urban poverty and inequality, exploring how these concepts are defined, reflected and understood in cities. Poverty and inequality is not only examined in terms of how it manifests itself in cities, but also in terms of how it is produced and constructed by the multiple actors who engage with, or disengage with, poverty and inequality in a city. This means that both the distribution of poverty and the discursive construction of poverty are important concepts in this research.

The third theoretical frame briefly focuses on the way in which sub-standard settlements are defined and constructed both in terms of each country being researched, and in the comparisons made between countries of the south. The organizing, categorizing and naming of sub-standard settlements is diverse and complex and hence this section of the literature review attempts to create a typology of sub-standard settlements across the four countries.

The fourth part of the literature review deals with the policies and politics surrounding sub-standard settlements and hence it is both theoretical and context specific. The fifth section outlines theory on social movements and extends these theoretical ideas to include both the human and non-human actors that come together to form the assemblages that result in the transformation of urban spaces, landscapes and politics. In sum, it will explore the relation between poverty and inequality in cities in order to analyse the roots of political power, and to understand the decision making processes that generate the current (and future) critical city issues manifested mainly in environmental degradation and poor living environments.

The final section draws all of these ideas together into a frame that reflects on the importance and value of considering the spatiality of sub-standard settlements as a way of understanding the reason for, distribution of and politics embedded in these particular forms of settlements of fast growing cities of the south.

2   Rethinking Modernity

According to Robinson (2006; 2010) two theoretical moments led to the divided nature of urban studies. The first created an alignment between certain cities and the experience of modernity. The invention, production and cultural and social experience of modernity was to be found in the wealthy, advanced industrialized cities. Here modernity is seen as newness, contemporary and privileged where de-individualisation, routinisation and monetization was favoured (Robinson, 2010). Cities that were left behind in this process were considered as traditional and primitive, even when these cities "regarded tradition as an anachronistic but present reality (especially in Africa)" (Robinson, 2010, p 3). This created the 'other' of the modern city, that was located elsewhere, and in which the traditional and primitive was embedded. Robinson (2010) argues that modern cities have therefore been juxtaposed against those cities considered 'un-modern', creating a dual system of cities for over a century of urban theorizing and hence these ideas are strongly entrenched in our imaginations and knowledge of cities. Developmentalism was the second theoretical construct which ordered cities in the way that still contains them today. Development and modernization are mutually reinforcing concepts, as "markers of the not-modern came to characterize an urban space in need of development" (Robinson, 2010, p 3). The

markers of under-developed or developing cities are well recognized in urban theory in terms of particular forms of urban structure; "limited urban infrastructure; informal construction methods; lack of economic opportunity; informal economic activities; large population growth with limited economic growth; external dependency" (Robinson, 2010, p 3).

This characterization of non-modern cities has been challenged by urban theorists of the south who argue for greater recognition of the diversity and complexity of developing cities with their economic, social and political duality (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004; Robinson, 2006; Dupont, 2011; Roy, 2011). However, little has been written about what wealthy and poor cities have in common, or what they can teach each other, as research has remained focused on difference, or on dominant western focused models, such as Sassen's global city model (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004; Robinson, 2006; Dupont, 2011). Sub-standard settlements fall into the group of markers for non-modern cities and by their nature imply a lack of development. Research on the innovation and social, economic, environmental and political contribution of these spaces reveals that a deeper understanding of their role and contribution needs to be developed (Agier, 1999; Roy, 2011).

Of course emphasizing that these settlements are located in cities in the south already creates a positioning and set of discourses that may not be useful. Jenny Robinson (2006) in her book Ordinary Cities argues that the well established divide in urban theory about western and developing world cities creates a hierarchy or ordering of cities that is unjust and unhelpful. She states that "accounts of wealthier cities are often generalized as claims to universal knowledge about all cities" (Robinson, 2010, p 3). She proposes that all cities should be considered to be 'ordinary' cities and that the issues and problems in these cities should be considered in a relational rather than dualistic or polarized way, thereby developing more representative urban theory. Cities all together then become "dynamic and diverse, if conflicted arenas for social and economic life" (Robinson, 2006:1).

This is particularly true in a reflection on settlements, especially sub-standard settlements, between the developed and the developing world. An 'ordinary cities' approach proposes an approach that understands multiple ways of being urban and which looks for multiple ways of making new urban futures which are diverse and the product of human creativity and inventiveness (Robinson, 2006; Dupont, 2011; Roy. 2011). The categorizing, ordering and labeling of cities is problematic and serious, and this is true too for sub-standard settlements within cities, as Robinson's (2006) book reveals. Within the modernist urban view, cities of the future will become unstoppable sites of unsustainable consumption and spaces of large scale marginalization (Davis, 2005). This modernist approach to urbanism has led the United Nations in the UN Habitat report to refer to the fast growing developing world cities of the future as 'slum cities' (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, 2003). The notion of 'slum cities' therefore sets in motion thoughts about the very different patterns and dynamics of these cities, which defy modernist urban perspectives and solutions (Swilling, 2006; Pieterse, 2008; Roy, 2011). It is therefore important in this research to reflect on the concept of 'ordinary cities' and to be critical of an ordering or labeling of cities and their spaces that reflects the dominance of a western view of what makes a city.

One way of challenging this hegemonic view of cities is to listen to the voices of the people living in these cities and spaces and to map out the way they resist attempts to be excluded from the construction and production of their living environment. It can be argued that the modernist view does not recognize, for example, informal settlements as spaces of innovation and reason, but rather sees them as spaces of failure and survival, requiring development and outside intervention. It is important to understand and reflect on how the actors producing and living in these spaces define and respond to them. A critical exploration of the role of civil society organizations and individuals in responding to sub-standard settlements, and the politics and policy making processes involved, will highlight what 'ordinary citizens' who live in these spaces consider as important and necessary in their path to 'development' and greater sustainability.

