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DOMESTIC SPACE AS A SURVIVAL STRATEGY FOR LOW-INCOME WOMEN: A UGANDAN EXAMPLE

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ABSTRACT

This paper sheds light on the obstacles that prevent low-income women from fully enjoying their right to adequate housing. Low-income women have not been fully engaged in influencing the planning environment around housing despite their experiences in housing women. Feminist and other cross-cutting literatures have expressed gendered inequalities in housing however concrete solutions related to house design and planning have not been advanced. The Masese Women's Self-Help Housing Project in Jinja, Uganda was developed solely for the benefit of low-income women, however the houses that were built have been altered. This paper posits that studying the house transformations in order to understand how low-income households practice space can help point architects and planners towards inclusive housing design and planning approaches that can benefit the low-income households and prevent governments and donors from spending finances on futile house prototypes that eventually get abandoned. Low-income government provided housing in Uganda has been continually transformed by its beneficiaries. The transformations are a major sign that there is discontentment about the houses since low-income households are excluded from the design and policy shaping processes of these houses. By transforming the houses, the low-income households attempt to fit their houses or environments to their ways of living. The unregulated housing transformations contribute to a shoddy and overcrowded appearance of the housing area, resulting into the same look that government intended to avoid initially. The study was a qualitative exploratory and descriptive case study strategy, it sought to understand a real-life problem at the Masese Women's Self-Help Housing Project. Precedent studies of the project and a literature review were carried out to analyse the various housing transformations in an attempt to address the problem of inadequate government provided housing for low-income households. The findings of this research are intended to inform house design, planning and policy initiatives that studying housing transformations in low-income areas can guide the advancement of housing that is suitable for low-income households, especially women who utilise domestic space more.

KEY WORDS Low-income Housing, Gender Analysis, Women, Adequate Housing

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1. INTRODUCTION AND THE CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Women experience barriers to income generation beyond those faced by men. These barriers are often psychological tending to be brought over from previous socio-economic systems. The prevalent belief that women's work is not part of the monetary mainstream seems to prevail. Even in the housing realm, women are often excluded from decisions concerning house design yet they use domestic space more than men due to their intrinsic role as caretaker in homes, and also because house is a resource to them. The present study was carried out at the Masese Womens' Self-Help Housing Project (MWSHP) in Jinja, Uganda. The project sought to provide women with permanent houses that would change their future and help them break the inter-generational cycle of poverty through the concept of enablement. It was established under a site-and-services-self-help programme, which was funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the Africa Housing Foundation (AHF). While the land was availed by the Jinja Municipal Council (JMC). The MWSHP was aimed at upgrading the lives of women who had been living in squalid conditions in the Masese 1 informal settlement adjacent to the project's site. It was set up in collaboration with a Masese Women's Cooperative Group with 700 women as members, and was intended to enable the women through the promotion of self-help by them constructing their houses, and to get them involved in income-generating activities (IGAs) through the production and sell of build materials. The women were trained in building material's production, house construction, and project management.

The MWSHP project was considered to be sustainable in the aspect of training because the trainees became trainers of other beneficiaries of the project notwithstanding gender. New houses

were to be built for all the participants, and existing houses still in good condition were to be upgraded. The concept of income generation was premised on the idea that if the women produced building materials for the community's usage and sell, they would be able to make some income for their survival. Community services and other different businesses were also to be established and members received building materials like cement as housing loans. Loans with an interest rate of 8 per cent were to be repaid over a period of 72 months, and repayments collected recurrently or deducted from salaries. However, the project did not effectively meet its objectives. Many women failed to pay back the loans, so they sold off their houses even though the houses themselves could have been a source of income if they had been designed with the users in mind. The women who benefitted from the MWSHP have transformed their houses in various ways to be able to generate income from them. The spaces that are generated due to the alterations are enclosed by make shift or permanent materials. The new extensions of the MWSHP's houses can be easily perceived because the houses were arranged in a gridiron manner, as if they were smaller versions of western prototypes. The extensions, (Plate 1) have been erected in the open spaces in front of and between the houses reducing on the already narrow spaces in some circumstances.

