

SLUMMING IT UP IN SÃO PAULO'S FAVELAS

In self-governance projects, the state only provides the land and money to community associations, which are set up with the help of a local housing movement... This isn't about building a house for myself...rather, it's about trusting on the ability of the poor, the future residents, to collectively manage the whole process from pursuing permits to procuring materials and builders. [Nabil Bonduki]

As a group of officials from the OECD, World Bank, UN Habitat, and other multilaterals and donors entered the minibus towards Cidade Tiradentes, they were warned by Pedro Dias, a member of one of São Paulo's housing movements that the 35km drive from Jardins, the upscale neighborhood where they were staying, could take up to two hours [Exhibit I]. Tiradentes was the largest social housing complex in Latin America, with over 40,000 houses. The development had been started by the Brazilian state in the late 1970s to tackle the city's growing housing crisis after mass migration triggered a rapid growth of overcrowded slums – or *favelas*, in Portuguese. Several decades later, about 240,000 people lived in Tiradentes, either in houses built by the state (~160,000) or in the surrounding favelas (~60,000). Yet, Tiradentes was also known for its 'Mutirão' – a 396-unit housing development through which a group of local favela residents, supported by the Homeless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Teto) had applied for state funds to build housing blocks whilst self-governing the whole development process. Unexpectedly, the Tiradentes Mutirão turned out cheaper than the state-led blocks, whilst offering bigger and better quality apartments.

On the way back from Tiradentes, the officials would meet members of another housing movement as well as former officials of the São Paulo Municipality, and visit two *Cortiços*, near the Municipal Theatre – one of the most celebrated cultural venues in South America. The *Cortiços* had first appeared in the late 19th century as cheap communal accommodation for laborers. A hundred years later, the *Cortiços* offered cramped and insalubrious conditions to dozens of poor families forced to share unhygienic bathrooms and kitchens. With the turn of the 21st century, as the city center fell into decay, more *Cortiços* emerged from the illegal occupation of around 10% of more than 700 abandoned buildings by organized squatters – groups of impoverished Brazilians and immigrants who worked in the center but could not afford the rents and would otherwise be forced to live on the streets or in favelas. In these slum tenements, people lived under constant threat of eviction – a reality fictionalized in the award-winning movie *The Cambridge Squatter* ('Era o Hotel Cambridge')¹. But in the last two decades some *Cortiços*, including the former Cambridge hotel, had benefitted from self-organized rehabilitations financed by the state and supported by housing movements.

As the first Brazilian city to undertake urban regeneration with a pro-poor focus, the São Paulo Municipality supported the self-governed Mutirão and Cortiço projects. These schemes offered an intriguing alternative to the country's national housing policy, the multi-billion dollar program, My House, My Life (Minha Casa Minha Vida, MCMV). Created in 2009, MCMV had built over 2 million houses in its first 5 years. And before funds dried up in 2015 when Brazil entered into an economic downturn, MCMV had an additional 3.9 million houses planned. But many critics pointed out that MCMV, the largest social housing program in Brazil's history, had repeated past mistakes by

¹ The 15-story Cambridge hotel was occupied in 2012 by around 200 families from the Homeless Movement of the Centre (MSTC), a movement affiliated with the larger FLM (Frente de Luta por Moradia, the 'Frontline of the Struggle for Housing')

incentivizing commercial builders to build in land far away from jobs and poorly endowed with social and physical infrastructure – as one critic claimed, “we are building today the favelas of tomorrow”².

Time permitting, the officials would also stop by Heliópolis, São Paulo's largest favela with over 200,000 people, where they could witness efforts to equip (“urbanize”) the favela with basic amenities like water, electricity, sewerage, paved streets, street lighting, and social infrastructure. Slum upgrades had long been advocated by multilateral agencies as the solution to tackle the housing crisis in developing countries. The basic idea was to encourage public agencies to enfranchise slum dwellers and work with them through participatory processes to identify and prioritize their needs. For the donors, slum upgrades preserved the richness of the slums' culture and the ‘build-your-own’ mentality, whilst keeping the poor close to job opportunities. Further, slum upgrades prevented the need for forced evictions, which were seen as a violation of human rights.

The question bringing the multilateral officials to São Paulo was the extent to which the innovative Mutirão and Cortiço self-governance projects were scalable and context-insensitive. Finding ways to help tackle – quickly – the global housing crisis was urgent. In 2019, the UN projected that almost 70% of the world's population would be living in urban areas by 2050, with around a quarter living in informal areas. This grand challenge had gained wider visibility in 2017 during the UN Habitat III Conference in Quito, Ecuador, the first UN global summit on urbanization since the adoption of the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, in 2015. Unifying the UN Habitat III participants were challenges as to how cities, towns, and villages could be planned and managed to fulfil their role as drivers of sustainable development. In Quito, a broad consensus had been reached that cities had a key role to play in shaping the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change. This consensus informed the decision by world leaders to adopt the New Urban Agenda in Quito, an encompassing policy committing to rethink how cities were built and managed by drawing cooperation from governments, civil society actors, and the private sector.

By 2021, the New Urban Agenda gained further relevance as the COVID-19 pandemic brought attention to the fact that a quarter of the world's urban population lived in overcrowded informal areas and thus could not follow stay-at-home orders. With the housing crisis deepening social fractures, more voices called on governments to treat housing as a human right. São Paulo was a case in point. For people living in a favela or rundown Cortiço, the chances of dying from COVID were ten times higher than for those in wealthy areas³. And to make matters worse, as the number of people left jobless by one of the world's worst COVID outbreaks grew exponentially, tent cities quickly spread around São Paulo. To protect property rights, the authorities responded by clearing out the new settlements, including nearly 4,000 people in São Paulo, although by June 2021, the Supreme Court had suspended further removals until the end of the year. Still, as the pandemic pushed thousands more homeless people onto the streets, it was time to ask: *was there anything that the world could learn from the ongoing self-governing initiatives to tackle São Paulo's housing crisis?*

² Guilherme Evelin (2019) 'Minha Casa, Minha Vida constrói hoje as favelas de amanhã', diz Antonio Risério». O Estado de S.Paulo. 27 de julho de

³ Mello, D. 2020. Risco de morrer por coronavírus varia até 10 vezes entre bairros de SP. Agencia Brasil, 5 May

Dr. Cristina Sousa with Professors Nuno Gil and Rafael Valim prepared this case as the basis for class discussion. The case does not intend to serve as endorsement, source of primary data, or illustration of effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation. The authors are responsible for any inaccuracy.

Brazil's Housing Crisis

The history of the campaign for urban reform in Brazil was long and hard, with many breakthroughs and discouraging setbacks. In his book *Pioneers of Social Housing (Os Pioneiros da Habitação Social)*, Nabil Bonduki, an eminent Brazilian urbanist, defined 5 distinct periods: 1912 to the 1930s; 1930s to 1964; 1964 to 1980; 1980s to 2000; and 2001 to the present. A key year, 1912 was when the federal government built the first social housing complex, recognizing that the lack of housing for the working class was a public problem. Yet, social housing construction was only to become regulated in the 1930s legislation review, which promulgated housing as a matter for the State. Still, the production of social housing failed to accompany the rapid urban migration and Brazilian cities grew in a disorderly way over several decades. Following the 1964 military coup, the state invested further in social housing leading to 20 years of massive utilitarian housing complexes for the working class, away from city centers. Critics blamed these programs for aggravating Brazil's social problems in that they pushed the poor into distant suburbs. And, indeed, in São Paulo for example, Cidade Tiradentes became one of the poorest and most marginalized urban districts, despite offering much improved housing conditions to people who used to live in favelas – precarious informal settlements, with mostly unfinished self-built, self-financed small houses (30 to 40 m²)⁴. Furthermore, the rapid growth of urban population across Brazil main cities made it common for organized squatters to find somewhere to live, either by occupying land or abandoned buildings in the city center. There were attempts at repressing this, but it became a wide reaching phenomenon, with many city suburbs originating from organized squatting without secure tenure.

