

Reclaim the Streets! : Results of a Participatory Planning Process in an Informal Neighbourhood – A Case Study from Mozambique

Introduction

City of Inhambane is a small town on the cost of Indian Ocean in Mozambique with a population of approximately 62.000 (estimation for 2005 based on the census from 1997). It is located 470km far from Maputo. Although, with respect to economic activities, the city is rather isolated and not directly situated on the main national access road of the country, it has an important administrative role being a provincial capital.

Like most of the other Mozambican cities, Inhambane is composed of a cement city and adjacent informal neighbourhoods, which are called *bairros de caniço*. Whereas the cement city of Inhambane contains buildings for administrative and commercial uses and villas with remarkable examples of modern architecture and a relatively better infrastructure, the *bairros de caniço* are made of reed houses on an irregular street pattern with almost no infrastructure. Especially in the 1980s, these areas were growing in an informal manner due to the rapid rural-to-urban migration caused by the civil war.

In August 2005 City Council of Inhambane (*Conselho Municipal da Cidade de Inhambane - CMCI*) initiated an urban upgrading project in one of its informal settlements with the technical assistance of German Technical Cooperation (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit - GTZ*). The aims of the project were to secure tenure rights and to accelerate the process of providing basic infrastructure.

To achieve these objectives, during first phase of the project participatory planning methods were applied, such as community mapping, public hearings and planning workshops with representatives of inhabitants. The particular intention of the City Council of Inhambane was to follow socially and environmentally sensitive methods and to respond to the specific necessities in infrastructure by using local materials and local labour.

Historical background

Mozambique was for almost five centuries under Portuguese rule. During this era, as De Quadros (2002:1) reports Portuguese colonists hold the land by different types of titles including leasehold and freehold. She argues that in the last years of the colonial rule a land market developed.

After gaining independency in 1975, Mozambique was ruled as a socialist agrarian state. In this period land and colonial plantations were nationalised. Rural cooperatives and state enterprises were established. As Tanner argues (2002: 6) the people, who joined the independency struggle, were mostly disappointed by this national policy since they expected redistribution of land.

Until 1992 Mozambique experienced a prolonged civil war, which mainly occurred in rural areas between the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) and Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), both of which are today active as major political parties. As a result of this civil war millions of people migrated either abroad or were dislocated to the rather secure areas around the cities and main road corridors occupying marginal land (Tanner 2002: 6 and De Quadros 2002: 2).

At the end of the 1980s, in Mozambique economic and political liberalization took place. In 1987 a Structural Adjustment Programme was introduced and followed by laws and regulations enabling the restructuring, including privatisation. In 1990 a new Constitution of the Republic was approved, which foresaw administrative decentralization. After the Peace in 1992, refugees and migrants returned back to their original areas. This period was characterised by the land needs of these people and the interest in land by nationals and

foreigners for different economic purposes, like agriculture, raising cattle or tourism (De Quadros 2002: 2-3).

Demographic development and characteristics of urbanization

In Mozambique the last census was conducted in 1997. On the basis of this census, total population estimated for the year 2005 is 22,137,000 and average household size is 4.36. The urban population growth rate was calculated 4.79% for the period of 2000-2005 whereas for the same period the rural population growth rate was only 0.74% (<http://www.unhabitat.org/habrdd/conditions/eafrica/mozambique.htm> 01.09.2005).

The *Action Plan for The Reduction Of Absolute Poverty (2001-2005)* (PARPA) (Republic of Mozambique 2001: 4) describes the profile of the poverty in Mozambique (15-19) and states that rural areas in Mozambique are poorer and supplied with less infrastructure than the cities. In the same plan it is argued that "... there is an inevitable tendency for migration to urban areas and great pressure on the non-agricultural job market in the near future" PARPA (35). This statement shows that urban poverty is getting an important issue for Mozambican cities.

As a result of the colonial background, Mozambican cities have in general a cement town in the centre, which includes administrative and public institutions, a market and small shops. Around this cement town there are 'informal' peri-urban settlements with irregular street patterns and a rural character. The houses in peri-urban areas are rather constructed by cheaper local materials, which can be reed (*caniço*) or adobe. Most of the dwellings in Mozambique are huts, which dominate both for rural and urban areas. 61.8% of dwellings in urban areas are huts, whereas 27.5% are modern houses. In cities, 82.7% of the households are living in their own dwelling. Although the access to basic services is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, only 18.6% of the dwellings have electricity, 9.0% have piped water inside of the house and 8.0% have a flush toilet in Mozambican cities (INE Housing Survey). Most of the time, peri-urban settlements are concentrated along the main access road to the city and they include market areas. Next to these areas, there is generally a green belt composed of small-scale gardens (called *machamba*), which are cultivated either for self-subsistence or for the local market.