Plate 1: Makeshift structures erected in between and around the houses at MWSHP

The defective spaces formed by the extensions lead to overlooking and encroachment on privacy thus replicating the environments seen in informal settlements. The new spaces lack ample daylight, adequate cross ventilation, are overcrowded, and extend to spaces for MWSHP's future expansion. The resultant thermal discomfort can adversely affect the health and wellbeing of the low-income households. The extensions also encroach on roads and road reserves, worsening the state of the already inadequate infrastructure. In order to prevent the "informalisation" of government provided housing areas, new housing design solutions that can accommodate the low-income households, but with space that allows for incremental growth need to be sought. This would prevent inadequacies such as unsanitary conditions that arise from house owners' aspirations to optimise personal gains from space for income generation (Kombe and Kreibich, 2006:54). The disorderliness resulting from the haphazardness creates a displeasing scenery. Aesthetics should be a precursor of low-income housing design and planning.

2. GOVERNMENT PROVIDED HOUSING DESIGN

The government of Uganda has not had a coherent approach related to solve housing problems. Past housing provision strategies have not focused on the entire population but on government employees and expatriates in parastatal institutions and organisations. Various public housing was constructed in selected housing areas as a result of these strategies (Nnaggenda, 2008); however, the housing has been relatively ineffective. There is need for an enabling approach that allows people to develop their houses within a supportive environment that encourages the aesthetic integration of self-help housing into surrounding habitations. Self-help housing has for long been seen as unfavourable to sound urban planning and development due to its displeasing nature. A paradigm shift towards an enabling approach was marked by Turner (1976) and the first Habitat conference in 1976 in Vancouver. In the last two decades self-help housing has been seen as a solution and not a problem, and as the only way to fill up the huge demand for urban housing.

The policy shifts eventually influenced national housing policies towards the enabling strategy globally. In Uganda the National Shelter Strategy (NSS) was established in 1992 and it emphasised the hindrance of housing development by existing statutes, procedures and regulations, and called for a revision of existing legislature or an enactment of new ones. When the NSS document was being drafted the government intended to adopt the enabling approach as its major policy with the aim of providing adequate shelter for the entire population by the year 2000 (Dimanin, 2012). The enabling approach is “aimed at maximising the contributions of all the actors in the housing production process within a supportive legal and regulatory framework” (UN-Habitat, 2002:4). Bourennane observes that the enabling strategy “is designed to provide [low-income households] with flexible means

to initiate residential development. In addition, the enabling strategy was advocated to shift the role of government from a provider of housing to a supporter” (Bourennane, 2007:63). In Uganda there has not been much improvement yet the NSS report had warned that unless all the impediments imposed were first resolved like the existing legislature that required amendment, there would “be very little progress towards attaining the implementation of shelter programmes up to the year 2000” (M.o.L.H & U.D, 1992:ix). The NSS also reported that women were among the socially and economically disadvantaged groups. It defined the disadvantaged groups as, “those who are, in one way or another unable to have decent shelter” (M.o.L.H & U.D, 1992:ix). It explained that the women were disadvantaged due to social, cultural, economic, legal, physical and physiological conditions. It further explained that women’s conditions were worsened “by the disregard of some cultural values and some constitutional and legal provisions which militate against them”. The report state that there has not been sufficient mobilisation and participation for women. Most of their plans and programmes are initiated by pressure groups without involving them initially” (M.o.L.H & U.D, 1992:ix). The Uganda National Housing Policy (2016) as a way of mainstreaming gender at all levels of human settlements development emphasised women’s right to adequate housing and stipulated that housing projects and programmes had to involve women in housing development. However, the various shelter programmes in Uganda have not fully embraced the enabling strategy concept as is evidenced by the low-income housing developments that ensued.

Researchers globally recognise that housing design characteristically lacks a gender perspective and is blind to the variances between men and women. In Kampala it is evident that kiosks, restaurants, salons and other HBEs in low-income housing areas are operated by women within domestic space. The idea that house is a home and income

generating space to women has been ignored.