Nuttall and Mbembe (2008) explore the concept of an African metropolis in relation to pre-constructed ideas of what is urban and what is modern. They question the way in which "cities in general and African cities in particular have been read in recent global scholarship" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008, p 1). They reflect, as does Dupont (2011) in her paper on Delhi, on the development of the concept of a 'global city' and its relationship with and reflections of globalisation, suggesting Saskia Sassen's model of global cities as a point of departure. Sassen's view is that global cities are "nodal points for the co-ordination of processes of production, innovation and accumulation on a world scale" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008, p 3). They suggest that "many analysts have argued that the global city paradigm is a universalising category that overlooks experiences of urban life in the south" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008, p 3). This is problematic as global cities of the south may in fact reflect the future of urban humanity and hence are the frontier or cutting edge of globalisation or globalising modernity (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008; Koolhaas, n.d.). According to Mbembe and Nuttall (2008, p 4) "these cities operate as a testing ground for techniques later applied to the global cities behind which they supposedly lag" thereby challenging the meta-narratives of modernity. This approach therefore moves away from the notion of African cities as 'slum cities', or cities locked into irresolvable crisis, to a concept of African cities that reflects their fragmented, colliding and innovative orders where "forms of social collaboration and people's repeitore's of action are constantly shifting. Civil life appears as an inchoate mix of ruthlessness and kindness, cruelty and tenderness, indifference and generosity" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008, p 6-7). Simone, in his research on African cities, reveals the "wide range of provisional, highly fluid, yet co-ordinated and collective actions" that are generated by residents in African cities that "run parallel to, yet intersect with, a growing proliferation of dencentralised local authorities, small scale enterprises, community associations and civil society organisations" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008, p 7). Koolhaas in his book Lagos: How it Works suggests that West African cities invert everything that is characteristic of a modern city, arguing that it is necessary to move away from the binaries that define so called modern and third world cities, such as the framing of elements as formal and the unformed, or chaotic. He suggests that an exploration of the informal holds the key to understanding the structure

and order of these cities (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008). Roy (2011) in exploring subaltern urbanism, reflects on the formation of ideas that allows for a theorization of megacities and subaltern spaces and subaltern classes that challenges dominant assumptions. He states that "writing against apocalyptic and dystopian narratives of the slum, subaltern urbanism provides accounts of the slum as a terrain of habitation, livelihood, self-organisation and politics. This is a vital and even radical challenge to dominant narratives on the megacity" (Roy, 2011, p 223).

It is necessary therefore to create the space to explore what it means to a sub-standard settlement within a city in the south through the experiences of those living in such settlements, connected to these settlements, and planning and managing them. Given that these spaces are typically and materially defined by poverty and inequality, a lack of services and environmental degradation and risk, it is necessary to use these concepts as a point of departure for both theoretical and empirical investigation. However, as the above discussion suggests, it is how, and by whom, inequality and poverty are defined that matters. Similar approaches of developing a concept of 'multiple modernities', where there has been an opening up what is

meant by urban modernity have been applied to China, Brazil and Asian cities and this may provide a useful way of framing the research done here (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008; Roy, 2011; Dupont, 2011).

In rethinking modernity in fast growing cities in the south, it is therefore necessary to adopt a more critical view of urban theory in the production of knowledge on sub-standard settlements and their urban politics. It is important for this research to recognize "the locatedness of much of what passes for universal theory" so as to extend "the geographical and analytical scope of theorizing" that moves well beyond the claims made on "the experiences of a small selection of wealthier cities" (Robinson, 2010, p 4; Mbembe and Nuttall, 2004; Roy, 2005; Robinson, 2006). Locatedness refers to the particular socio-political context and history in which the formation of universal theory has been embedded, which Robinson (2006; 2010), Roy (2011) and Dupont (2011) argue have, up to this point, been quite narrow. The knowledge produced in this research will make a contribution both to the knowledge already produced on these spaces in cities, and to the comparative gesture required to extend our understanding of cities in general.

3 Defining Urban Inequality and Poverty

3.1 Inequality

Inequality is essentially a distributive problem, constructed through several combined processes, which are multi-dimensional in nature. Some are universal processes, while others are context specific. Inequality is produced and reproduced both by individuals, small groups (such as families and specific communities) and large groups (ethnic or emigrational groups, classes etc). Urban inequality is therefore both symptomatic of and caused by structural inequalities in social and economic relations and is most intensely experienced within a neo-liberal agenda. Locally experienced inequality is rooted in political, economic and social relations and processes that are distributed across far reaching spatial networks of both national and global inequality. Sub-standard settlements are considered to be good markers of the social, economic, political and environmental inequality of cities of the south and hence they form a useful lens through which to view and explore processes of inequality in cities. This research will adopt both a

discursive and distributive approach to understanding inequality in ten cities in the south.

A discursive or constructivist approach to inequality provides a useful and meaningful way of analyzing how different actors construct and respond to the policies and campaigns addressing inequality within their cities and countries. In recognizing that inequality is at odds with the normative dispositions of a large part of humanity, the dominant normative perceptions define the point of departure for the analysis. This is important, as judgements about what constitutes inequality in cities and within sub-standard settlements, and who gets to define this, needs to be critically explored. There has been much debate about ideas of justice and what constitutes fairness or (in) equality. Sen's (2009) book 'The Idea of Justice' questions whether it is possible to secure agreement about what constitutes a just society and its associated rules and institutions, as different people have different views on

what is fair and acceptable in society. However, Sen (2009) argues that we can, however, identify clear injustices that people and societies must address. His point is that there are certain things that stand out as 'certain' injustices, which are based on their material qualities, as well as their discursive construction. Poverty and inequality, which are structurally embedded in and a consequence of sub-standard settlements, can be considered as a major injustice in cities, and these issues should therefore be of immediate interest to policy makers (UNDP, 2010). Questions about what is 'fair' and acceptable, and what is 'unfair' and unacceptable inequality therefore need to be asked as well as 'what are the goods and bads that are contested in the distributive system and who gets to decide on this distribution? These perceptions are constitutive of the demands for the negation of inequality, through the concepts and principles of social justice, environmental justice, or spatial justice. However, the perceptions of inequality and justice may vary from one society, or one city, to another. Since the 'discursive' position is inspired by the humanities, it also provides opportunity to bring in the history of each country and city – not history in its totality, but social and political history that is relevant to understand the particular discourses, policies and campaigns addressing urban poverty in each city. A discursive approach therefore enables a wide range of actors to construct, define and shape how inequality is understood and mapped in cities, thereby extending and deepening the production of knowledge on inequality in cities.