Land Law and land market in Mozambique

Despite the economic liberalization in the last decade, land remained property of the state in the Constitution of 1990, which states that "Land is the property of the State and can not be sold or alienated in any other form, nor can it be mortgaged".

Similar to the Land Policy approved in 1995, Land Law (1997) and Regulations of the Law (1998) recognize the customary rights over land. The legal framework enables participation of local communities in management of natural resources and acknowledges role of local leaders. It permits land use rights gained through "good faith" occupation (*boa fé*) of a minimum period of 10 years. It allows women to hold title to land. It makes possible for foreigners to enjoy the land use rights. The law differentiates the exclusive right of use and licences to carry out economic activities and introduces the necessity of a land use plan as a precondition for obtaining use rights, and it separates the responsibility over land administration in rural and urban areas (De Quadros 2002: 2-6).

In Mozambique the land is the property of the state and occupants have the right to use the land. Individuals and communities traditionally occupying a land and Mozambicans utilising a piece of land for 10 years in good faith gain the land use rights permanently, which is issued by a document called DUAT (*Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra*). There is an exception for foreign investors, who are only granted by a title for 50 years with an option of renewal for another 50 years. Government can also authorise people or companies to use land (Hanlon: 8).

The Land Law prohibits purchasing land. However, there is de facto a land market. In the practice, the properties on a plot, e.g. houses or trees, i.e. indirectly the land can be purchased. Especially in the areas with a speculative development pressure there are informal ways of to buy and sell land. Jenkins (2001) mentions dual land markets: one is informal and the other one includes the private sector serving speculative purposes of urban elite. He argues that there is, especially in urban areas, a continuous pressure to privatise land. At the same time, the land management capacity at central and local government is limited. So that ad-hoc planning and land management continue and informal land occupations in urban areas are staying not clarified (Jenkins, 2001: 6-9). Having surveyed several settlements in peri-urban areas of Maputo City, Jenkins (2001:10) shows that the urban poor, who were living in better locations, are either being re-located in rather peripheral and unsuitable areas or their neighbourhoods are getting denser. This happens both through market forces or official channels. This tendency has a negative impact on the livelihood of urban poor.

Based on the study on land market in Mozambique conducted by Cruzeiro do Sul (*Instituto de Investigação para o Desenvolvimento*) Negrão (2004: 24) argues that land market in Mozambique is more active in peri-urban settlements or in those areas where more migration from rural areas are experienced. Peri-urban areas are growing around the main roads even into non-parcelled regions without any infrastructure. The state and local governments do not have the capacities and resources to supply minimum conditions to settle. As a result, these areas are first occupied and later the subdivisions are legalised and infrastructure is supplied.

Informal land market in general expands through three different ways: first on the fringes of cities; secondly through sub-divisions within the existing neighbourhoods and lastly in places, which are inappropriate to settle. Firstly, in the fringes of the cities, occupants of the rural land dividing their land provisionally in parcels in order to sell them. This process is not essentially illegal. The people know the political and administrative structures and involve the local authorities in the process. Mostly rural migrants and young families with limited income are the buyers. Secondly, in older neighbourhoods, the inhabitants subdivide the existing plots in order to rent to a relative or a friend and later they sell it to the occupant family. The third way of expansion of informal land market, which takes place in improper areas for housing, involves local structures –chiefs- and officials of the municipalities on the supply side and the poorest population like single mothers and divorced women, on the demand side. Besides the informal ways of urbanisation, formal land market also grows through trade of infrastructure on the piece of land, land speculation or in the form of condominiums, especially in Maputo (Negrão, 2004: 28-30).

The land law recognizes the customary rights and involves local communities in the decision taking during the allotment of land use rights to individuals. In terms of these features the law is rather appropriate for rural areas, where a local community is easily to be defined. In urban and peri-urban areas the social structure is more anonymous, the pressure of land speculation is stronger and types of economic activities and poverty are different. These particular conditions make it difficult to involve the local community in decision taking process.