With Brazil's return to democracy in 1981, the housing and urban development responsibilities were decentralized to federal states and local municipalities. At the same time, housing movements started to call for urban policy reforms, with over 250 representatives attending their first national gathering in 1980.⁵ This dynamic gained further impetus in 1988 with the new Brazilian Constitution, which promoted the participation of civil society. Crucially, whilst housing movements brought slum dwellers together at the grassroots, leading the movements were progressive college-educated individuals. Further, the movements enjoyed support from progressive priests within the Catholic Church who were behind faith-based communities. During this period, one outcome of the housing movement protests was national legislation by which favelas became Zones of Special Social Interest, where the general urban laws did not apply. A housing movement member recalled,

People call the 1980s a lost decade because it was a decade of economic crisis, but from a political point of view, it was a time of rebirth for Brazil and of power for progressive municipal governments.

Collective action notwithstanding, throughout the 1980s and 90s, Brazil's housing crisis became acute. With the support of housing movements, land and property squatting became common as well as protests to advocate for the right to a house, and confrontations with the police. Still, housing movement leaders were aware that occupations were problematic: they led to precarious dwellings with unhygienic conditions and left squatters living under the threat of imminent eviction. So, two ideas gained traction: one, campaigning for land and resources for self-organized

⁴ In contrast, the 1979 land parceling law stipulated plots had to be a minimum of 125m² (<https://www.cauba.org.br/wp-content/uploads/anexos/leisdecretos/Lei-6766-79-ParcelamentodoSolo.pdf>)

⁵ Levy, Charmain, *The Housing Movement in the City of São Paulo: Crisis and Revival*, 2005, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303410399_3_The_Housing_Movement_in_the_City_of_Sao_Paulo_Crisis_and_Revival

developments of new houses ('Mutirões') and rehabilitation of 'Cortiços'; and the favela movement, which campaigned for favela upgrades. The turn of the century began with a landmark constitutional amendment (2000) introducing the human right to adequate housing⁶. This was followed by major institutional reforms including the creation of the City Statute in 2001, which affirmed the social function of property; the creation of the Ministry of Cities and the Council of Cities in 2003 to support the articulation between the municipal, state, and federal governments; and the creation of the Fund and the National System of Social Housing in 2005. But if the new institutions were the culmination of a 13 year campaign for urban reform, they had failed to prevent the growth of urban inequality: by 2005, over 45 million people lived in precarious favelas built in illegal plots.⁷

São Paulo's Housing Crisis

The largest city by population in South America and capital of the wealthiest state in Brazil, the country with the widest income inequality gap in Latin America, São Paulo was a city of extremes. This city with over 20 million people contributed more than 10% to the country's GDP, had the 11th largest GDP in the world, and was home to two thirds of the established multinationals in Brazil – "Earn in São Paulo, spend in Rio" was the Brazilian aphorism⁸. Yet, São Paulo was also emblematic of the housing crisis afflicting Brazil – a country with an urban population of around 186 million (almost 90% of its overall population!), and where by 2019 around 11 million people were estimated to lack adequate housing⁹. So, a deficit of 5.8 million homes, which reached 24 million when considering the combined range of inadequate housing¹⁰. In São Paulo, the housing crisis was such that it had made headlines globally in 2017 when over 20,000 homeless people marched the streets to demand affordable housing. At the time, the housing deficit was estimated around half a million (or 1 million if including all inadequate housing)¹¹ – a deficit that would take 120 years to close unless the pace of construction, rehabilitation, and the housing budget changed drastically¹². And yet, almost 300,000 houses remained empty, despite over 100 organized squats in the city center¹³. In addition, around 24,000 people lived on the streets of São Paulo by 2019, a number that had risen to 65,000 by 2021 as thousands of people lost their jobs with the COVID-19 pandemic.¹⁴

Behind these stark figures was a long history dating back to the 1970s when rural workers rushed to São Paulo in large numbers, causing a rapid hike in population. As migrants struggled to find accommodation, favelas mushroomed. It was then that the housing movements began to gain traction, supported by progressive priests and leftists. With the help of pastoral agents and graduate students engaging with the poor at grassroots level, organized groups in different neighborhoods started to emerge during the military regime. São Paulo's housing movement thus grew in a

⁶ Defined as the provision of water, sewerage, electricity, street lighting, garbage collection, road paving, public transport and access to basic social services.

⁷ IPEA 2015. National Report for Habitat III. Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA, acronym in Portuguese) Brazil. Available at < <https://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Brazil-National-Report-Habitat-III.pdf> >

⁸ GDP contribution table, 2018, <https://www.ibge.gov.br/estatisticas/downloads-estatisticas.html>

⁹ <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/BRA/brazil/urban-population>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.br/mdr/pt-br/noticias/dados-revisados-do-deficit-habitacional-e-inadeguacao-de-moradias-nortearao-politicas-publicas>

¹¹, <https://canaisglobo.globo.com/assistir/globonews/dialogos-com-mario-sergio-conti/v/6710503/>

¹² <https://www.reuters.com/arUcle/us-brazil-homeless-fire-idUSKBN1L116J>

¹³ Ramalho, Wellington, Tetos Sem Gente, July 2019, <https://noticias.uol.com.br/reportagens-especiais/imoveis-vazios-no-centro-de-sao-paulo/>

¹⁴ <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210828-pandemic-pushes-new-homeless-onto-sao-paulo-streets>; <https://www.poder360.com.br/brasil/mais-de-66-000-vivem-nas-ruas-de-sao-paulo-calcula-ong/>

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decentralized way, using the Catholic Church infrastructures for support and expansion. Groups were largely autonomous from politicians, whilst developing a repertoire of methods modelled to a degree on the Christian Base Communities: gathering signatures for petitions, obtaining audiences with authorities to try to negotiate a solution, demonstrations in front of authorities, and calling upon the media – in sum, developing capacity to stand up for their rights. Housing movements also started to receive support from the Workers Party (PT). A member of a movement told the visiting officials,

In São Paulo we had the late Cardinal Paulo Evaristo Arns, one of the most progressive in Latin America. Dom Paulo sold the church administrative building to buy community centers in favelas and other neighborhoods and gave them to the communities so they could get organized... When we struggled to open any doors at the Municipality or at the governor's office, the Church ended up helping. We ran to the Cardinal for help. When we were attacked – regular incidents at one point – the Church helped denounce the attacks in the press and to human rights organizations... The support was very strong ... from the church... and from the Workers' Party (PT) as well.

With the support of the Workers Party (PT) in São Paulo, local housing movements evolved from protest movements into collective action movements, engaging in two main types of action: i) struggles for slum upgrades (urbanization of favelas), including secure land tenure and provision of basic infrastructure; and ii) organized occupations of vacant land. And after the first organized occupation of an abandoned building in the city center in 1997, more occupations followed, with nearly 10,000 families occupying 44 buildings over the following 7 years in protest¹⁵. At the same time, housing movements started to demand greater control over housing construction through self-managed cooperatives, the Mutirões. By 2003, the situation was dire: around 3 million people lived in substandard housing, including around 1 million in cortiços¹⁶, and nearly 9,000 lived on the streets, whilst over 420,000 houses (12 percent) were vacant, including around 45,000 in the city center¹⁷.