A distributive approach suggests that inequality is based on the systematic, unequal distribution of both goods and bads in society. The spatial representation of inequality is important to map and analyse as it reflects unequal relations within society that are deeply spatial in nature. Understanding the socio-spatial dialectic is also useful as it reflects how society shapes space (unequal social relations cause an unequal distribution of good and bads across space) and how space in turn shapes society (the spatial concentration of goods and bads reinforces unequal social relations) (Soja, 1989). For Soja (1989, p 81) "social and spatial relations are dialectically inter-reactive, interdependent … social relations of production are both space-forming and space-contingent" (Soja, 1989, p 81). This implies that the spaces of sub-standard settlements reflect the unequal social and economic relations of society, and at the same time, the opportunities and constraints of these spaces determine the social reproduction of citizens of these settlements, further entrenching social and economic inequality.

A deeper consideration of urban inequality raises a key question about its embeddedness in socio-economic relations. Researchers need to explore to what extent inequality is constructed as a discrete variable that is territorially dichotomized, in contrast to being spatially structured along a wider continuum of socio-economic stratification? Or, in other words, to what extent is poverty spatially concentrated? Can the problem of urban inequality be simplified, or reduced, to the problem of "substandard / informal settlements"? The answer to this question is 'no'. This is because a one-sided focus on 'slums' in urban policy-making addresses the symptoms rather than the root causes of inequality. It avoids the larger issue of the redistribution of (economic, environmental, social, cultural and political) resources, and rather focuses on the products or outcome of inequality as opposed to the production of inequality. A much clearer understanding of the relational and contextual character of inequality needs to be developed, which does not occur when only the symptoms of inequality are explored. The concept of justice offers useful ways of thinking about the distribution of benefits in society.

According to Bromberg et al (2007, p 1) over the past three decades civil society groups and activists seeking a "more fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of society have increasingly turned from conceptions of (economic) equality to broader coalitions of justice". Justice is analysed in both material (re-distributive) and non-material ways (happiness, liberty, security and opportunity), which also reflects the multi-dimensional definitions of poverty (Bromberg, et al, 2007). Rawls' (1971) principles of justice, namely that 1) that everyone should have an equal right to have equal basic liberties within a total system that ensures liberty for all, and 2) that social and economic inequalities, where necessary, should be arranged to benefit the least advantaged among us (Bromberg et al, 2007, p 1) provide a useful frame within which to consider inequality and to explore what may be considered fair and just. However, according to Bromberg, et al, (2007) this normative ideal needs to be extended to include spatial and social difference and it needs to consider in what spaces such shared notions of justice could be produced and activated. This implies that the concept of spatial justice, and perhaps even spaces of justice, need to be explored. This is supported, as discussed above, by the work of Harvey (1973), Lefebvre (1974), Soja (1989) and Massey (2005) who challenge the fixed, contained and absolute nature of space and rather argue for a deeper exploration of the production of space. Space here is both produced by and a producer of social relations and therefore justice becomes a matter of understanding the socio-spatial dialectic which reveals the relations between socio-economic structures and the geography of injustice. Space therefore matters and it

therefore needs to form a central concept in the production of knowledge about policies and politics that shapes sub-standard settlements in fast growing cities. Bromberg et al (2007, p 2) provide a useful summary of these ideas:

> *"Understanding that space—like justice—is never simply handed out or given, that both are socially produced, experienced and contested on constantly shifting social, political, economic, and geographical terrains, means that justice—if it is to be concretely achieved, experienced, and reproduced—must be engaged on spatial as well as social terms."*

The making of space, and hence inequality, is therefore strongly rooted in active deliberations between multiple actors who have the power to shape and produce space through the social, economic and environmental relations they construct through their material practices and their discursive engagement. Bromberg et al (2007) argues that this making of space leads to the opportunity to build solidarities across difference, enables space to be a process and a product, and allows actors to negotiate and participate in inscribing meaning to, in this case, sub-standard settlements. Justice therefore becomes "a shared responsibility of engaged actors in the socio-spatial systems they inhabit and (re)produce" (Bromberg, et al, 2007, p 3) so that concrete concepts of justice can be produced in the sub-standard settlements of the ten cities chosen for this study, that reflect their particular history, character and desired future, as articulated by the actors that share these spaces.

However, to begin this process it is useful to reflect on the measurement of inequality in broad terms across the ten cities in this research.

The 2010 Human Development Report (UNDP, 2010) provides a useful frame for measuring human development, which can then be used to reflect inequality (see Figure 1).

This dashboard reveals that both the HDI and empowerment indicators are necessary to reflect a baseline condition of human development. This can then be expanded by focusing on a multi-dimensional poverty index, as well as indicators that reveal vulnerability, such as indicators of environmental sustainability, human security, well-being and decent work. Inequality can be more directly measured using the Gini co-efficients, inequality adjusted HDI and gender indices.

A political economy approach should then be applied in the analysis and interpretation of the data to ensure that the factors underpinning inequality in cities and in sub-standards settlements is revealed. According to the UNDP (2010) "policy recommendations to reduce inequality have typically focused on redistributing income, promoting access to services, and to a lesser extent, introducing progressive taxation". However, more needs to be done at a policy level to address structural inequalities and empowerment, if inequality is to be addressed at a more meaningful level. The UNDP (2010) argues that the state has a major role to play in reducing barriers to inclusion and empowerment. They suggest that economic and social opportunities, legal protection, political participation and spatial inequality should be jointly explored to reflect inequality and injustice or the concepts of spatial justice discussed above.

