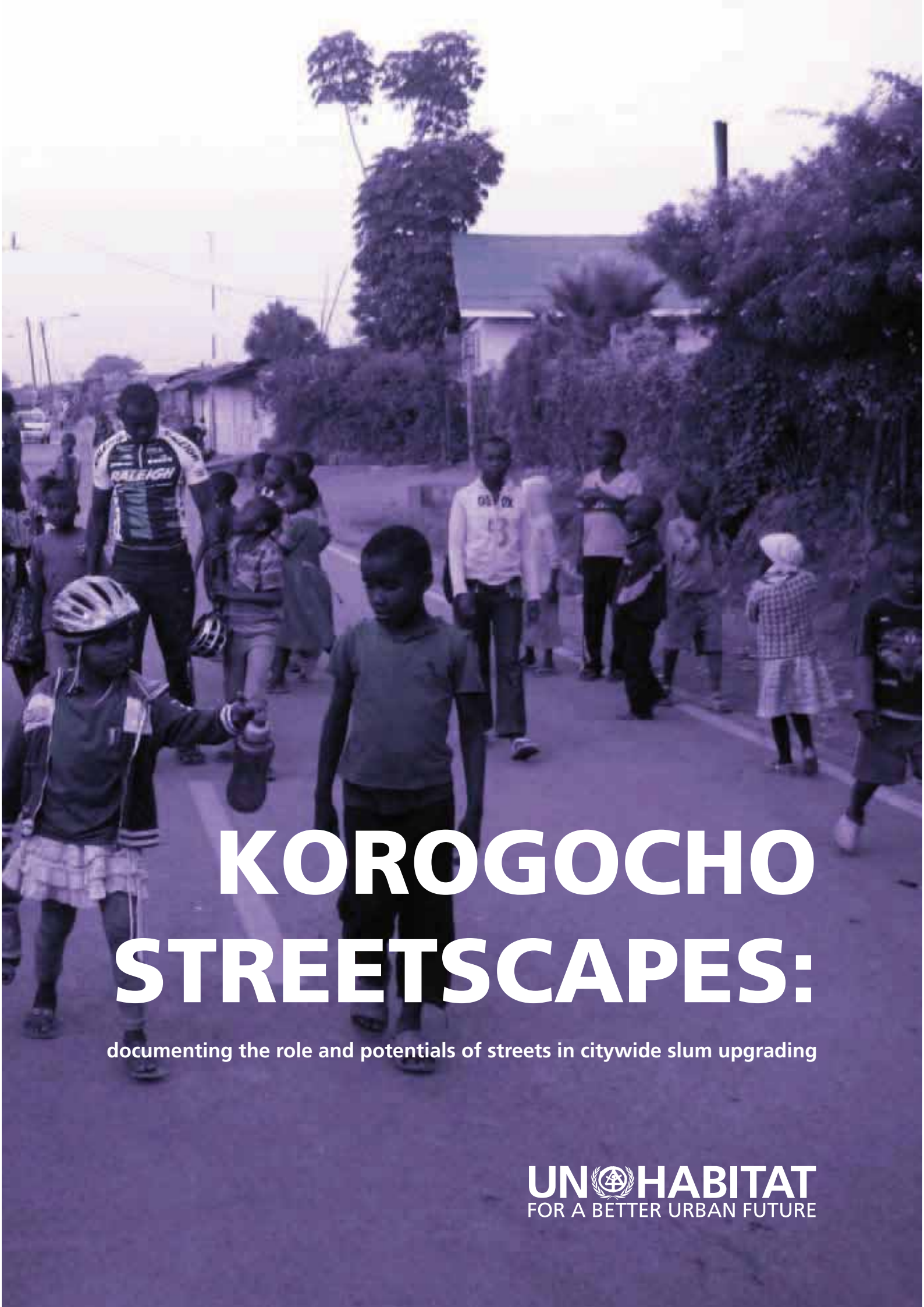




KOROGOCHO STREETSCAPES:

documenting the role and potentials of streets in citywide slum upgrading

UN**HABITAT**
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report will explore the role and potentials of streets in slum upgrading, using the street upgrading project in the Korogocho slum in Nairobi, Kenya, as a case study. It focuses on the experiences and perceptions of the residents in Korogocho, and the changes ‘on the ground’.

The study argues that successful urban places are based predominately on streets and the connected street life. Streets serve as democratic, open public space and as platforms for economic and social development. Therefore, streets play a fundamental role for the public life in cities and particularly in slums, where open space is scarce.

The key findings of the study reveal that the streets have boosted microeconomic activity, which has increased the number of jobs as well as the available goods in the area. The connectivity to the larger urban fabric is improved,

which facilitates the flow within and to Korogocho. As part of the larger number of people dwelling in the street, the perception of safety has increased. The level of participation highly affects the resident’s attachment to the streets and communication is crucial to sensitize the community to the changes carried by the project. Overall, the project has brought positive aspects to the community and improved the life of the residents.

The publication ends by providing a description of key lessons, and a list of recommendations for planning, designing and maintaining streets in slum upgrading programmes and projects.

The publication forms part of an innovative shift promoted by UN-Habitat towards city-wide participatory slum upgrading where streets are used as the entry point.





FOREWORD

In Swahili, the name Korogocho means crowded, shoulder to shoulder. We all have seen images of a slum and the reduced public space citizens living there can share. Each new street means an increase of micro-economic activity, safety and security, and mobility. The new streets brought new and fresh connections with the surrounding urban fabric.

As a former mayor, I have already a strong conviction on the need to reassert urban design and planning as two key development drivers of contemporary city building. By laying streets and setting out public space in slums, you delineate public and private space and begin an urban transformation and regeneration that encourages prosperous cities.

When I speak of streets I do not mean simply roads for cars. I am talking about streets as multi-functional spaces which contribute to creating a safe, lively, and an economically productive public realm.

As the research carried in this publication shows, streets are an opportune entry point for successful slum upgrading for three reasons:

First, the planning of streets and public space (as components of overall settlement master planning) provides an accessible and positive forum for community participation. To improve the conditions of slums it is crucial to consult with community so that residents can participate in the planning, design, implementation, and maintenance of interventions.

This is fundamental for creating sustainable and responsive interventions.

Second, urban planning and the laying of streets can help generate wealth. Micro-enterprise activity springs up on street corners, new services and products reach slum households and new jobs are created.

Third, planning street upgrades or creating new streets in all slums in a city helps us 'go to scale' and connect the slums with the wider urban fabric of the city.

What is needed – and what UN-Habitat is advocating for – is a pro-active approach to creating lively and economically productive public spaces and streets in slums. This publication showcases our emerging principles regarding the importance of streets and community participation in slum upgrading. I sincerely thank all those who worked on this for their efforts, critical insight and working with me on a new approach to improving the living conditions of all urban residents and addressing the challenge of slums.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Clos', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Dr. Joan Clos
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
Executive Director, UN-Habitat





“When you introduce streets and latrines, and put lights in the streets, imme-

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