To tackle a growing housing crisis, São Paulo's Municipality started favela urbanization programs involving physical upgrades and legalization of land tenure ('Bairro Legal')¹⁸. In addition, the Municipality created the *Bolso Aluguel* program to assist families that needed to move out of favelas located in areas prone to flooding or landslides, or in buildings in danger of collapsing¹⁹. The Municipality also started to rehabilitate some Cortiços. But progress was disappointingly slow due to lack of funding, bureaucracy, and difficulties in taking possession of private buildings that had been illegally occupied, and in reaching a consensus with the organized squatters. As a result, only 11 buildings (985 housing units) were rehabilitated between 2001 and 2009; and 46 buildings (2980

¹⁵ São Paulo: A Tale of Two Cities, UN-HABITAT, 2010

¹⁶ Sampaio, Maria Ruth Amaral e Pereira, Paulo César Xavier, Habitação em São Paulo, SciELO, Brasil, February 2004, <https://www.scielo.br/j/ea/a/W6JcgF3z5qqd47LVJCQpcvh/?lang=pt>

¹⁷ Neuhold, Roberta dos Reis, Os Movimentos de Moradia e Sem-Teto e Ocupações de Imóveis Ociosos: a luta por políticas públicas habitacionais na área central da cidade de São Paulo, Dissertação, USP, São Paulo, 2009, https://teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/8/8132/tde-09022010-130648/publico/ROBERTA_REIS_NEUHOLD.pdf

¹⁸ Bairro legal is a play on words, as 'legal' means "legal" in a lawful sense, but colloquially also means "great"

¹⁹ By 2020, the Bolso Aluguel program was still being advertised on São Paulo's municipality website, and people facing peril were still eligible to apply for rent support, despite the considerable reduction in funds.

housing units) between 2009 and 2016, seven of which received state funds, even though the state limited funds to R\$76,000 (~£8000), a threshold too low for many projects [Exhibit II]²⁰.

My House My Life (Minha Casa Minha Vida-Entidades, MCMV-E)

Efforts to tackle the housing crisis gained a major boost in 2007 with the Growth Acceleration Program launched by President Lula da Silva (2003-11), followed by a second stream of funding during Dilma Rousseff's Presidency (2011-16). The most important program was the My House My Life program (*Minha Casa Minha Vida*, MCMV), launched in 2009 with a budget around \$18.6 billion to develop 3 million houses for low-income families; this was followed by a second phase in 2011 (\$35 billion) to build 2 million additional houses. In 2013, a UN-Habitat report commended the Brazilian government for continuously reviewing, correcting and improving the MCMV's modalities and the articulation with stakeholders²¹ [Exhibit III]. Further, the UN agency highlighted the program as a notable example of a large scale housing scheme benefitting vulnerable people and low-income families and as laying the foundation to reduce Brazil's housing deficit. By 2015, under the auspices of the Ministry of Cities, MCMV had reached 3.75 million contracted houses, and a 3rd phase for 3 million houses was announced. But the MCMV program was not without critics. Designed to respond to the economic crisis by supporting the construction industry, the funds went directly to private builders, which was a massive blow to the housing movements. Moreover, due to the builders' focus on more lucrative housing production for higher income families, by 2015 housing supply exceeded demand by 1.5 million units for households earning above 3 minimum wages, whilst the shortfall for the lowest income families (0 to 3 minimum wages) exceeded 6.5 million houses²². Critics also highlighted the lack of quality in housing construction.

In 2010, following lobbying from the housing movements, the government created a MCMV sub-program. The MCMV-Entidades (MCMV-E) shared the same institutional rules as the MCMV but the funding would be allocated to housing associations and cooperatives. A movement member said,

We'd been campaigning for years for a large-scale social housing program and when they launched MCMV, they did it to help the building companies. How would this affect the housing movements? Lots of people went to Brasilia and organized squats ... As we were represented in the Ministry of Cities, together with representatives from government, academia, construction companies, and civil entities, we managed to submit a proposal, and the MCMV-Entities was launched in 2010.

Compared with social housing production carried out by construction companies, self-managed housing production by cooperatives and associations of residents was fractional – BRL 0.5 billion allocated, compared to 16.5 billion.²³ This encouraged calls for a major increase in funds for self-management²⁴. But by 2015, with Brazil sunk into its deepest recession since the 1930s, funding had

²⁰ CAIXA 2014. Programa Minha Casa, Minha Vida – Manual interno. CAIXA ECONÔMICA FEDERAL. Entidades Recursos FDS Bruno Avellar Alves de Lima

²¹ Lonardoni, F. et al, Scaling-up Affordable Housing Supply in Brazil – The 'My House My Life' Programme (Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 2013

²² Arellano V et al. 2016. Right to the City. Housing and Community Development in Brazil. Urban Planning Graduate Studio Report Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Columbia University

²³ Lonardoni, F. et al, Scaling-up Affordable Housing Supply in Brazil – The 'My House My Life' Programme (Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 2013

²⁴ Balbim, R, Krause, C. 2014. Produção social da moradia: um olhar sobre o planejamento da Habitação de Interesse Social no Brazil. R. B. ESTUDOS URBANOS E REGIONAIS, 16 (1)189-201;

dried up. Further, with the arrival to power of the right-wing Presidency of Jair Bolsonaro in 2019, the Ministry of Cities was dissolved, which housing movements said was *'the final nail in the coffin'*²⁵.

Politics and economics notwithstanding, in a progress report on implementing the UN New Urban Agenda, submitted in 2021, the Ministry of Regional Development said there was no U-turn on the state's commitment to solve Brazil's housing crisis²⁶. Accordingly, the Ministry stated that from January 2019 to June 2021, the government had delivered more than 1 million housing units for low-income families. And to further promote poor families' right to housing, the government announced a new program, the House Green & Yellow (Casa Verde & Amarela). Still, by June 2021, the rise in tent cities across Brazilian cities was making headlines all over the world as it was the Supreme Court's decision to suspend people removals and the President's own reaction – 'it's the end of private property', said the President.

São Paulo Housing Movements

Housing movements in São Paulo had a long history going as far back as the 1970s campaigns to improve living conditions in Diadema, São Paulo's poorest dormitory town. During the dictatorship period, to be a home owner became a deep seated aspiration in society, owing to the state's efforts to get public opinion behind forced evictions from the city center favelas to the periphery. With democracy, the housing movements appropriated this aspiration and turned the tables on society by claiming the right for the poor to live in the city center. The emergence of housing movements was particularly strong in São Paulo whose sharp rise in population combined with social, political and economic factors led to a daunting housing deficit – "When I joined, my aim was to get a home. But the campaigning showed me I could achieve much more than that", said a housing movement member, whilst a former government official explained the difficulties of their struggle:

There's a big stigma within housing movements in that they question the state competence at the very core. There are numerous empty and unused properties, and yet there are loads of homeless people ... Illegal occupations are supported by the constitution and federal law, as both identify social function as a requirement with every property. But the general public tends not to know about this.

Things started to change in the late 1980s and early 90s. Under two progressive administrations, the housing movements encountered a Municipality eager to engage in constructive dialogue: Luiza Erundina's (1989-92) and Marta Suplicy's (2001-05), with the former making history for being the first to sponsor slum upgrades and community self-builds (Mutirões). A former official said,

Part of what we did in Erundina's time involved educating the housing movements on management. The dialogue with the movements was vital because they had an endless struggle. So we taught them about limitations. When Erundina took office, the movement leaders would go up to her claiming the land plots she'd promised. They had no notion of project timings, public management timing, and budget reimbursements. So we had to raise their awareness about these issues.

²⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/jul/18/ministry-of-cities-rip-the-sad-story-of-brazils-great-urban-experiment>

²⁶ 2021, National Progress Report on Implementing the New Urban Agenda. Ministry of Regional Development Federative Republic of Brazil. Available at < https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/Relatorio%20Brasil_ONU-Habitat_EN%20%281%29.pdf>

In turn, Suplicy's administration made São Paulo one of the first cities to award secure tenure to residents of favelas occupying public land, without transferring land ownership, and support the rehabilitation of Cortiços – “not only building houses, but also citizenship”, was the motto.²⁷

The scale of housing movements pushing for self-builds was such that by 2018, a monthly general assembly of the Unification of the Cortiço and Housing Struggles (Unificação das Lutas de Cortiço e Moradias) could involve around 2000 people from over 50 base groups. With the number of families exceeding the number of houses available for each project, each base group operated a points system devised to ensure a fair process of home allocation in a future project. Once a housing movement secured funding for a project, affiliated group coordinators selected the highest scorers to form a ‘building community’, with the number of members matching the number of future housing units. With the movement's help, this building community would be in charge of managing the project and budget, including procuring materials and contractors and producing accounts for the authorities. A movement leader said,

When we were set up back in the past, we created rules and regulations, and approved them, so that we could help families. When new people join us, they need to be made aware that there are rules. Everyone has to participate, at least go to meetings and the assembly... Over time, we may realize that we need to update these rules. What applied 10 years ago, won't necessarily apply now.

Supporting the local housing movements producing proposals and chasing funds were umbrella organizations such as the Union of Housing Movements (União dos Movimentos de Moradia) and the Center of People's Movements (Central dos Movimentos Populares – CMP). Both organizations campaigned for people's housing rights and policies on community participation. The CMP in particular took part in protests for urban reform and coordinated campaigns for the right to housing – ‘The CMP gives us unified strength when dialoguing with governments and helps coordinate action with other movements,’ said a movement member. Housing movements had no political affiliation and although they had some donor funds, they mainly relied on their members contributing time and effort, even incurring costs for campaign visits to Brasília. A delegate explained,

When Fernando Henrique Cardoso [1994-2003] was elected president, everyone thought Brazil's problem of social inequality would be solved ... so we lost our international funding... This is a fact of life and movements have adapted and made long-term savings... The housing funds are exclusively for building houses. No funds are used for people to campaign – mobilization has no fund allocation.

The Mutirão Program

It was during Erundina's progressive administration that the idea of Mutirões gained traction in São Paulo. Inspired by Uruguay's Housing Cooperatives, the Municipality worked with the local housing movements to formulate a public policy that resulted in the creation of the city's first Mutirão program. Instead of organizing land squatting, movements would support groups of people to form ‘building communities’, identify available land, and engage with the Municipality to receive funds to buy the land, design and build their own houses; eventually, the beneficiaries would take part in construction. A former official of São Paulo Municipality said to the visiting officials,

We proposed a few self-governance programs as an alternative to the state-led developments where a builder was selected to erect a uniform apartment block with bad architecture and no community involvement. The Mutirão program would involve participation by the people and smash the idea of

²⁷ HabitaSampa (SEHAB Bulletin), March 2004.

the massive housing complex, without pushing people to the periphery... The dialogue with housing movements was vital because they had an endless campaign and had to be made aware of the limitations. Later, they realized they needed to campaign for federal law changes, and proposed a bill for a national housing fund to do at national level what was being done in the São Paulo Municipality.

To succeed, a building community had to submit a proposal designed by a technical advisory body consisting of lawyers, architects and engineers, together with a copy of the association statutes, a list of members, a budget, and building site procedures. In addition, the housing movement working behind the scenes needed to be recognized by the authorities. Members of the building communities were expected to pay a nominal subscription fee for running costs and sometimes a small supplement, agreed by members, for more enterprising activity or to close project funding. If the building community was deemed qualified to manage the whole development, they would become responsible for assembling the project supply chain (themselves and others, mostly from the neighborhood). The basic idea was to leverage the skills and know-how of the poor in house building. Favelas were such small worlds that, in the absence of official codes of construction, the poor had learnt to develop their own rules to devise solutions for inevitable conflicts. So, why not mobilize this human capital for larger housing developments? A former Municipality official said,

This whole thing moved from individual self-build, to collective self-construction and then to self-governance. A Mutirão wasn't merely collective construction, it also involved the organization of a group of families which would manage the whole development process... Although each building community had meetings with us beforehand, the projects were their own. This was about bringing in diversity, encourage participation, and respect the right to high quality architecture and the right to land... An important development was the establishment of technical advisory bodies. The Housing Lab, established within the Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning of the University of São Paulo, was the first to be established, leading the way for others to follow suit. During Erundina's 4-year mandate, we signed off 11,000 housing units in Mutirão projects, involving nearly 100 projects.

When the federal government set up MCMVE to scale up São Paulo's Mutirão program at national level, attending to the capacity and limitations of building communities, it attributed a fraction (~2%) of the funds allocated to the mainstream program. The MCMVE was set up to combine refundable (minor part) subsidies with non-refundable grants²⁸. The upfront subsidies targeted low-income families (with up to 3 minimum wages) who would have to reimburse a small portion via monthly payments over 10 years. These were calculated as a ratio of the household income, initially 5 per cent but later increased to 10 per cent, after which the beneficiaries would gain possession of the house. Higher-income beneficiaries were expected to contribute with their own counterpart funds. After significant lobbying, the housing movements managed to increase the income threshold under which people qualified and adjust it to cost of living. A group coordinator explained,

Applicants had to add their name to the register and indicate their job and income ... The register is binding and applies to the family, but the ceiling was very low (BRL 1,000)....So if I had a job and earned 1,000 and my husband or son earned another 1,000, I would be out of the program. Yet, with 2,000, I wouldn't be able to pay market prices [in São Paulo]. So we had to campaign again as we

²⁸ In the first phase of the MCMV program (2009-2010) non-refundable subsidies equated to 75 per cent of the funding available (*Scaling up Affordable Housing Supply in Brazil – the MCMV programme, UN-HABITAT*).

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were struggling to help our local families. It took a while but we managed to raise the ceiling to 2,000, and even be allowed to include 10 per cent of families who earned up to 2,375.

In low-housing projects, the beneficiaries were allowed to participate in construction, whereas in multi-story buildings, the building community could project manage but had to outsource construction. All construction work was monitored by CAIXA, the Federal Savings Bank. But a housing movement member complained that CAIXA was far more demanding with the Mutirão projects than with those developed by commercial builders, despite the former being far more detailed. Among progressive circles in São Paulo, there was a shared belief that Mutirões could deliver better quality housing at a lower cost. To help the building communities navigate through the bureaucracy, local housing movements worked in coordination with São Paulo's Union of Housing Movements, which articulated their needs to the Ministry of Cities (disbanded in 2019). A movement member said,

We call the Union a mother entity in that it supports various affiliated housing movements... If an affiliated movement wants to obtain resources from CAIXA for a building community, it approaches the Union and asks for help to write a proposal... Whenever we submit a proposal, CAIXA tries to insist we adopt the blueprints used by construction companies claiming they bring costs down. So, we have to prove this is actually not the case. It's always a tug of war between us and CAIXA officials, and some project proposals can take up to 3 years to approve. Later, CAIXA inspects every single unit, whereas on housing developments by construction companies they only do sample inspections.