3. WOMEN’S PLACE IN HOUSING

Women’s participation in housing design guarantees an inclusive vision of low-income housing. Governments have a major role to play in the advancement of social inclusion. Gender sensitive housing can contribute towards improvements in low-income development. Houses need to be designed and planned from a gender equality standpoint, through the identification and consideration of all physical, social and cultural hurdles. Housing is a social construct that is perceived in different ways by different individuals. The forms of accessibility and the conditions and quality of life that housing offers to households is different according to their gender. Owning houses empowers women by creating opportunities for income generation, *securing their place in the community and ensuring their livelihoods. When women are economically empowered, it spurs development for their families and communities* (ICRW, 2010:1). According to the Ugandan Constitution women and men have equal rights. However even though women and men are equal under Ugandan law, in reality women are typically denied their rights. This is especially right when it comes to housing rights, which are very much tied to culture and custom. As a result of significant gendered dimensions in Uganda, women have been positioned in vulnerable and unequal situations, which eventually aggravate their housing needs and thus their caregiving responsibilities.

Women have not been able to afford appropriate housing, this is a major problem affecting access to appropriate housing and a significant barrier to realising women’s rights to housing. Traditional forms of housing in Uganda often fail to recognise the complex and unequal relations between men and women in our society. Globally for decades pressure organisations, networks and groups of feminists, female scholars, and women politicians’

groups have uncovered the ways in which the traditional forms of housing policy and other actions neglect women. It is important to recognise that women have always been active participants in housing even though their rights to housing have been largely ignored, until the recent past. Houses are designed in such a way that they perpetuate inequalities between genders, according to Roberts some women likened houses to mere boxes (Roberts, 1990).

Women have been involved in shaping the built environment through construction, improvement or maintenance of housing. Nevertheless, women are not involved in the design process of houses yet they utilise them for longer hours, they carry out the bulk of domestic tasks at home even when they are employed part-time or full-time in formal gainful employment. Homes are spheres of women's activities. "Ideally, women might prefer to work outside their homes. Where this is not an option, however, planners must acknowledge the fact that low-income women suffer from working in overcrowded, poorly lit and poorly ventilated home environments" (Freeman et al., 1997:57). The integration of women's interests into the design and provision of housing can make their domestic responsibilities easier by giving them a chance for cooperation and productive, income-generating activity while allowing income and time for other pursuits (Landau, 1997:64). Housing is neither lived nor experienced in the same way by men, women, the elderly and children because of different territorial factors such as accessibility, mobility, and localisation that come into play. Men and women do not or are not able to use and enjoy housing in the same way or extent. Some of the government provided housing in Uganda manifests unequal gender relations.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR GENDER AND HOUSING

Houses or housing can be viewed theoretically as containers of human activity or of the social relations which make up a home (Roberts, 1990). However, in real life the boundaries between physical life and social life merge. Even though technical reflections are beyond the scope of this work in a housing area every space, brick, tree, and other elements within the surrounding environment carry underlying meanings.

4.1 Women and Domestic Space

Literature on women and how they use domestic space is limited because the involvement of women in domestic space related decision-making remains an under-researched area, particularly in low-income urban settings. Gender studies related to research and policy concentrate on segregated labour markets, political rights and violence and overlook the areas of design and planning, especially in relation to housing design (Vestbro and Horelli, 2012:318). Women are excessively in need of low-income housing owing to gender related discrimination and various sources of gender inequality (Madariaga and Nueman, 2016). A fundamental determinant of the low-income housing urban grain has been the problematic provision of western-like low-density detached single-storey houses to accommodate households that formerly lived in informal settlements.

In Europe feminists re-imagined housing design from the perspective of enabling 'everyday life', which many women are engaged in (UN-Habitat, 2014). Sustainable urbanisation is conceivable if women and children in low-income housing become a significant focus for house design, planning, policy, and urban governance. Women typically work in their communities and have their clients from these same communities. This emphasises the importance of the local to women's economic activities, "but also points to the importance of the

surrounding context which can contribute significantly to how these businesses" fair (Wigle, 2005: 9). Women find it easier to work for their households or within their communities than commuting to places of work, therefore house design, planning, and policy that promotes the duality of house as home and workplace can be appropriate to them.

