

Laura Burocco

Report Nairobi Field Trip - Saturday, 15.09.2012, *Mathare Valley e Kambi Moto in Huruma*

### **Mathare Valley**

“Mathare Valley is a part of Mathare slum located few kilometers from the centre of Nairobi. The Valley is one of the oldest and worst slum areas in Nairobi and the degree of poverty there is unimaginable. People live in 6 ft. x 8 ft. shanties made of old tin and mud. There are no beds, no electricity, and no running water. People sleep on pieces of cardboard on the dirt floors of the shanties. There are public toilets shared by up to 100 people and residents have to pay to use them. Approximately 600,000 people live in an area of three square miles. Most live on an income of less than a dollar per day. Crime and HIV/AIDs are common”.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathare\\_Valley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathare_Valley)



Fig 1-2-3-4 Housing tipology in Mathare ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

The construction of storey buildings using wood and iron sheet has become an indicator that the population in Mathare Valley is increasing at very high rate. This is apart from increase in house rent. The houses vary in size and the number of people per household. A normal house is about 10 x 10 in size housing 3 – 5 people on average. The safety of these houses is questionable as they are never supervised by qualified personnel, however most people preferred them as they are considered safe than live in a shacks in Mathare Valley or Kibera. Lack of space for slum expansion has made structure owners to be creative and change their design and new floors are added by self initiative. The rent is about 4000 shilling for a single room confirming the fact that resident in this area have a greater capacity aquisitive than people in Kibera and are normally employed in some kind of activities. Power, water and washroom are not a guarantee by the landlords.

<http://matharevalley.wordpress.com/2011/05/23/mathare-changing-housing-design/>



Fig 1-2-3- Despite the precarious conditions homes continue to be enlarged and floors o be added ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )



The Moonlight building, we visited is structured in 6 floors everyone with 9 apartments for floor organized along two corridors, one internal and one external facing in the street. The internal corridor (photo 5) not permits ventilation and determine unhealthy conditions. The value of the rent is the same (4000 shilling) either for the external or internal apartment.

Fig 4-5 Internal and esternal corridors in the building we visited ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )



The only form of ventilation provided in the interior corridor is a open grid present in the pavement of each floor which should facilitate the air's circulation.

This type of system, in addition to being dangerous, given the presence of many children in the corridors, is ineffective due to the obstruction of these ventilation routes, used by residents as a storage due to the lack of space in individual units

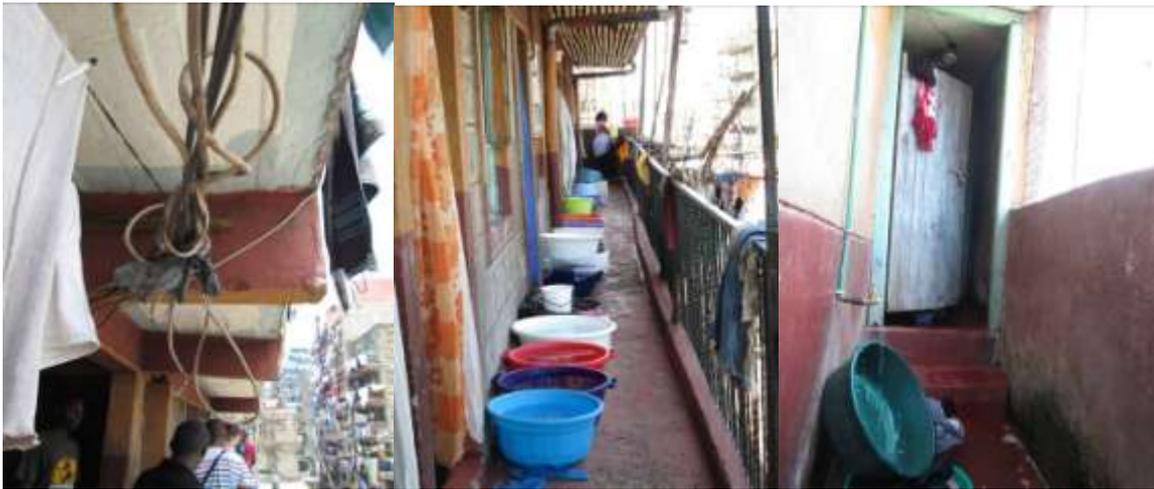
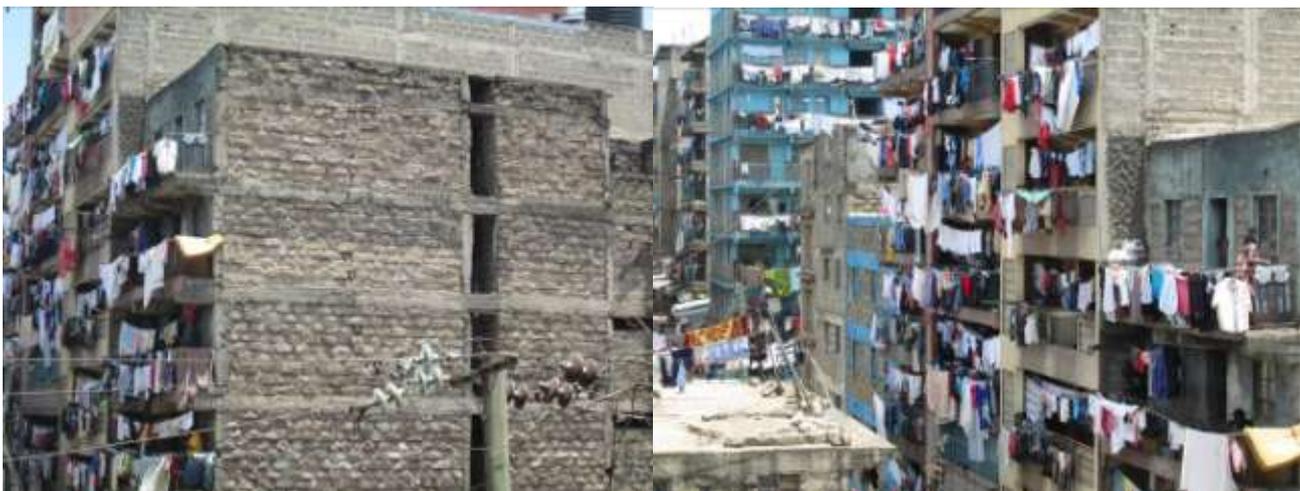