Cidade Tiradentes Mutirão

Tiradentes was often used to illustrate bad planning, the delegation of officials were told whilst being encouraged to look to the favelas foregrounding the housing blocks built by the state between the 70s and the 90s [Exhibit IV]. Indeed, its social housing blocks were typical of decades of state funded utilitarian complexes that made it hard for residents to establish communities or even open a business. Apartment blocks spread as far as the eye could see, rendering the local cash economy insufficient for the local population. With most residents having to commute for an hour or more to reach work, young people were left on their own, deprived of the opportunity to realize their potential and vulnerable to fall prey to crime. Indeed, critics noted that those who benefited most from developments like Tiradentes were speculators; one said,

The [Tiradentes] periphery model benefitted the property market speculators threefold: by evicting the poor from the city center, thus raising those areas' value; by selling plots to workers in the periphery, many of them illegally; and by improving the intermediary areas... A whole community was pushed over here, but to access their workplace every day... roads had to be put in, as well as water, electricity and transport networks, thereby increasing the value of the intermediary areas.

Yet, Cidade Tiradentes had also made headlines for an impressive 396-unit Mutirão project [Exhibit IV] to relocate families from local favelas, a project which had gained force in 2010 after the Homeless Workers Movement (MTST) and the favela residents found available land.²⁹ Aware of the MCMVE program, the MTST helped the favela residents to organize themselves into a building community and apply for funds – "This is owed to participation of the people, architects, engineers... It did not start with organized squatting. Instead, we put political pressure on the authorities to buy

²⁹ The MTST was affiliated to two national movements: the National People's Housing Union (UNMP – União Nacional de Moradia) and the Centre of People's Movements (CMP – Central de Movimentos Populares)

the land”, said a housing movement leader. The MTST also helped the participants deal with the bureaucracy, even updating people’s marital status and IDs to ensure all required paperwork could be submitted.

Working side by side with the MTST and a technical advisory body, the building community saw the project approved in 2013. During the design process by the technical advisory body, the families were asked to vote on two major issues: a suggestion to increase community spaces at ground level, by adding more floors and installing lifts (both unusual in state-led housing blocks); and a plan to build 60m² units instead of the usual 40m², both of which were approved by all. However, owing to the slow approval process by the authorities and subsequent funding delays, it would take more than six years for the Mutirão to be fully completed. A housing movement member explained,

The big issue with a Mutirão is the lack of inflation adjustments to counteract delays in the approval process. The biggest risk we faced was price fluctuation in construction materials, like steel. The building community had to absorb that risk. We campaigned a lot on this with the federal government ... We submitted a table with the unit price of everything ... in practice, we had some leeway because the government required unit prices, and we managed to negotiate good rates by buying large quantities. That’s where good management came in. As a result we built larger units, with higher spec at a lower cost, compared to the social houses built by the private builders.

To determine who would get priority to move in first and to which unit exactly, the building community used a points system and coordinators logged attendance of meetings and assemblies, as well as work on site, displaying it on posters [**Exhibit V**]. Coordinators also gave members individual cards [**Exhibit VI**] to record their participation on the project (help out, staying on site overnight to secure it, campaigning for the release of funds, protests), which they stamped for validation against coordination records in order to ensure fair play. A coordinator said,

Everyone has to pull their weight and put in the same effort, as jointly agreed at meetings. There were a few cases of people who would not turn up when they were supposed to and when they did they would be on their mobile all the time and not do anything... So they were called in at the assembly to explain and were given another opportunity... in one case one guy was given another chance, but later on he was excluded from the project at the assembly openly by unanimous vote.

All in all, participants in the Tiradentes Mutirão were quite happy. Beneficiaries had participated extensively in the development process, with manual labor carried out by a local builder to achieve increased quality. Unlike the state-led model where the government would set a price per housing unit and agree a margin for the builder, the self-governance Mutirão involved no profit for the residents, whilst delivering better housing quality and typologies. Yet, former officials who endorsed the model were unclear if their governance model was exportable, and one of them added,

The agreement between the local authority and a building community, plus the services of a specialized technical body makes the basic self-governance model. [In São Paulo] we developed a specific culture for it to work. But on the MCMVE some distortions started to happen... Communities outside São Paulo operate a disguised form of self-governance – they have a leadership group who discuss a lot more and decide a lot more, so they don’t really have full participation.

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Still, by 2018, the Mutirão model was getting widely endorsed by a UN Habitat rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living.³⁰ *'Participation in upgrading', said the UN rapporteur, 'requires democratic processes through which the community can make collective decisions. These processes should facilitate community meetings, the appointment of spokespersons and effective sharing of information'.*

São Paulo's Cortiços

The Cortiços in São Paulo's city center first appeared as cheap accommodation for laborers in the 1890s and a century later, in the 1990s, these communal buildings housed dozens of families sharing insalubrious and unhygienic kitchens and bathrooms. To this stock of buildings, others joined, namely abandoned buildings occupied illegally by organized squatting to pressure the Municipality into approving rehabilitation proposals, on the basis these buildings had no social function. The plight of the organized squats gained global recognition in 2016 through the award-winning Brazilian movie, *The Cambridge Squatter* (Era o Hotel Cambridge), which told a fictionalized version of the occupation of the empty 15-story Cambridge hotel by low-paid workers and refugees, and their efforts to see off the threat of eviction. A year later, another Cortiço made global headlines: *Ocupa Mauá*, which came into being in 2007 when squatters took over the abandoned Hotel Santos Drummont. When the authorities tried to evict over 200 low-income families (approximately 1,300 people, hereof about 200 children) from *Ocupa Mauá* in 2017, a global movement of support gained force, successfully pressuring the authorities into committing to agree a peaceful solution.³¹

The case of the Conselheiro Crispiano/Iracema Eusébio (Eusébio) building [Exhibit VII] visited by the delegation of officials was telling. This Cortiço was rehabilitated to hold 72 housing units to accommodate around 300 low-income beneficiaries. The development started with an organized occupation of the abandoned federal government office building in the city center.³² A movement member said,

They [government] abandoned this building and moved into a brand new one. The city of São Paulo is full of buildings like this one, with no social function... There was an organized squat in order to pressure the authorities into expropriating the building and using it in the program... We occupied it for about a year... Usually, when organizing an occupation, we don't expect everyone who takes part to end up living there. 300 people took part in the occupation to put pressure.

Since the Eusébio building was owned by the state, the rehabilitation process was less complicated because the local authorities did not need to expropriate private property. With the support of the Unification of the Cortiço and Housing Struggles movement (ULCM), the authorities warmed up to the idea of the organized squatters gaining rights to reside in the building³³. Still, the squatters needed to formally organize themselves – sign up to the social program register, disclose their incomes, and join a base group affiliated with ULCM – if they wanted to have any chance of accessing funds from the MCMVE program. This aspiration was well received by the Municipality, eager to see funds from MCMVE going to the rehabilitation of Cortiços. A group coordinator said,

³⁰ Farha, L 2018, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context*, General Assembly, UN, A/73/310/Rev.1, 19 September 2018, paragraph 76, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1643657?ln=en>

³¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/nov/27/resistance-sao-paulo-homeless-reclaim-city-occupations>

³² Former offices of the Brazilian Social Security Institute (INSS – Instituto Nacional do Seguro Social)

³³ The building was awarded to the ULCM in 2010 via concession (Concessão de Direito Real de Uso), thus remaining public property, see Lima, Bruno, 2019, *Promoção da Habitação Social*, pg 436

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There are MCMVE program requirements. All applicants need to have a CADÚnico, which is a unique social identification number. This is a register, and with that number they can check if people already own a house elsewhere, and check if they have a bad name with the federal government.