Figure 1: The Human Development Report's Dashboard

Table 5.1	Measuring human development

Towards a new human development dashboard

Empirical measure	Components of Human Development				
	Health	Education	Material goods	Political	Social
Average level	Human Development Index			Empowerment indicators	
Deprivation	Multidimensional Poverty Index				
Vulnerability	Indicators of enviromental sustainability, human security, well-being, decent work				
Inequality	Inequality-adjusted HDI				
	Gender Inequality Index				

Source: HDRO based on Pritchett (2010)

3.2   Urban Poverty

Poverty is defined as the multiple deprivations that reduce access to welfare, opportunities and the freedom of choice in social reproduction (May, 2008). By implication, residents of sub-standard settlements are considered to be the urban poor. However, research has shown that these residents may not be the poorest residents within the city, and assumptions about the nature and depth of their poverty need to be challenged. In India[1], urban poverty studies and policies have often focussed on population groups living in slum areas (Niua, 1986, 1989; Risbud, 2009) implicitly leaning towards an approach based on housing poverty, defined, according to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, by the lack of "safe water, secure and healthy shelter with basic infrastructure such as piped water and adequate provision for sanitation, drainage and the removal of household waste" (UN-HABITAT, 1996). However, not all poor city-dwellers are housed in slums and not all slum-dwellers are necessarily poor on the basis of income criteria (Risbud, 2009: 177). For instance, the study conducted by Baud et al. (2009) in three major Indian metropolises (Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai) shows – on the basis of poverty mapping according to an index of multiple deprivation – that the hotspots of poverty are not concentrated in slum areas.

The difficulty with assessing poverty at the level where people are classified as poor, is that variations of poverty within poor groups are often difficult to determine, as the depth of poverty is so great that differences within this level of poverty are not clear or do not carry much significance. Poverty lines are commonly set to determine who lives within 'poverty' and who is just outside of what is defined as poor. In measuring poverty in sub-standard settlements, if a multi-dimensional approach is to be used, a wide range of deprivations need to be considered, such as housing type, services, source of energy for household activities, education, access to health care, etc. It is also important to consider the social construction of poverty and to think about what social conventions or social groups have the power to define poverty and levels of deprivation. These may also vary from one context to another.

In assessing poverty in relation to human development, the UNDP (2010) report states that addressing poverty and development is about increasing people's choices and access to resources. These choices and resources should enable a decent standard of living, a healthy life and the right to be educated. Other important choices include guaranteed human rights and self respect, political freedom and access to power in decision making, and what Adam Smith called the ability to mix with others without being "ashamed to appear in public" (UNDP, 2010). Ross's (2010) work on informal settlers who move up the housing hierarchy in the Western Cape, South Africa, clearly reflects the informal settlers' desire for 'oordentlikheid' or respectability, as their housing situation changes. Rawls' (1971) work in 'Theory of Justice', places great emphasis on self-respect and access to primary goods in the way in which poverty is constructed. Happiness and well being is also considered important in an assessment of poverty with both opulence (income and commodity command) and utility (happiness and choice fulfillment) contributing to human well being and deprivation (Clark, 2006). The 2010 UNDP report argues that the following three elements are important for human development and hence they reflect what poverty undermines: well-being, which is about expanding people's real freedoms so that they can flourish; empowerment and agency, which enables people and groups to act and to achieve valuable outcomes and justice; respecting human rights and other goals of society.

Sen's capabilities approach which focuses on human capability and freedom is a useful way of framing and assessing poverty in sub-standard settlements. Sen (1981) states that poverty is the absence of certain basic capabilities which allow people to function. However, Sen (1981) suggests that it is important, when assessing poverty, to reflect on how different societies and different people use their capacity to convert income and commodities into useful achievements. Residents living in sub-standard settlements often reflect high levels of innovation and capacity in using and converting limited, and otherwise considered 'non-useful' resources, into valuable resources for their living environments and employment opportunities.

According to May (2006) poverty should not become a produced 'reality' or a product, but rather it should be understood in terms of the social and economic structures which shape it (May, 2006). Poverty therefore cannot be defined equally for all the countries represented in this research. It must be framed within the particular historical, socio-cultural and economic context of each society and in relation to the political context and fundamentally, the wealth of the various social groups in each setting. This supports the need to have a context specific assessment of poverty in sub-standard settlements as different contexts

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1   The section on India draws from: Dupont V., 2010a, "Slum demolition, forced eviction and their effects on the affected families. Focus on Delhi and Mumbai", Paper presented to the SETUP conference « *Housing of the poor, social exclusion, urban and environmental policies in metropolises of India and Brazil* », University Paris Ouest & Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, 1-3 February 2010.

and histories will produce different trajectories of poverty in different spaces. Time is also important in the assessment and analysis of the underlying causes of poverty as different events and shocks, and phases in governance will produce different outcomes in sub-standard settlements. This leads to questions about vulnerability and how an assessment of vulnerability can lead to a deeper understanding of poverty. This is valuable as there are essentially two categories of poor people: the chronically poor, which are households that remain below the poverty line over time, and the transitorily poor, that move between poor and non-poor categories over time (Aliber, 2003, p 473). This implies that mobility in poverty becomes important to explore. Questions about mobility or lack of mobility in and out or poverty need to be addressed as residents of sub-standard settlements reflect high levels of mobility, due to the fluidity and uncertainty of life in sub-standard settlements. Shocks and risk events probably have the greatest impact on these issues and these are prevalent in such settlements. The poverty profile, which includes the poverty line or poverty gap helps to reveal how poverty varies across sub-groups (May, 2008).

Carter and May (2001) question the concept of the 'chronically poor' and prefer rather to refer to those who are 'structurally poor'. These households lack "minimum sufficient combination of assets to better their circumstances" (Carter and May, cited in Aliber, 2003, p 478). Access to assets, as well as socially defined rights, environmental resources and coping and adaptive capacity form a major part of determining who is poor and who will have mobility in poverty. For residents of sub-standard settlements, broad structural forces impose the first condition of poverty, while a wide range of deprivations, which are a result of both structure and agency, deepen or lessen the experience of poverty.