Informal settlements and all types low-income housing cannot be discussed without reference to gender. "These externalities affect men and women in a different way. Due to the fact that women spend more time in the neighbourhood, their perceptions of the problems and their impacts is more acute" (Fadda et al, 2000:179). Gender is connected "to the social, economic and political differences" between men and women (UNCHS (Habitat), 1993:3), including their perceptions "of the different quality of life and livelihood opportunities" (Fadda et al, 2000:167). The possibility of combining work with domestic responsibilities are critical elements of women's economy. "Doing gender in context" is something that has to be recognised or deconstructed in all gender aware activities. A house has an indirect role in the reproduction of gender depending on the amount of time women and men devote to the domestic chores, in the kitchen or in the garage" (Vestbro and Horelli, 2012:318). On top of having to carry out domestic chores, women are more likely to have their work located within their community, by taking part in informal activities like Home Based Enterprises (HBEs), in the housing areas, they are able to serve the entire community.

Women tend more to use their domestic spaces for activities such as rental accommodation or other income generating practices. Still within their domestic space they grow crops as subsistence gardening (SG), or rear domestic animals either for sustenance, income generation or both. The rationality of development practices that overlook women, who are a major part of the population involved in agricultural production is interrogated by the debate

amid international organisations about women and the subsequent questions related to gender (Lazreg, 2002:125). Women are habitually key players in enabling domestic food supply even when there is little or no food produced in a household, because of the “moral ethic” within which women’s work is situated (Hovorka and Lee-Smith, 2006:126). In domestic space women are more involved in activities like house chores, shopping, child rearing and elderly care, even though houses have been formerly designed in accordance to the interests of men “There is a wide consensus that women cook and, in most cases, prepare food ... shop or procure the food for eating in the home, which in some cases means growing it in kitchen gardens or keeping small livestock for milk and eggs, for example. In other cases, it means saving some food from produce that they sell as traders. It can also mean that, when drought or economic crisis hits, women feel the pinch most, as they have to find some way to provide for their families, and these can lead them to organise collectively” (Hovorka & Lee-Smith, 2006:126). Rental housing for income generation is another activity that women get involved in. “Not infrequently, a woman may handle the tenants even when a man lives on the premises; what Kumar calls a “woman-managed” household. Most male landlords have a female partner but many widows and separated women rent out property. Women more than men are likely to channel their resources towards the basic needs of children and the betterment their households. This justifies the need for the development of gender specific housing. The self-help transformations made by the low-income women seem to be more suitable to them than those assumed by the MWSHP (Elwidaa, 2020:159). Promoting the intrinsic connections between gender and feminism is likely to boost and guarantee rigorous, comprehensive development research, including suitable, meaningful development intercessions (Hayden, 1981). Studying women’s ways of living in low-income housing can help in the interpretation of the way different

genders practice space, and also make comprehensible the resultant differences and inequalities embedded in society.

4.2 Housing and Social Relations

Modernism and postmodernism offer possibilities to the feminists. “Modernism, on the other hand, points to the possibility of progress and change. Things may be patriarchal now ... but they need not always be so; more than that, it is possible to judge between alternatives, and history on our side” (Massey, 1994:213). Massey discusses “flexible sexism” in light of modernism and postmodernism and the current debate around the two, whereby both sides claim feminism for their own. “Spatiality cannot be analysed through the medium of a male body and heterosexual male experience ... and then generalised to people at large (Flexible sexism)” (Massey, 1994:182). As long as space is provided for in houses or housing areas domestic chores, child rearing and elderly care, can take place. “This approach, therefore, underscores that it is necessary to understand not only class relations but also (for instance) gender relations as significant in the structuring of space and place, spaces and places” (Massey, 1994:182). Theoretically women and men can be able to reduce on job related expenses like transport dues and fuel costs if work is located closer to home.

Gender status differences can be conserved by architectural space, “dwellings reflect ideals and realities about relationships between women and men within the family and society” (Spain, 1992:7). For example, the layouts of domestic buildings in pre-industrial societies, like the Mongolian Gers, reinforce and are symbolic of women’s subordinate status. Everyday surroundings in which activities of gender or masculinity and femininity are performed spatially every day. Professional design or “domestic architecture, mediates social relations, specifically those between women and men. Houses are spatial contexts within

which the social order is reproduced” (Spain, 1992:140). Society thought it was essential to allocate women to the private domain in order to control, protect, and contain them in the belief that the female body was vulnerable at its margins. In spite of her social class, most interior and private spaces of the home were a woman’s place. Spatial arrangements produce and are produced by status distinctions. Space is “organised in ways that reproduce gender differences in power and privilege ... gendered spaces provide the concrete, everyday-life foundation for the production, reproduction, and transformation of status differences” (Spain, 1992:233). In order to develop appropriate house designs and house planning it is important to study how space is used by different genders.