To incentivize people to participate and instill a sense of fairness in the housing allocation process, similarly to other building communities, with the help of ULCM, the squatters had to make their own rules to govern the decision-making process. A group coordinator of ULCM said,

All coordinators meet once a week to discuss the register and questions submitted, to approve actions, protests. Once a month we have the general assembly. The base groups operate on a weekly, two-weekly or monthly basis... Over the years, we perfected the system... These days, most of us keep a digital attendance spreadsheet... If any person complains, we double check our records.

The more time and effort a person put into the whole development process from participating in the organized occupation to attending subsequent meetings, go on trips to Brasilia to pressurize bureaucrats to release funds, and organize awareness sessions on progress, the more points a person would gain. Participation was logged in charts [Exhibit V] and in individual booklets [Exhibit VI] and cards, and the higher the score, the more priority a person would get in being allocated a new home. A coordinator of base groups told the visiting officials,

We work in the project and have the task at the ULCM of determining which base group takes more people to a project, as well as the points a person can gain to earn the right to choose which floor they'll move into... If their score is high, they can say, "Well, I'd like to live on the 6th Floor!" Everything is logged in a booklet, a red and a yellow card that people take home. The booklet shows yearly activity... A red card logs monthly meeting attendance and contribution towards costs and they take these home. The yellow card points count higher ... for example, if they went to Brasilia campaigning... Members earn more points if they occupy a building, spend the night there, securing it till morning... We assess all activity... There's no point crying over spilt milk. If they didn't follow the entity's criteria, spent their time moaning about life, they end up getting whatever's left...

By 2012-3, the project proposal for rehabilitating the Eusébio building had been approved. So, residents moved out for over 2 years while the rehabilitation took place, after which they moved into their new homes. But not before another group of squatters occupied the site, requiring the ULCM to apply for the courts to reinstate possession and remove them. A former squatter recalled,

We all returned home... some went back to their old cortiços, others with family and others in expensive rented houses... It's a matter of trust in the ULCM... When there was about 5% left to complete on the rehabilitation work, a non-organized group of squatters moved in and stayed 6 months... they made a mess, broke things... but since ULCM owned the building... the military police came to evict them and they left peacefully... the contractor had to return to repair the damage.

The new residents received their keys in 2016. And 5% of the person's salary was the rent established under the rules of the MCMVE program, payable monthly for 10 years. A ULCM member said,

The program requires rent – here is low rent. People aren't living here for free, they're paying back 5% of their salary, as disclosed by them on the social register... So it varies. Some people pay BRL 90, others 120 or 150... The highest here is just over 100... The subsidy is high... but there's a condition. For up to ten years they can't sell... not until they finish paying for tenure... they're reimbursing the federal government... It's an investment by the government so that people on low pay can buy their

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own home... With our campaigning, the property title was given to ULCM and will be transferred to the families when they finish repaying. They'll receive all the documents from CAIXA (bank).

The story repeated itself in a nearby Cortiço, an old colonial house, Casarão do Carmo, which had partially burned down in the late 1980s when it housed over 80 families, all sharing inadequate sanitary and kitchen facilities. With the support of the City Center Housing Movement (Movimento de Moradia do Centro – MMC)³⁴, 66 families living in the overcrowded Casarão campaigned and pressed the São Paulo Municipality for action, submitting a refurbishment proposal. Although the expropriation process started in 1992, given that the site was adjacent to an old listed church it would be 10 years before a project design was approved (2002). In 2004, after 12 years of campaigning and waiting, construction started on a new 22 apartment building on the Casarão's grounds [Exhibit VIII] and the families were asked to temporarily move off site to subsidized rented accommodation across the city, through Bolso Aluguel. A movement member explained,

We approved the project and identified the beneficiary families... Over the years some families were helped by other housing projects, others gave up, some died... of the original 66 families, only 21 had remained on site...they were moved out and their shacks demolished prior to construction... we supported and campaigned with these families, but not all of the 21 families took an active part in the movement campaigning... [The house allocation] here was handled differently, the points system didn't apply as these families were the original residents and had been the designated beneficiaries and so they were entitled to a new home here, on completion... those who campaigned, did it for themselves and everyone else.

The Casarão rehabilitation project itself was initially managed by the local government, through the Metropolitan Housing Company of São Paulo (Companhia Metropolitana de Habitação de São Paulo – COHAB-SP). But in 2005, the construction was halted after the building company went into administration, and so it remained for several administrations. Funding cuts ended up also affecting the rent subsidy that families were initially given when moving off site. A movement member said,

When construction stopped they'd already built three levels, but still they wouldn't release any flats... we went to the Public Ministry, to the Municipal Housing Council, to the Town Hall and Brasilia to campaign... we even occupied the site for a few days to pressurize the authorities... This carried on for many years... with left and right wing governments... It was very difficult, very complicated... We were told there were no resources and that the construction company which started the work had gone bust and other companies weren't interested in taking over such a small project.

After another 13 years of campaigns and protests at local and national level – even travelling to Brasilia to campaign directly at government level, – success came in 2017 when the Municipality gave the go ahead for construction to be completed. And 2018 started with a ceremony to hand over the house keys to the families, 14 years after they had been asked to move out – “During those 14 years, I nearly gave up, but stuck to it and carried on campaigning... joining in street protests. I tried to convince others that we would succeed no matter what... unfortunately, a few friends died and never got to see the end result”, said a beneficiary who had lived in the Cortiço since 1988. With

³⁴ Neuhold, Roberta, Os Movimentos de Moradia e Sem-Teto e as Ocupações de Imóveis Ociosos: a luta por políticas públicas habitacionais na área central da cidade de São Paulo, Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas, USP, 2009, Pg 113, https://teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/8/8132/tde-09022010-130648/publico/ROBERTA_REIS_NEUHOLD.pdf

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support from the MMC, those families who saw the project completed managed, however, to create a cohesive community and a sense of belonging and pride. A movement member said,

This was in fact a 30 year project... To me, they're family! From time to time they organize a party and everyone comes down to join in. They're all from Ipirá, Bahia, and all get on so well! This cortiço was family oriented... the first family from Bahia brought others in, as they appear to have been the ones willing to fight for it, when it all started. They created an enclosed community... Everyone shares the sense of being a big family.

As with other Mutirões and Cortiço rehabilitations sponsored by MCMVE, the beneficiaries of the Casarão rehabilitation project were asked to commit to a low monthly rent³⁵ over 10 years (plus service charges), after which they would receive the title deeds. A movement member said,

These houses are small but nice ... and recently, we [MMC] submitted an application to use the adjoining listed colonial building that is empty, the Casarão (Big House), and turn it into a cultural center or a nursery for use by this community and the wider community.

Heliópolis: slum upgrades ('Favela urbanization')

Spread across 247 acres (1 km²), Heliópolis, home to 200,000 people, was São Paulo's largest favela right at the heart of the city, and the last stop on the delegation. Its roots could be traced back to a decision by the authorities in the 1970s to move 153 families to temporary accommodation in the area, once a dense woodland with open fields, a move which ended up being permanent³⁶. Over time, squatters moved to the area and its popularity led to the sale of illegal plots by self-proclaimed land owners. In the favela, it became common for six or more families to share a self-built house [Exhibit IX]. Inhabited predominantly by people with roots in the northeast and with a tradition for large families, these houses tended to remain in the family, with some family members working and living in the same building. As their children got married, the tradition was to add another level [Exhibit X] to the house for them; in other cases, people built additional levels so they could rent them out.