Within this legal framework and on the context of particular urbanisation in Mozambique emerging through an informal land market and is characterised by urban poverty, autonomous municipalities, which are established in 1997, have challenges to handle problems of urbanisation. There is a need to collect experiences in policy-making and project application in terms of land-use decisions, allocation of land rights, and supply of infrastructure, especially in peri-urban areas.

Urban Upgrading Project in Informal Settlements in Inhambane / Mozambique

The upgrading project in informal settlements in Inhambane was initiated by the councillor for urban development at the CMCI (City Council) and local bureau of GTZ (German Technical

Cooperation). The concept of upgrading was defined through three important components: security of tenure, use of participatory planning methods and allocation of basic infrastructure. However due to the limited budgets it was decided to realise the project in phases. The first phase should include registration of the individual plots and definition of needs and priorities in the neighbourhood in terms of infrastructure by applying participatory methods. At the end of the first phase a series of sub-projects should be defined and proposals should be prepared, which can be realised in the second phase.

CMCI was co-operating with several provincial and international institutions, who gave financial, technical and in-kind support, in order to realize the project. CMCI itself contributed with its human resources and covered some of the operational costs. FIPAG (Waterworks in Inhambane) supplied the project with a satellite image of the city, which enabled to prepare a base map for the neighbourhoods. GTZ gave technical support and assistance during the application during the first phase of the pilot-project.

By means of this composition of contributions by several institutions, CMCI intended to establish a sustainable project model, which enables these institutions to collect experiences in cooperation and to scale-up and apply the model in the entire city in following years.

Characteristics of the intervention area

The household survey conducted in the first phase enabled us to prepare a database in order to accelerate the legalisation process and to define the socio-economic and physical characteristics of the neighbourhood. The following information is the result of this survey.

The intervention area, chosen by the technicians at the CMCI, is approximately 11 hectares. It shows similar characteristics like the other informal housing areas made of reed. The built density is high. Access paths between the houses are narrow (approx. 1-2m) and the street pattern is irregular. Because of the proximity to the bay of Inhambane and land fillings on the seaside there are repetitive floods in the neighbourhood.

70% of the plots are occupied after 1980. 26% of them are purchased by their current occupants. At the same time there is a high rate of rental plots: 36% of the plots are rented without any document. 21% of the plots are occupied by "boa fé" (good faith) 17% of the plots is heritage. 77% of the plots are not yet registered.

In the study area, there are 1.039 people living 199 families, which means that the family size is around 5,2.

76% of the houses are made of reed. In 71% of the houses the roof is made of zinc. The size of the houses is most often around 7mx4m, which makes 28m² indoor living area per family, whereas the size of the plots is most often around 14mx15m with a size of approximately 210m². The provision of infrastructure is poor. In 53 houses there is even no latrine and 104 cases do not have tap water.

Most of the houses in the intervention area are built in recent years and they are rather in precarious conditions. There is a lack of infrastructure, like sanitary facilities, water, access roads, electricity and illumination in public spaces. The most important needs mentioned by the inhabitants are access roads, canalised water, public taps, and spatial re-organization and legalization of plots.

Methods used in the project

In October 2005, as one of the first steps of the first phase, a 3-day stakeholder workshop was hold. The official representatives of the neighbourhood (*secretario de bairro* and *chefes dos quarteirões*) and representatives of other national and provincial institutions, like Provincial Services of Geography and Cadastre, Provincial Directorate of Public Works and Housing, Waterworks in the Province of Inhambane and Ministry of Coordination of Environmental Action, as well as the officials and two councillors of the CMCI participated in this workshop. The aim was to discuss the objectives and methods of the project and to prepare an activity plan for the next steps. In the same meeting, the controversial

approaches to and ways of intervention in informal settlements, like in-situ upgrading and relocation of households in the specific case of the neighbourhood Chalambe 2 were discussed. The need for a detailed survey on the spatial qualities and legal status of existing plots and socio-economical characteristics of the population, as well as a detailed mapping were mentioned during the meeting.

One of the important results of the first workshop was the identification of the complexity of the existing forms of land possession and occupation: there are larger parcels from the colonial era which are subdivided and rented to new comers. Some plots are officially demarcated with cement markers on the corners but the occupants do not have any kind of documents. Some inhabitants occupy more space beyond the official marks of their plots. It was expected that there were a large number of unregistered plots but none of the institutions had an exact number. The size of the population was also unknown.

Another result of the workshop was that the municipal officials recognised that there are no norms or regulations for the informal settlements. There are some standards for size of plots defined through the minimum width and depth, and minimum width for a access road in new development areas. However these norms are unsuitable for an in-situ upgrading purposes in informally built areas and do not respond the necessities of the majority of the urban residence.