Mbembe and Nuttall (2008, p 6) provide a useful definition of poverty that summarises the ideas presented in this section:

"Urban poverty itself is many things, some of which have to do with material deprivation; others with lack of security and dignity; others with what Appadurai calls the "exposure to risk and high costs for thin comforts"; and others still with the "terms of recognition" – the ability and capacity of the poor to exercise voice, to debate, contest, and oppose vital directions for collective social life" (Mbembe and Nuttall, 2008, p 6).

The approach to poverty for this research therefore needs to recognise a series of dimensions, not limited to income shortages and/or housing poverty alone, while following the same lines as the concept of structural poverty defined by unmet basic needs (Salama and Valier, 1995) and by multiple shortages of diverse resources, not solely material ones[2]. An analytical framework in terms of households' livelihoods, incorporating "capital" of different types – human, financial, physical and social – whose paucity or deprivation makes access to certain resources and meeting basic needs more difficult, thereby contributing to poverty would be useful in assessing poverty in sub-standard settlements (see: Moser, 1998; Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones, 2002; Baud, et al, 2008) and, reversely, whose strengthening contributes to the improvement of the households' living conditions.

While examining the specificity of urban poverty, other authors (Milbert, 1995; Wratten, 1995) have put forward certain risks inherent to the urban environment itself (congested housing combined with industrial and water pollution, settlements in unhealthy and/or dangerous areas) that often affect the most temporary settlement areas, in particular the illegal occupation of land, relegated to areas not suitable for development. Hence, urban poverty is associated with certain types of vulnerability. Another feature highlighted by Wratten is the vulnerability generated by state and police intervention. Particularly in a context "where a rigid constraint is placed in the supply of serviced land and housing", "[r]esidents of squatter settlements live in terror of official clearances in which they may lose their few capital assets and personal possessions" (Wratten, 1995, p 24).

In relation to slum clearance policies (which are particularly significant in Indian metropolises), it is also important to raise the issue of the deprivation of rights, which is at the heart of the notion of forced eviction and its effects, as well as the risks some of these deprivations bring to bear on potentialities and capabilities. Here the United Nations Organisation's (UN's) human rights approach is useful, which defines forced eviction as "the removal of individuals, families or communities from their homes, land or neighbourhoods, against their will, directly or indirectly attributable to the state" (OHCHR-UNOG 1996: Introduction). Hence, forced eviction is not merely a displacement like any other type, which may be reduced to intra-urban residential mobility. Among the main features contributing to the distinction between them as detailed in the UN's document, two deserve to be underlined here: "state responsibility" and "invariably an element of force or coercion", to the extent that "forced evictions often involve the irreparable demolition of the homes of affected persons".

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2 This paragraph and the subsequent three ones draw on: Dupont V., 2010a & 2010b

Nonetheless, the families expelled from slums should not be viewed merely as being passive victims, but rather as both victims – of forced eviction and the destruction of their homes, forcing them to leave – and actors, deploying coping strategies, although they may have a very limited margin of manoeuvre and their choices may be made under particularly strong constraints, in a decisive social and political context. It is therefore important in this instance to adopt "an approach that consists of restoring to the actors concerned their share of initiative in working out their own lives" (Godard, 1990, p 9). This is also the approach followed in India by the 'subaltern' movement, that recognizes "the exercise of agency by subaltern subjects", even in the context of slum evictions (Baviskar, 2003, p 97; Roy, 2011).

Understanding poverty and inequality is a complex and multi-faceted process and the above section has attempted to provide some insight into the different approaches, positions and methods that can be used to develop a deep and multi-dimensional understanding of these concepts. The following section defines sub-standard settlements in the different countries that form the research focus of this study.

4 Sub-Standard Settlements in Brazil, India, Peru and South Africa

Section 3 has revealed that in whatever way poverty in sub-standard settlements is defined, the basic premise that needs to be accepted is that these spaces reflect injustice within fast growing cities. Sen's (2009) book 'The Idea of Justice' argues that although there may not be overall agreement about what is just, or what is fair, or in this case who is poor and who is not, there can be agreement that there are clear injustices in society that must be addressed and removed (UNDP, 2010). Poverty and inequality in sub-standard settlements is one such example of an 'obvious' injustice that must to be addressed through a wide range of interventions and actions by a range of different actors. Even though attempts to address this injustice may only reveal just how resilient these spaces of sub-standard settlements are, this should not stop actors from doing whatever is possible to bring about the transformation of these spaces.

However, to begin this process it is first necessary to begin to define what 'sub-standard settlements' mean in different fast growing 'megacities' in the world. In this case, for an international project involving cities in four different countries, an important prerequisite is to delimitate precisely the type of settlement that will constitute the focus of study. Reflecting on the use of the term "slum" may also be useful, as words are not neutral (Gilbert, 2007). The detailed description of sub-standard settlements in each country is presented in the conceptual framework.

UN-Habitat (2010/2011) defines a slum household as one which lacks "one or more of the following five amenities: durable housing (a permanent structure providing protection from extreme climatic conditions; sufficient living area (no more than three people sharing a room); access to improved water (water that is sufficient, affordable and can be obtained without extreme effort; access to improved sanitation facilities (private toilet or a public one shared with a reasonable number of people); secure tenure (de facto or de jure secure tenure status and protection against forced eviction). However, data is not often available on the last condition and hence the first four indicators are used to define slum households.

The following framework provides a useful matrix for defining sub-standard settlements based on their legality (status of occupation) and regularity (spatial lay-out and physical structure), as criteria for measuring the degree of precariousness and socio-economic deprivation. This is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: A Matrix of Sub-Standard Housing Structure and Status

	Regular	Irregular
Legal	Impoverished quarters; inner-city decay, etc. Peri-urban development	i.e. resettlements colonies
Illegal	i.e. inner city squats	most precarious settlements, squatter camps, backyard dwellings, etc.

However, these conditions vary from country to country and hence it is useful to describe sub-standard housing as it stands in each specific context[3] and this is presented in the conceptual framework.