The way the concept of gender was undergoing change in eighteenth and nineteenth-century North America has been investigated by various scholars. Eighteenth and nineteenth centuries North American housing design reflected “an increasing tendency toward gender integration and greater emphasis on egalitarianism rather than hierarchy” (Spain, 1992:117-18). Within a household public and private spaces were not visualised or sternly understood in gender definite terms. Masculine spaces, which were considered the most public ones in the home initially, were no longer understood largely as male spaces. The private interiors of a house that had been previously seen as female spaces were becoming more public. In nineteenth-century North America “order within the household was expected to create order in society” (Spain, 1992:123). Gendered space was on the decline but architects “did not set out to create more egalitarian environments specifically for women, yet the twentieth century was characterized by a gradual reduction in sexual spatial segregation and gender stratification” (Spain, 1992:134). Women architects are not dealing with the problem of residential and community design, which is still keeping them in their place. Professional women should become authorities in housing design or interiors

such that housing architecture can be made more successful functionally. Women's work is not yet done since the design of the places they live in still follows men's visions. (Hayden, 1981). Backyards, of the rectangular houses on individual plots can be combined to create green spaces. The green spaces or the rear of the existing homes can provide space for neighbourhood improvements like day care facilities, elderly care, and related food spaces. Hayden (1981) suggests that form could be given to changes in social relationships, involving paid child care, classless relations, multi-generational neighbourhoods, communal cleaning and eating, facilities, community gardens and locally organised, or collectively owned economic activity with only minor alterations to the structure of modern developments. Different spaces should be designed with emphasis on the way users can effectively use them. "Spaces may be "sexed" according to the biological sex of the people who occupy them, or gendered according to the "gender" associated with the different activities which occur in them" (Rendell et al, 2000:101). Design and planning professionals, and policy makers in developing countries need to analyse best practices from developed so as not to "reinvent the wheel" so to speak.

5. THE STUDY'S METHODOLOGY

The MWSHP is a project that primarily targeted women. It was selected as a case study with the aim of examining the gender-based housing transformations. The project embraced the enabling strategy and was intended to empower women through housing ownership, which constitutes a security factor that would motivate the women to investment their time and resources in to housing development. Initially the project had intended to have 700 houses built, however 372 were built instead. Using a qualitative exploratory and descriptive case study strategy, the present study concentrated on the MWSHP's houses. Doing a case study was desirable because of the need to understand

complex social phenomena (Nnagghenda, 2008). The findings and conclusions of a case study would be more convincing and accurate because data is generated from various sources of information in a corroboratory mode (Harrison et al, 2017). The data collection methods that were adopted are personal observations, photography, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, systematic sketching. Through personal observations the houses that had been transformed were selected, and in-depth interviews and focus group discussions held with the women who owned houses. Discussions pertained to the alteration types the women had made to appropriate their houses. The alterations were documented mainly through the usage of photography and personal observations. Purposive sampling was carried out because the altered houses were easily identifiable (M.o.L.H & U.D., 2013). Local leaders and heads of house at the MWSHP were interviewed to elicit their perceptions, opinions and attitudes concerning the ways in which the houses had been transformed.

6. WOMEN'S SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

Various transformations to houses were a common occurrence at the MWSHP's site. The transformations were various, from alterations to extensions. The house extensions were added to the government provided houses by the women as one way of extending the indoor space to make it bigger or to create a new space altogether. The additional space that is created allows the low-income households to accommodate extended family members, to comfortably care for the elderly, or to indulge in home-based enterprises (HBEs) in the form of rentals for income generation. In essence the added space allows households to achieve some comfort because the housing models that were provided seem inadequate in size, or it is used for sustenance and livelihood activities (HBEs).

The most common transformations at the MWSHP are those created to form kiosk space for the women's sustenance. The kiosks can be spotted at various places, they are used by the women to sell food or groceries also for sustenance. They can be found erected in open spaces meant for recreation or close to the houses mostly at the frontages. The placement of these structures haphazardly blocks views from the houses' interiors, and does interfere with the access of daylight and natural ventilation into the houses. (Plate 2).