All this informality made property registration a complex issue, even after the legislation was changed to allow for collective property register, whereby officials would take into account the area each family occupied in a building and issue separate property deeds, accordingly³⁷. But in Heliópolis, despite efforts by progressive administrations, secure tenure remained illusory for irregular home owners who failed to claim permission of use titles, owing to their perceived lack of value. In turn, proposals to charge a rate in exchange for secure tenure were rejected by residents, who believed that having unwittingly bought illegal plots when the area had no infrastructure, and then built their houses was entitlement enough. Yet, progress started to happen when the first Residents Committee formed in 1982-3 and asked the São Paulo Municipality to acquire the land from the federal government and develop an urban project³⁸. The following 30 years would bring intermittent commitment and funding, and even attempts at evicting people in favor of speculative property developments, given the prime location of Heliópolis on high ground (safe from flooding)

³⁵ The rent commitment is 17% of the salary, <http://www.capital.sp.gov.br/noticia/prefeitura-entrega-apartamentos-e-moradores-voltam-ao-casarao-do-carmo-apos-13-anos>

³⁶ Vila Prudente and Vergueiro (www.unas.org.br/heliopolis)

³⁷ Provisional measure 2220, created in Fernando Henrique Cardoso's government [1995-2003]

³⁸ Companhia Metropolitana de Habitação do Município de São Paulo – COHAB-SP

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and 9km from the city center. Meeting at the headquarters of the local movement next to the library [Exhibit XI], a former official and earlier resident recalled the process to the delegation of officials,

The Urbanization of the favela requires opening up roads and re-parceling the area, which is hard to achieve... People involved are often of a lower cultural and economic level, making it difficult for them to participate, to express themselves and to believe it will happen. In São Paulo, up to the mid 1980s, there were no significant favela urbanization efforts...it was more about securing tenure.

We had no electrical or water infrastructure, only two natural water mines springing water to the surface. When the Municipality... acquired the land in 1983 we started trying to open some streets and lanes with gutters and curbs, paid for with public money... road building and widening was done in close consultation with the residents. Some houses would be in the way and so the owner had to be persuaded to lose half a meter of garden to benefit everyone else. This was done in conjunction with social workers, the municipality engineers and architects... it was a very dynamic process.

Over the years, the relationship between Heliópolis's residents and the authorities saw its ups and downs, depending on the dominant political force in the São Paulo Municipality. But invariably, the joint efforts of the residents and local movements succeeded in fending off eviction orders. A delegate for the Centre of People's Movements (CMP) told the visiting officials,

There is a very strong history of organized effort and achievement here... As well as organizing ourselves within our neighborhood, we believed it was important to build entities with the ability to articulate our campaign with other communities. We approached the Centre of People's Movements and organized a congress for all housing movements... Here, we were campaigning for tenure, for housing, and other resources: health centers, nurseries, cultural centers. This is no longer a housing campaign, but a campaign for better conditions in the neighborhood in every sense.

By 2006, as Heliópolis got gradually equipped with social infrastructure, including medical centers, nurseries, and schools, the favela was upgraded to 'Bairro' (neighborhood) and later became known as Cidade Nova de Heliópolis (New Heliópolis City). In addition, over time, many precarious houses were replaced with buildings up to five story high, featuring on the ground level shops, hairdressers, bars, garages, and other small businesses, topped with levels of residential apartments, often occupied by people who run the business on the ground floor. However, this 'verticalization' program (referred to as the 'Singapore program') produced mixed results, because the provision for public facilities, businesses and services, or recreation, was inadequate; and the cost per family was high. So, many squatters were unable to afford the cost of houses and some blocks have fallen into disrepair. Notwithstanding this, Heliópolis was large enough to provide local jobs as an alternative to the city center job market in commerce or domestic work. A resident said,

There was a prejudice against favelas, many believed anyone who lived in a favela was a bandit... Still, I prefer to use the term favelas, whereas many now call them communities. But when you call them that, it's as if you are dismissing the problem... and we still have problems that need solutions... Actually, the things we achieved working together with the housing movement, the infrastructure and funding, were a recognition of our rights... Now we have a sewage network, electrical infrastructure, schools, nurseries, medical and education centers... I believe ours is a success story.

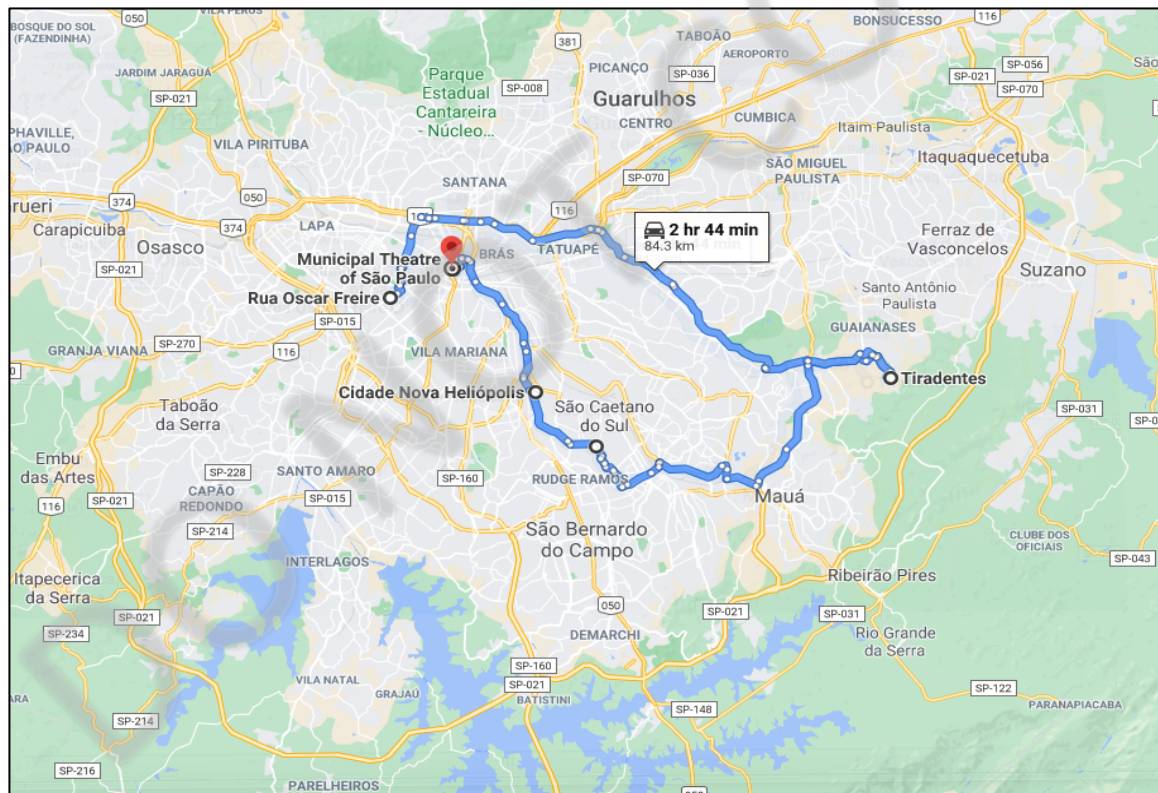
After a long day first visiting the Mutirão in Cidade Tiradentes, then two Cortiços in the city center, and then a quick visit to Heliópolis, the officials in the delegation were totally exhausted. Commuting

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from the city center to Tiradentes had been an almost 2-hour journey in each direction. Only the fortitude and indomitable spirit of the people who lived there could explain how they could survive the hardship of their daily routines. And the hardship experienced by the first families who moved to Tiradentes many decades earlier was almost impossible to imagine. From this perspective, living in a rehabilitated favela in Heliópolis, even without secure land tenure, or in an upgraded Cortiço seemed a dream come true. And even the Mutirão in Tiradentes also offered much better homes than the neighboring housing unit built by the state. And yet, notwithstanding all the merits of the self-governing projects, side by side with the state-led programs, São Paulo's housing crisis was far from resolved. If anything, the situation had deteriorated substantially after the COVID pandemic hit Brazil, with the number of homeless people estimated to have almost tripled to over 65,000 by the São Paulo State Movement of Homeless People (Movimento Estadual da População em Situação de Rua – MEPSR)³⁹. So, which lessons could be drawn from São Paulo that were relevant to the world?