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3   The following set of terms (Box 1) appear regularly in discussions around sub-standard settlements and hence provide insight into the attributes and issues dealt with in relation to these spaces of habitation and work .

Box 1: Terms Used when Referring to Slums (Source: SETUP, 2009)

Demolition (linked to forced eviction of slum dwellers and destruction of their dwelling); Displacement ; Encroachment; Eviction; Forced eviction; Invasion; Land invasion; Regularization of informal settlements; Land regularization; In-situ rehabilitation; Relocation; Relocation site; Relocated households; Re-localisation; Transplantation; Resettlement; Resettlement colonies; Sites and services; Shanty town; Favela; Jhuggi-jhompri clusters (Delhi); Jhopad-patti and zopadpatti (Mumbai); Cherie (Chennai); Slum clearance and redevelopment; Squatter; Squatter settlement; Transit camp; In-situ upgrading; Informal

5   Social Movements that Transform Urban Spaces and Politics

This research discusses the role of social movements in transforming the spaces of poverty and inequality in fast growing cities. Social movements reflect the everyday struggles that arise from the structural manifestations of political, social, environmental and economic inequality (Larmer, 2010). Social movements take on many forms, from those that are well established to those that are more temporary, such as protest movements, which emerge and disappear as issues and events arise and as they integrate into broader organizations or society. They include civil society organizations, NGOs, self defined social movements, riots and strikes, crowds and mobs and must be considered in relation to the political parties, institutions, international agencies and social agents within which they interact.

Goodwin and Jasper's (2003, p 1) definition of a social movement reveals it broad nature: "A social movement is a collective, organized, sustained, and noninstitutional challenge to authorities, powerholders, or cultural beliefs and practices". Della Porta and Diani (1999, p 16) reflect on the main characteristics of social movements: They are "(1) informal networks, based (2) on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about (3) conflictual issues, through (4) the frequent use of various forms of protest".

Different approaches can be used to explore the public sphere and civil society and these are presented in Box 2.

Box 2: The Public Sphere and Civil Society

The Public Sphere and the Civil Society

a) The hegemony approach: set of voluntary private associations which constitute the arena where a certain social group constitutes its cultural and political dominance over diverse groups and social classes, constituting a national collective will (Gramsci, 1966: 40-50; Bobbio, 1977: 150-177).

b) The third sector approach: Lester Salomon, one of the main scholars of the third sector, states that 'a virtual associational revolution is going on. This makes an expressive global 'third sector' which is composed by (i) structured organizations; (ii) positioned outside of the formal state apparatus; (iii) which do not aim to distribute profits from their activities, among its directors or shareholders; (iv) self-governed; (v) compromising individuals in a significant unitary effort' (Salomon, 1993; on Fernandes, 1994: 5).

c) The social capital approach, 'Social capital here refers to features of social organizations, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action. (…) Voluntary cooperation is easier in a community that has inherited a substantial stock of social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement' (Putnam, 1993. 167).

d) The discursive approach sees civil society as an institutionalized dimension of the world of life, which is composed, at the same time, by the objective, social and subjective world. It is dynamized by diverse orientations of action – values, norms and ends – and types of action – communicative, normative and teleological – with feedbacks from different structural components, especially culture, society and personality, through processes of cultural reproduction, social integration and socializations (Lopez, 2008).

e) The democratization approach tries to explain the emergency and characteristics of civil society in terms of strength / weakness and autonomy / dependence, by the use of the so-called Dahl's Box (1971: 13-25) combined with the modernization approach, seen as a structural differentiation in subsystems and cultural differentiation in specific spheres (science, ethics and aesthetics) of Weber (1946: 323-362), Habermas (1989 : 11-35) y Lash (1990: 17-30).'

Marginalisation and exclusion, as well as spatial segregation, are common to people living in sub-standard settlements. However, citizens in these spaces have challenged this 'separation' and have found innovative, formal and informal processes of engaging with the state, and the structural forces that have led to the formation of these spaces in the first place. These processes of struggle can be considered through the literature on social movements, networks and more recently the concept of 'assemblages' (Bickerstaff and Agyeman, 2009). The concept of assemblages has been developed from actor network theory and it draws together the multiple actors, including people, texts, machines, animals, environments, discourses and relations that collectively constitute and shape social and environmental justice. According to Bennet (2005, cited in Bickerstaff and Agyeman, 2009) assemblages are groupings of different actors and actants and their relations through which power is distributed and exercised. Agency is the result of the interactions of different actors and actants and the relations that are embedded in these interactions. These relations vary across space and time and are continually being constructed through social ties, political institutions and discursive strategies. This approach may offer useful insights as to how the themes of the different work packages can be drawn into the research on social movements and inequality in cities.

Bickerstaff and Agyeman (2009) challenge the notion that communities will act as coherent and equal groups and suggest rather that the dynamics of political mobilization cannot assumed to be unified. In the same way that those

that write about space argue that space cannot be fixed and is not static, but always under construction (Massey, 2005) so too are the frames of action in social movements not "static, reified entities but are continuously being constituted, contested, reproduced, transformed or replaced during the course of social movement activity (Bickerstaff and Agyeman, 2009, p 783). These frames are "deployed to legitimate movement goals and campaigns by mobilising potential adherents and constituents, and demobilising any antagonists" (Benford and Snow, 2000, cited in Bickerstaff and Agyeman, 2009, p 783). It is therefore important to consider the spatial constructs of framing practices and to understand how space shapes and transforms these processes. Locally experienced poverty and inequality in sub-standards settlements are rooted in and shaped by social, political and economic relations that stretch across far reaching spatial networks (Bickerstaff and Agyeman, 2009) and hence the scale at which these processes of social action evolve becomes important to consider. The extent to which scale is produced and used by social actors becomes an interesting aspect to explore (Bickerstaff and Agyeman, 2009). Kurtz (2003) reflects on how social actors invoke 'scale' strategically in negotiations over the construction, meaning and response to injustice, in this case poverty and inequality.