The next step was the preparation of the household survey and conducting a capacity building workshop for the field staff. 10 students from the ESHTI (*Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo de Inhambane*) who made a practical training at the Municipality were involved in the field study. The objective of the training was to communicate the methods of participatory survey and planning. Besides teaching the methods of simple cadastral measuring, called triangulation, students were prepared for the field work.



Figure 1: First Public Hearing

At the end of the January 2006, the first public hearing in the neighbourhood was hold. During this event, the principals and objectives of the project discussed at the first stakeholder workshop were communicated to the whole community. Most of the participants showed their expectations in terms of indemnification. People expected that their houses would be relocated and they would be compensated by the municipality, as it was the case in neighbouring cities. However the municipality of Inhambane did not have any possibility to provide financial compensation in the case of relocation. The main principal of the project was to realise an in-situ upgrading project solving the problems on the

same site. So, the interventions like enlargement of the existing paths to enable access and to allocate space for infrastructure inside of the neighbourhood would be only possible if the inhabitants could find a consensus and would be able to leave enough space between their plots for this purpose. During the public hearing people discussed the idea of the upgrading project and agreed with the realisation of a household survey and mapping as a first step. They agreed with the idea of establishing a planning committee to continue the planning work. It was suggested that all the chiefs of the 6 subdivisions of the neighbourhood, called *quarterão*, (5 men and 1 woman) should be part of the planning committee. In order to find a equilibrium in terms of gender it was proposed to complete the committee with a female member from each *quarterão*. People have agreed with the idea. Later one male neighbour and the secretary of the neighbourhood, who has the role of the leader of the chiefs of *quarterões* also joined the planning meetings. However most of the female members failed to attend the planning workshops so that at the end the committee was male-biased. The

committee was commissioned to discuss the needs and potentials of the neighbourhood and deliver a spatial plan with a proposal for enlargement of some access roads.

Following the first public hearing, the household survey was launched. At the beginning, the technical staff of CMCI accompanied the students in the field. There were 3 groups of 3 students who worked in the field conducting the household survey and measuring and drawing sketches of the plots. One of the students worked in the municipality and produced the database in Excell and later transferred into Microsoft Access.

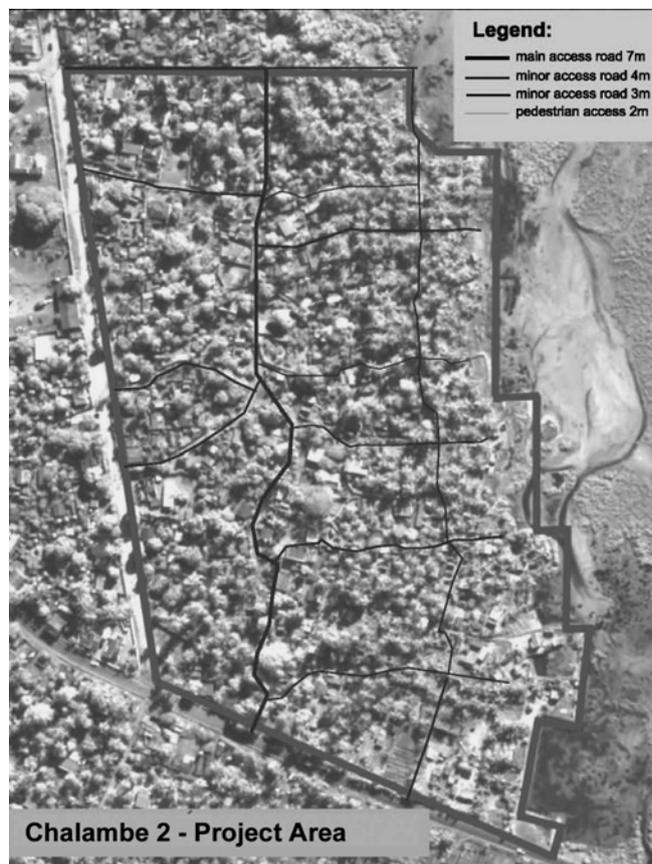


Figure 2: Proposed street pattern by the Planning Committee

In the first two planning workshops with the committee, besides an analysis of the potentials and problems, first draft for a proposal was produced and discussed with the representatives of other institutions, who provide infrastructural services in Inhambane. With the technical assistance by these institutions and GTZ the committee defined criteria for the enlargement of the access roads and installation of infra-structure and for re-location some houses. The possible width of the access roads and streetscapes were set as follows: 7m for main access, 4m for minor access roads and 2m for pedestrian access paths.