Fig 8-9-10 Electricity, water supply and toilets are not provided by the landlord ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

Due the absence of ordinary electricity connections the residents need to organize an informal connection. Water supply is not guarantee into the units and need to be organized through one pipe for floor located near the one 2 bathrooms per floor available for the residents.



The landlord of the building owned around twenty buildings around the area but lives in the same building where he occupy six unit ( three in the internal and three in the external corridor ). The son as well lives in the top floor of the building.

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William M. Okoch Ojambo, Resident of the building, friend of Kevin

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## Kambi Moto in Huruma

**Kambi Moto Housing Project**, in Huruma informal settlements are situated in Starehe Division of Nairobi City. The entire settlement occupies an area of about 4.117 hectares. Huruma consists of seven villages: Mahira, Redeemed, Ghetto, Gitathuru, Kambi Moto, Grogon and Madoya. All these settlements are located on land belonging to the City Council of Nairobi. Some of these settlements have been in existence for as long as 28 years. Huruma settlement prides itself as a pioneer in Community Led Slum Upgrading processes that have so far seen close to 200 housing units put up.



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“The housing project Kambi Moto started in 2003, the residents started making daily saving based on an individual member’s ability. Some contribute as little as ten shilling daily. Trough the support of Pamoja Trust and Akiba Mashinani Trust each member was required to save at least 10% of the initial cost of constructing ground floor, a called starter house. This translated into about 7 thousand and 5 hundred shillings. The group through group saving also loaned the member another 10% while Akiba Mashinani Trust loaned the remaining 80%. The beneficiaries started repaying their loans as soon as they occupied the starter houses. 86 members have completed their houses and 56 more units are under construction and will be ready in the next few months”. *Realizing Right s Though Practice, annual campaign 2012. Published by Pamoja Trust , pp.53-54*



Fig 1-2, Meeting with the members of the Kambi Moto Hosuing Project, Huruma ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )



Fig. 3-4 Despite someone allege that poor communities are too disorganize to mobilize resources to put up their own structures the Moto Kambi Project demostre high level of organization and management capacity ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