By employing a geographical understanding of social movements, as elaborated by Leitner et al. (2008) and Nicholls (2009), we can better explain why political mobilisation follows certain trajectories and occupies certain spaces (and not others). Lier (2009) provides a powerful argument to support the value of developing a relational understanding of scale in this research. Different spatial configurations suite different social actors' interests, which make scale production a political project. Scales are politicised in different, yet related, ways. The social construction of particular scales are continuously contested and subject to regulation (Marston 2000; Gough 2004). Also, reconfiguration between scales is often encouraged and resisted by various actors, (Herod 1998; Swyngedouw 2004). Importantly for WP3, social actors themselves employ scalar political strategies for certain objectives to be achieved. Political actors form networks with certain mobilities, and these the spatialities must be seen in relation to the organisation of the state. Social movements are often horizontally organised networks, or rhizomes if you will (cf. Woods, 2003), which "take on state institutions, whose spatiality has traditionally been dominated by nested scales, ranging from the national to the local" (Leitner et al., 2008). Different political actors deploy various 'scale frames' which correspond with, or even challenge, the scalar organisation of the state: while some might be successful through up-scaling strategies, other movements bring the struggle down to the sublocal level

– where they might be best organized. Some networks even demonstrate a mobility which allows them to link social movement mobilizations in far away places, creating new political geographies (Nicholls, 2009).

The way in which frames of social action are assembled and then strategies employed, will depend on the structural opportunities and constraints in a particular political, social and spatial context and the local experience of injustice, as well as the scale at which this happens. Social movement research therefore needs to consider the tensions and conflicts and knowledge produced within social movements and between them over time (Larmer, 2010).

Bickerstaff and Agyeman (2009) reflect on the emblems of social action that become powerful symbols in the process of participation, negotiation and decision making. They explore the framing of elements of the non-human landscape in the strategies of social action and question how knowledge is produced about these issues. They use the example of the framing of toxic ships, in an environmental justice case study, as 'ghost ships' and examine why these ships were framed in this way. Research into the emblems and symbols used in the strategies of social networks and assemblages to address poverty and inequality in sub-standard settlements will reveal the way knowledge is produced and power is exercised in these spaces.

Assemblages offer a useful frame for exploring social movements and networks as they draw together a wide range of actants (people, texts, media, internet, non human actors) with discourses, tactics and actions and places, spaces and political and economic structures. There are also different intermediaries that connect actors, such as NGOs, formal institutions and the media and these play a major role in ordering and defining the relations between actors. These intermediaries and the relations between actants within an assemblage result in a myriad of entanglements that reflect the power relations and hence dominance and resistance of different actors in space and in the networks they participate in. This leads to a complex spatiality that contains the entanglements and relations of these multiple actors and reflects power, particularly power exercised through the production of knowledge (Frew, 2002). As Larmer (2010) suggests the action of social movements is related to and shaped by the action of their ordinary members, their relations to broader political systems, and their interactions with wider urban and rural communities of the poor.

Citizenship acts as a space for contested identity formation and action by both human and non-human actors in ensuring that multiple voices are heard in decision making. The shift from government to governance among advocates of the 'network society' (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003) has opened up new spaces for different actors to engage over processes that affect their daily life. Citizenship is therefore a contested, discursive space as different actors define whose interests should be considered and on what basis (Smith and Pangsapa, 2008). The definition of actors has also been extended to include non-human actors, which are "seen as legitimate constituencies that require stakeholder status in decision-making processes" (Smith and Pangsapa, 2008, p 27). Citizenship has had a strong focus on rights and entitlements, but more recently different claims are being made by citizens that extend this view. As Isin and Turner (2002, p 1, cited in Smith and Pangsapa, 2008) state: "what is new is the economic, social and cultural conditions that make possible the articulation of new claims and the content and form of these claims as citizen rights". Research into social movements within sub-standard settlements in the ten cities being considered in C2S will reveal the conditions that shape the articulation of claims, and their discursive nature. Lier (2009) suggests the urban scale is immensely complex, woven in a mesh of scalar arrangements between the global, national and sublocal. It is important not to lose sight of any of these as constitutive of the political opportunities and limitations placed on city managers and urban planners. The scale of the city has been underplayed in urban theory, argues Robinson (2009), in favour of a focus on inter-urban competition and networks. Urban policy makers and international donors, however, have become more rather than less focused on the city scale. This offers a promising way out of a narrow focus on sublocal development projects, and invites for more inclusive, redistributive visions of urban development (Robinson 2009)

Social movements also need to be considered in terms of the relations that are embedded in real people in real contexts over time. Geographical proximity can allow social capital and strong ties to develop, even in political landscapes characterised by heterogeneity and translocal flows. This is a prerequisite for alliances between unions and community organisations to develop over time (Nicholls, 2009).

Larmer (2010) in his reflection on social movements in Africa, suggests that social movements emerge in complex and changing circumstances, and so although the materialist context of structural political and economic forces provide a useful guide as to why and how social movements have formed, they cannot reveal the multiple and unpredictable trajectories that social movements follow. Their overt or official position may not always reflect reality or the people they say they represent (Larmer, 2010). Social movements

should therefore not be viewed necessarily as "authentic and unproblematic movements of the people, simple counterposed to powerful and exploitative forces in society. They are rather the expression of the contradictions and hierarchies of the society in which they operate, whose debates and conflicts express inequalities or resources, influence and education and differences of class, gender, ethnicity, amongst others". They might be authentic representatives of the poor and marginalized, but they are just as importantly spaces within which political difference is contested and articulated in societies that are characterized by social conflict and inequality and hence they are best researched within their own context and in relation to broader structural forces (Larmer, 2010). Importantly, the "poor and marginalized" might not have common interests: place-based interests might create lines of division, so might patronage and political alliances. According to Larmer (2010, p 253) social movements exist "along a spectrum that reflects their origins, sources of funding, links to particular nation-states and ideological bases and divergent social forces".