Parallel to a series of workshops and meetings of planning committee, an exchange visit from SDI (Shack/Slum Dweller International South Africa) was realised. During 5 days 3 activists from different cities of South Africa and one official of SDI shared their experiences with the inhabitants of Chalambe 2, officials at the municipality and field staff. They helped to conduct a detailed mapping activity of open spaces including the measurement of existing irregular paths. Through their

suggestions the questionnaire of the household survey was improved. They introduced the concept of saving groups. According to this model the Planning Committee of Chalambe 2 established a saving group. The most important impact of this technical visit by SDI was that the South African activist communicated their experiences as members of poor peri-urban dwellers in improvement of their living conditions. This encouraged the inhabitants of Chalambe 2 to be more active in betterment of their quality of life.

Having proposals for the enlargement of the existing paths in the neighbourhood by different members, the Planning Committee met to have a walk-trough in the neighbourhood in order to prove these proposals. During the walkabout a sketch of the future street pattern was drawn which was discussed and agreed by the committee members.

At the beginning of April 2006, another public hearing with the whole community and the Mayor and the director for urbanisation was realised. In this meeting, besides the presentation of the results of the household survey, members of the Planning Committee described their proposal regarding the spatial planning. The Mayor and the director responded the questions of the community members and explained the principals and method of the project and following procedure. They mentioned the possible contributions of

the municipality in the second phase of the project, like the providing material for the road pavement, its transportation and technical supervision.



Figure 3: Members of the Planning Committee during the last public hearing

Outputs of the first phase

The first phase of the urban upgrading project in Chalambe 2, which is concentrated on registration of existing plots and participatory planning process, had several outputs. One of them was a database with the information on the size and location of individual plots, spatial characteristics of the houses and socio/economic profile of households. This information summarised in individual information sheets will serve as a basis for the regularization for each plot to accelerate the regularization process in the municipality. Another output was a base map with existing

access paths, which was used in the decision taking and planning process.

Besides these data and maps, as a result of the workshops conducted with the Planning Committee, 3 project proposals were prepared: one for the demarcation of main access roads and paths which are proposed by the Planning Committee and agreed on by the municipality and the community; another one for the allocation of water pipes serving the interior of the neighbourhood; the last one for the reconstruction of the destroyed reed houses and fences during the enlargement of the existing paths.

In addition, during this phase a set of norms for urban upgrading in Inhambane and criteria for relocation of houses on risk areas were developed. At the same time two manuals for capacity building in the municipality were prepared: one about the participatory methods and another one about the computer aided design (AutoCAD).

A Result of Planning Process: “Reclaim the streets!”

The project proposal called “Reclaim the streets!” was one of the results of this planning process. It was a sub-project to reoccupy public space in this densely built neighbourhood and re-use it for public interest.

Throughout the typical informal densification process, inhabitants are expanding their living area beyond the passages and paths between the houses. Consequently the housing area is getting denser and the paths between the plots are getting narrower. At the end, it is very difficult for the local authorities both to keep records of cadastre and supply infrastructure in these areas, like solid waste collection and allocation of water pipes. In addition, lack of access paths within the neighbourhood makes it impossible to bring help in case of emergency, like fires and floods.

During the household survey and meetings in the neighbourhood the inhabitants of Chalambe 2 were articulating building access roads and paths in their neighbourhood as one of the most important need. They also agreed on that a well-accessed neighbourhood would bring benefits for whole community. However, unless these roads are well defined and used commonly, everyone would make use of existing unclear situation and enlarge his/her plot beyond its limits. Therefore, the municipality and the inhabitants had to reclaim and demarcate the access roads and paths immediately after the routes are determined. The community and the Council agreed that the demarcation of access roads and paths is the only solution to save them for common use and avoid the occupation by individuals.

Specific necessities in terms of infrastructure and access roads

Due to location of the neighbourhood, which is on the one side adjacent to the cement town and on the other side, is limited by the bay of Inhambane, Chalambe 2 is rather well

connected to the city and there is no need for a large street passing through it. The only need is a network of rather narrow streets, between 4-7m, to allow the access to the existing houses to facilitate a network of water pipes and drainage and to enable an efficient system of solid waste collection.