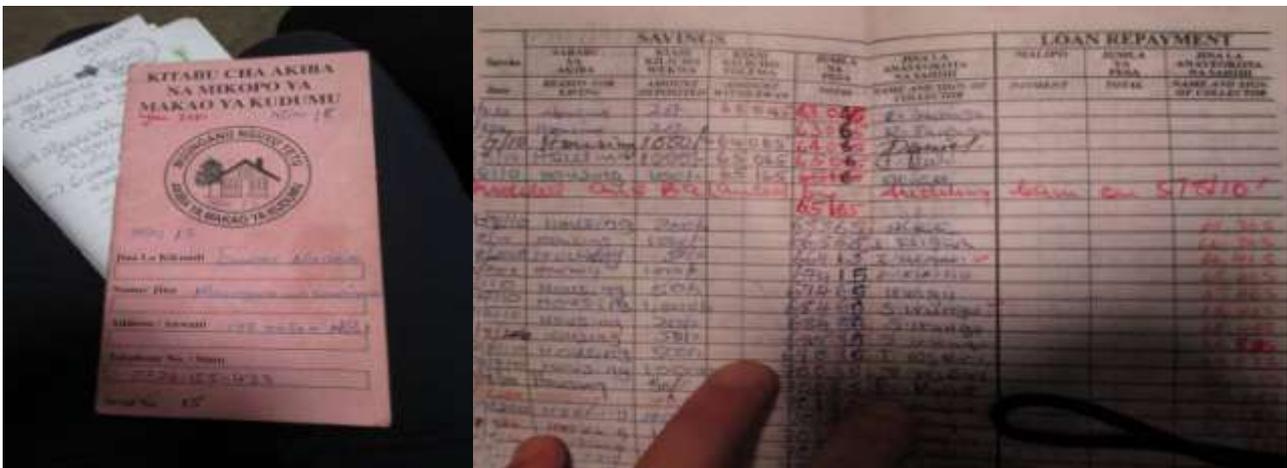


Fig. 5-6 . The individual diary of the residents ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

The members of Kambi Moto project register their deposit of money through the use of a personal diary in which report the amount of the deposit as well the amount of their withdraw (fig 5 e 6).

The project benefits 270 families directly and other 400 have since bought land in another area in order to build their houses. Households are now living in improved homes, complete with infrastructure such as running water, sewage connection, electricity, drainage, paving and renovated toilet blocks. Reasonable space to be shared between the members of the families unable the preservation of own privacy and a good level of ventilation and light is guaranteed by windows in every rooms. One family occupies one house organized vertically through a three-level 50 sqm structure that can be built in phases, subject to cash availability. The kitchen and living room are in the ground floor and the bedrooms upstairs. The cost to complete the house is at least 300,000 shillings.



Fig. 7-8-9-10-11-12-13 Housing condition, internally and externally ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

The project is a successful result of the partnership of Pamoja Trust and an Italian NGO COOPI into the legal framework of international cooperation promoted by European governments. Initially planned to take three years (2005-2007), the 1.5 million euro (US\$2.1 million) project has stretched into 2010 due to complications, such as the post-election violence of early 2008, which affected parts of Huruma. COOPI is the project's implementing agency, with the Italian ministry of foreign affairs one of the main donors and supports the construction of the infrastructure while Pamoja Trust, the local NGO, provides social and technical support.

In 2002, COOPI and Pamoja Trust supported the signature of an agreement between the Huruma community and the Nairobi City Council, with the council committing itself to transfer the land occupied by the informal settlement to the community, in accordance with a community land tenure system. The city council also designated Huruma a "special planning area", facilitating the adjustment of conventional planning standards and the adoption of a "more appropriate" building code. (<http://www.irinnews.org/printreport.aspx?reportid=88211>)



One of the infrastructural interventions resulting by the cooperation with the Italian NGO, it is the transfer of know how about the construction of an Italian typical form of pavement and a classical old system of drainage.  
(photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

Kambi Moto it is not far from Mathare Valley but present a complete different environment. Mathare as well provide housing for people who needed to live in the city but the condition are completely different. If Mathare provide just a shelter for housing needing people, Kambi Moto reflects a sense of community and of belonging. The engagement of the residents is a crucial element of participation and shows us a slum dweller effort to provide them with descent housing.



Fig. 14-15 Kambi Moto Housing Project in Huruma, Nairobi ( photo by Laura Burocco, September 2012 )

In line with the Turner's concept "Housing as a verb" demonstrates how a truly engagement of the community permit the achievement of better results in term of production and maintenance of the unit. Experience like the Kambi Moto project testimony that is possible for the poor to mobilize funds and improve their housing state through a good organization of the community member's participation and an initial support. Need to be recognized the impossibility for the government to provide houses for all and the importance of self managed initiative promoted by people empathizing the role of the government in define a legal and infrastructural framework which able access to land and houses for low income people in definitive term.