Smith and Pangsapa (2008) adopt a pragmatic view on how engagement between formal institutions should occur. They argue that the slums of rapidly growing cities in the south violate all the principles of the UN Global Compact and hence acknowledge that effective solutions are urgently required to address the processes of dispossession, degradation and exploitation that define these spaces, by recognizing who is responsible for these outcomes and how these acts can be addressed. However, they suggest that solutions will not be achieved by alienating the institutions that produce these impacts (from the World Bank to local municipalities), as many radical NGOs have done, but rather that social movements should treat these institutions as "adversaries rather than enemies" (Smith and Pangsapa, 2008, p 35) with direct engagement taking place over the construction of and rationale for development, modernization and poverty alleviation.

There is a clear worldwide trend for network building with a multi-stakeholder kind of association, political or non political and thematically oriented and there are several new and strong networks all around the world, building up relationships among key city, regional and national actors (institutions and/or persons). Those organizations disseminate information and knowledge, teach coordination and team work by permanently practicing it, working with people and institutions that clearly show their will to work in a joint way and generally developing activities in places where there are minimum agreements for a jointly action (putting temporarily to a side actions without a minimum level of agreement), as well as providing attention to poverty and environmental problems.

Those networks, particularly those independent and from the poorer countries, are changing, and even supporting social, environmental, urban poor, indigenous movements who are clear actors on their own, developing awareness raising campaigns, exchange programs and promoting internships, field visits (for training by doing), Internet discussions, seminars, forums. In short, they develop permanent ways of exchanging information and social knowledge generation. They contribute to making people and institutions accountable of what is going on in their communities, their cities, territories and/or the world, particularly focusing in the vulnerable.

An important issue here is the extent to which the policies and action are formulated and implemented "with" or "against" the urban poor. At the one extreme, labels such as "authoritarian", "technocratic", "elite-based" can be used to describe policies, structure or action. At the other extreme, "participatory", "deliberative-democratic" etc can be used. Usually there is evidence of a mix of policies and approaches. History reveals that social pressure and action is required to benefit the weak and marginalised. Conscientious and constant participation and systematic social control organized and adequately led by and for the more excluded is what leads to 'real' transformation. Social networks as well as democratic and decentralized institutional building are critical to these processes. Cities remain the arena for political expression of migrants and those that are excluded. Their voice is heard when they can communicate through organised and powerful social movements and hence it is necessary to explore the role of politics in challenging inequality in cities.

The key to breaking out of 'vicious circles', where urban inequality reproduces a certain type of politics (elitism, clientelism, patronage etc) which again deepens inequality, lies in the politics itself. Changes can be done by mobilizing new actors and new interests into the political system, and as a consequence changing the power relations between the actors and the rules of the game. The politics shapes policy choice and policy implementation and this in turn shapes politics.

However, it is important to recognize that this research focuses on politics rather than the political. Political spaces are usually construed as antagonistic, conflictual spaces that reflect the struggles of social forces. For Mouffe (cited in Smith and Pangsapa, 2008, p 36) 'politics' "involves the ensembles of practices, discourse and institutions that attempt to create a sense of order and organisation, manage potential conflicts and domesticate hostilities". The struggle should move from a struggle between 'enemies' to a struggle between 'adversaries' so that collective energy can be channeled towards negotiated and deliberated

solutions, rather than one group asserting power, and hence its will, over another. Deliberative processes lead to the development of new spaces of engagement, where multi-signification is recognized and valued and where the rules of the game are established by multiple actors who jointly construct the notions of and paths to sustainable and just urban futures (Hajer, 2005). It is therefore important that the politics of those engaged in sub-standard settlements is explored rather than just the political spaces that contain this politics.

6 Spaces of Sub-Standard Settlements

The concept of space can be used as a means integrating the research interests of poverty, inequality, spatial segregation, marginalization and social movements and networks in fast growing cities, which are being viewed through the lens of sub-standards settlements. As Massey (2005, cited in Robinson, 2010, p 7) argues "cities are routinely sites of assemblage, and hence multiplicity, urban outcomes are often best characterized as emergent from multiple overlapping and interesting processes and events".

Robinson (2010, Massey (2005), Harvey (2001) and Lefebvre (1974) state that an understanding of the spatiality of cities is a helpful way of recasting and reshaping theoretical and methodological approaches to cities and spaces within cities. Exploring the spatiality of sub-standard settlements in cities will reveal the "multiplicity, diversity and connectedness" (Robinson, 2010, p 2) of these spaces and the actors wihin them in fast growing megacities in the south. This approach challenges inherited assumptions about causality and relations in cities, rather examining spaces, which are the product of unequal relations, and which are embedded in unequal material practices, that are continually being enacted. Sub-standard settlements, as spaces of inequality, are always in the process of being made and are therefore a reflection of both social relations within cities, regions and nations and their politics (Massey, 2005). By exploring the spaces of sub-standard settlements, the relations between both human and non-human actors[4] can be revealed, which will lead to a much deeper understanding of urban politics and urban processes and the actors and social movements that shape them.

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4   Non-human actors refer to all elements of the environment that are not human, such as plants, animals, diseases, etc.

7 Conclusion

This paper has presented the theoretical framework and literature review for a study which will focus on the policies and politics that address urban inequality through the lens of social movements and their campaigns in sub-standard settlements. The research for this project will consider ten cities in four countries and hence the theoretical framework has concentrated on abstract concepts that frame the main questions of the research, rather than on the specific detail of each component of the research as this varies from country to country.

This paper has explored the way in which sub-standard settlements and megacities are constructed within a modernist frame, suggesting that a more open approach be adopted, which is not based on assumptions developed through universalizing theory, but which enables the complexity of spaces within cities to emerge through comparative research. It then presented ideas on the way in which poverty, inequality and social justice can be examined and understood by using both literature and the voices of those that experience and resist socio-economic relations that are unjust and unacceptable. The way in which sub-standard settlements are defined in the different countries represented in this research was reviewed briefly and a typology of 'sub-standardness' was developed. Finally the politics of urban processes was reviewed by reflecting on social movements and the way in which they transform and constitute politics within spaces of sub-standard settlements.

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