Components of the proposed system of access roads and drainage are as followed:

1. Access roads and paths, which are fulfilling the real necessities of the neighbourhood and can be realized only by enlargement of existing paths.
2. A low-cost pavement and drainage system constructed by means of local materials.
3. Planting of trees as a means of demarcation of access roads in order to contribute to a better spatial definition of public space.
4. Collection of solid waste, which hinders accumulation of rubbish in the drainage system and a jam. This also will diminish the risk of diseases related to lack of environmental hygiene.

Mode of realization: local materials & local labour

The enlargement and construction of access roads and drainage system will be realized by use of local construction materials, like coconut shells (*fibre de coco*) as filling material, main string of palm leaves (*laca laca*) put under the pavement against the erosion, rocks and coral stone (*saibro*) as pavement. It is proposed to assign a local small-scale firm in order to conduct the construction work contracting the inhabitants.

Inputs

Executing agency of the sub-project of demarcation of streets will be *Conselho Municipal de Cidade de Inhambane* (CMCI). German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and inhabitants of Chalambe 2 with their neighbourhood-based organisation structure are going to participate in the implementation process.

CMCI will contribute by allocating construction material (*saibro*) for the street pavement and technical supervising regarding the construction works. It will organize a bidding process among local small-scale construction firms.

GTZ will support the CMCI in technical and administrative terms.

Inhabitants of the neighbourhood will supply help in some steps of construction work, such as definition of routes, cleaning of the construction area, planting trees etc., through their active participation.

The cost for material for 2km access roads with a maximum width of 7m is expected to be around 47.000 EUR whereas the labour costs for the construction would be approximately 24.000 EUR. CMCI would undertake the technical supervision and allocate material, so that the municipality would cover 18% of the total costs, which makes 13.000 EUR. For the rest of the expected costs, which is around 58.000 EUR, CMCI is looking for additional financial support.

Resume

At the end of the first phase of the project a questionnaire among the participants, i.e. members of the planning committee and the officials at the municipality was realised. The aim was to collect their experiences and prepare a document about the lessons learned. Within the framework of this questionnaire components of a low-cost urban upgrading project were discussed. The components mentioned by the participants were as follows:

Sensitisation and involvement of the local community

Involvement of the community is considered as one of the crucial components of urban upgrading. Only if the community, local authorities and other stakeholders can reach a consensus, the living conditions in a neighbourhood can be improved. The real participation

has to include the decision taking by the community “the management of the process and correct allocation of funds” as one of the committee members mentioned.

In addition, the members of the community should be involved in the realization of the household survey. Especially in the case of mapping participation by the community is crucial. At the end of the survey, verification of data is another step of involvement.

Capacity building for the technical staff at the local authority

Urban upgrading project in Inhambane included capacity building of the technical staff at the municipality, in addition to establishment of a database of existing plots and houses. The technical staff and officials at the municipality were sensitised regarding the community involvement. However in terms of availability of and access to the data and management of digital data, e.g. up dating, the capacity building at the CMCI was not sufficient.

Registration and legalization of existing plots

Registration and legalization of plots, which are connected to land use rights (DUAT) can give security for the inhabitants. So that in the case of a speculative development in peri-urban areas the occupants are not forced either to buy the piece of land, where they are on, or leave it.

Demarcation and re-occupation of public spaces

Demarcation of public space was also mentioned as a fundamental issue in an upgrading project in order to prevent the occupation of common space by individuals, which decrease the living quality in the neighbourhood for all. The demarcation can only be realised based on a consensus by community itself.

Allocation and improvement of basic infrastructure

Allocation and improvement of the infrastructure are other key components of urban upgrading. The main objective of improvement of the quality of life cannot be achieved without betterment in the infrastructure, like water and electricity supply, waste disposal and rainwater drainage.

Use of local materials and simple technology

During the realization phase, i.e. enlargement of the existing paths and provision of the basic infrastructure it is important to use local material and labour as well as simple methods of construction in order to decrease the investment costs and to facilitate the maintenance of the built infrastructure.

Exchange of experiences

Due to the exchange of experiences among the different cities, institutions and projects, like Bairro Josina Machel in Manica, Bairro Urbanização and Mafalala in Maputo and SDI (Shacks/Slums Dwellers International) from South Africa, the officials of the CMCI had the possibility to be informed about the methods of urban upgrading. At the same time exchange of experiences encouraged the inhabitants to be active in searching solutions for their neighbourhood.

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