Plate 2: A house with a frontal extension at the MWSHP

The house extensions are made out of diverse materials, some makeshift. The extensions that are more permanent in nature are the spaces meant for rental accommodation. (Plate 3). The semi-permanent or temporary extensions house services like hair salons, bars, or movies halls. The women reported that they aspire to have more space than what they have now.

Plate 3: A permanent type of extension for rental on the right at the MWSHP

Plate 4: Gardening in the road reserve at the MWSHP

The MWSHP houses do not have ample space for gardening yet it was evident that the low-income women depended highly on SG and animal rearing for income generation and for their wellbeing. Gardening activities occur in road reserves (Plate 4) and open spaces meant for recreation.

The women of the MWSHP estate are responsible for the daily environmental management of their communities. They manage the availability of water for food and hygiene, there are two water points but the water is for sell. (Plate 5). The project was a site-and-services project however there is no running water.

Plate 5: A water point at the MWSHP

Plate 6: Outdoor activity at the informal settlement near the MWSHP

The Soweto informal settlement where the beneficiaries of the MWSHP came from should have been studied to inform the designers of the MWSHP's. The intense use of the out-door space seems not to have been considered. The houses are introverted yet the Soweto houses are of an extroverted nature (Plate 6).

The houses should have been designed mindful of the out-door chores that can be carried out while watching children play or chatting with neighbours. This infers that more space beyond the indoor space, which can be put to domestic usage, can be preserved during the design process of low-income houses.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Housing Design and Planning

Cities are comprised of inevitably diverse social and cultural compositions. Education, work, economic and cultural development flourish in urban spaces. Urban spaces also enable social movements and dedicated political action to de-construct social and gender stereotypes, and challenge those traditions that often hamper the implementation of women's rights. A shared sense of commitment that ensures equal conditions and opportunities for men and women ensures progress and success of city policies. Scientific inquiries of peoples' attitudes towards housing including the patterns of behaviour within housing can provide guidance to architects and other building professionals if design guides are developed from research. Peoples' housing needs would be satisfied if their ways of life are studied - how they cook, eat and sleep, can be documented, quantified and assessed, such that the houses are designed to match these certain partialities.

Housing design and planning should uncover and take into account women's preferences (Tipple, 2000). The low-income housing environment combines housing and work, and could resolve many of the problems faced by low-income women if studied and applied to low-income house designs. Advances should be measured in relation to gender-disaggregated information in the framework of regularisation, upgrading of informal settlements or development of new low-income housing areas. The MWSHP project was envisioned to empower women through the advancement of self-help and IGAs, however space for the latter was not created. The attitude of providing decent housing without consideration for the user households' activities is not enabling but instead contributes to the spread of informal settlement-like spaces like those observed at the MWSHP in

new and regularised housing areas. "Currently, gender studies tend to ignore the fields of planning, design and even housing, as the focus of research and policy are on the political rights, violence against women and the segregated labour markets" (Vestbro and Horelli, 2012:318). Considering women's quality of life is their right. Women should be able to participate on an equal footing in the designing, planning, and construction of their houses. Architects and urban planners should set out to create more egalitarian environments specifically for women, since women use domestic space more for the benefit of the entire house.

Correa (2000), Hayden (1981), and The Everyday Life group (1984) propose that the communal multiple use of space is favourable in domestic environments, since neighbours can be able to cooperate and socialise appropriately. Hayden (1981) and The New Everyday group (1984) argue that communal activities would enable women to carry out their domestic duties while they socialise. New house types that address the needs of women could be developed with communal spaces as part of the solutions to adequate housing. If neighbours are to cooperate effectively communal decisions require suitable physical conditions. At the MWSHP an environment that unites housing services, and jobs, could resolve many of the problems faced by women. Domestic activities that are frequently carried out outdoors, like washing clothes and preparing meals could be easily done communally, and in conjunction with IGAs if such spaces are located in close proximity to each other.

