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Informal settlements and sustainable urban planning for developing countries

Urbanization has been very strong since the middle of 1900s and from 2007, 50% of the population in the world became urban. Today almost one third of this urban population, around 1 billion, are living in areas classified as slum areas with substandard housing and lack of land rights. In some cases more than 50% of the growth of cities in developing countries has been implemented by the informal sector.

Slum areas often give a chaotic impression and may seem to have arisen completely unplanned. However, evidence suggests that the formation of many slum areas, in fact, is the result of organized and planned process characterized by precision and discipline. The formal and informal settlements have a parallel coexistence without interacting, and governments and informal planners rarely know each other's work.

The study is based on two case studies, one in Guayaquil, Ecuador, South America and one in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Africa.