The MWSHP was considered a success however the houses were eventually transformed, this is an indicator that the women were not satisfied. The housing designs should have reflected women's needs according to their gender and social-economic roles and the sizes of their households. Houses should have adequate space, for example, for ample verandas especially since some women may wish to indulge in HBEs, like selling

of vegetables or tailoring, which allows them to watch over their children at play or to chat with neighbours while working. Space or rental accommodation and other HBEs is also key. HBEs are usually perceived as the active type of income generating activity. Rental housing as a passive form of income generating activity has received little attention. Housing solutions which incorporate rental space help low-income households to solve some of the financial difficulties they faced. Literature frequently discusses women and their involvement in HBEs in informal settlements and not in upgraded low-income housing schemes. Households' economies are supplemented by IGAs, especially women who are frequently involved in them. The issues of women getting isolated in this way or of even being exploited is rarely discussed. This reinforces the need for communal spaces in house clusters where women can work together as they socialise. Small scale elderly and child care centres should be considered during the design process probably as IGAs since women can carry out these jobs together.

Domestic space in the informal settlements is used for informal activities such as HBEs, space for rental, and for SG. The discussion on the different ways space is used in the informal settlements has elucidated that the low-income households depend on informal activities for survival and also to pay for or improve their housing. House types with space for HBEs, rental units, and SG need to be developed for the low-income households to supplement incomes. Houses designed to accommodate spaces for IGAs should be developed. Theory exists on the topic of the need to provide space for HBEs; however, little has been done when it comes to relating HBEs to appropriate house type designs for the urban low-income households. House types that allow for flexibility in space use need to be developed, these types should allow the user households to modify existing space through extensions on an incremental basis as finances improve or allow (Nnaggenda-Musana, 2008). Extensions can be to the

back and side and not in the road to prevent the encroachment of houses on public spaces (Plates 7a & 7b).

Plate 7a & 7b: Authors depiction of how orderly extensions can happen at the MWSHP

When incomes improve additional rooms for subsistence can be added on to existing houses as need arises. Women's unpaid labour could be compensated by HBEs, since they work at home. Government should consider women's housing needs a priority and include these in annual national budgets. If government makes it a habit of carrying out Post Occupancy Evaluation Studies of self-help housing schemes, households' housing needs can be established.

7.2 Policy Considerations

The process for housing design and planning greatly under-represents women, and does not tackle the problems that women and children, particularly women-headed households, like those at the MWSHP experience. Policy makers need to appreciate and embrace the enabling approach because it acknowledges the important role women play in housing upgrading and development. Gender analysis should be made a prerequisite for funding by policy makers and funders as one way of providing a platform for the integration of gender-specific criteria into house design and planning. Housing policy and building regulations in Uganda need to address the behavioural characteristics of the population. The conventional design of houses should make them affordable for use or maintenance by low-income households. Architects and urban planners need to study this insufficiency and look into the findings of existing behavioural studies in order to find answers.

Policy makers globally disregard women's needs for shelter. Observations from fieldwork in the informal settlements of Kampala show that women are more often at home than men. HBEs and agricultural activities are frequently engaged in by women in the informal settlements. However, house types developed for low-income households do not consider their ways of living, for example studying the nature of the transformations at the MWSHP infers that the preferences for low-income women were disregarded yet the project was meant for them. The notion that a house is a resource for low-income women should have been implemented.

Policy, building standards and regulations need to be made inclusive and flexible when it comes low-income households, government should adopt various building standards to suit different income groups. The needs of all households should be catered for well in housing by the integration of gender analysis into housing design and planning processes (Madariaga et al, 2013). Rigid by-laws marginalise the low-income households by relegating them to housing that is inadequate.

8. FURTHER STUDIES

In Uganda past and present policies have underscored the importance of the enabling approach especially for disadvantaged groups in relation to housing acquisition, however the policies seem to remain largely on paper. There seems to be a comprehension gap, such that the policies require breaking down further from more general terms to the spelling out of specific issues.

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¹ "This article incorporates material from the paper "Women Feeding Cities: Re-focusing the Research Agenda" by Diana Lee-Smith, presented as the Keynote Address at a meeting organised by Urban Harvest and RUAF on Gender and Urban Agriculture in Accra, Ghana, 20-23 September 2004" (Hovorka & Lee-Smith, 2006, pp. 126).

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Notes

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