EXHIBITS

Exhibit I – Route from Jardins, São Paulo, to Cidade Tiradentes, Heliópolis, and Cortiços



³⁹ <https://www.poder360.com.br/brasil/mais-de-66-000-vivem-nas-ruas-de-sao-paulo-calcula-ong/>

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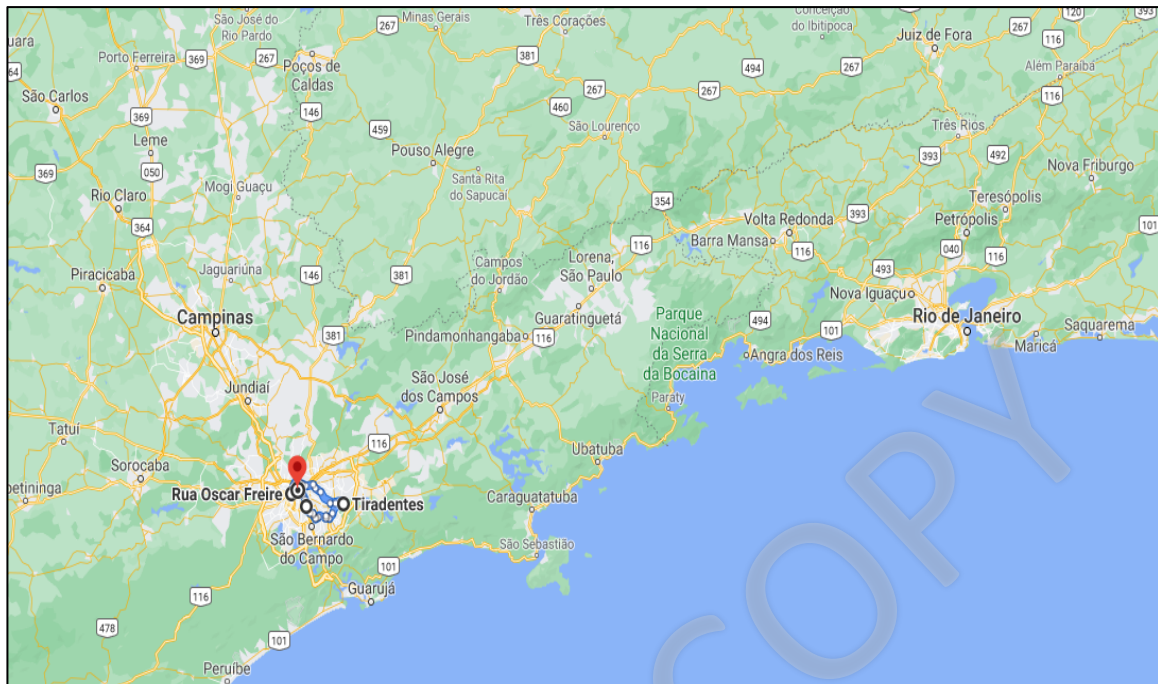
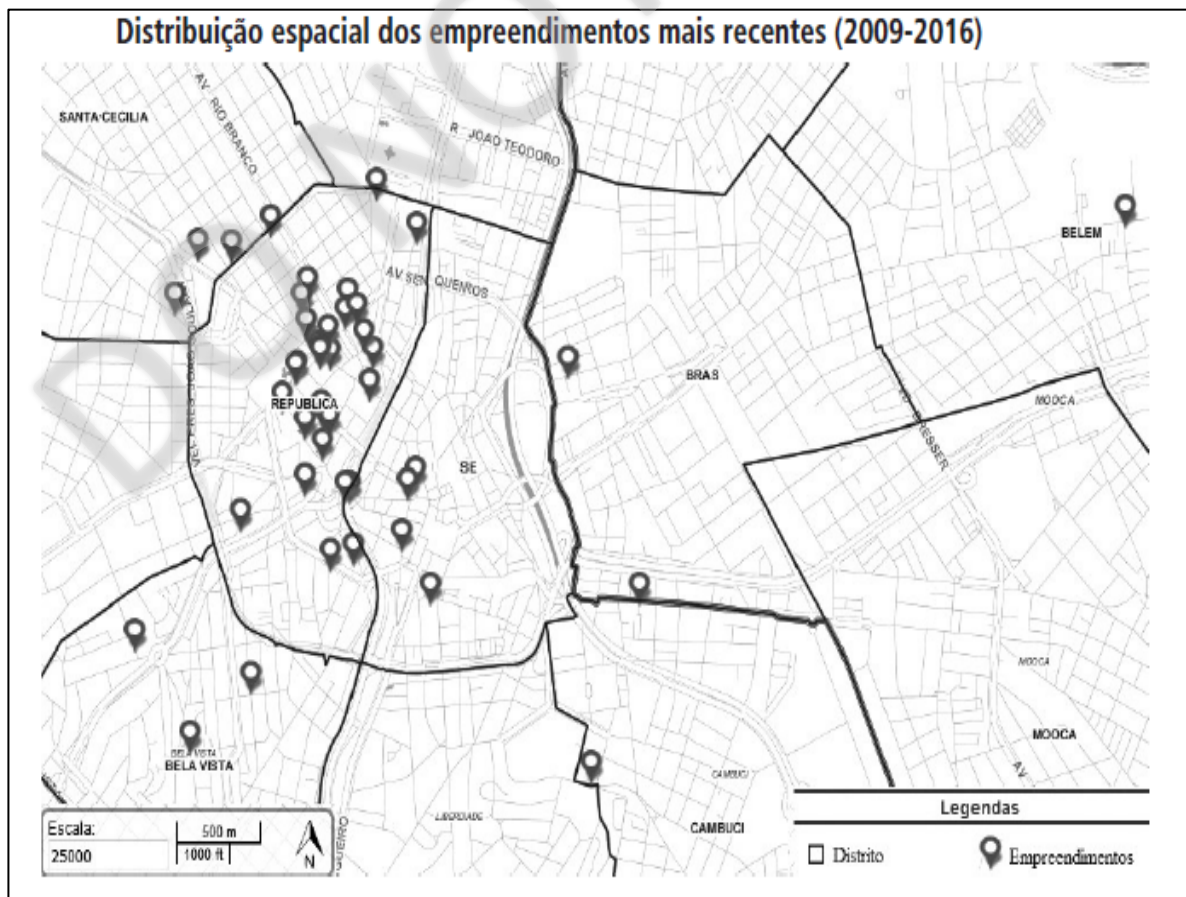


Exhibit II – Spatial Distribution of Rehabilitations of Cortiços (2009-2016) from Lima 2016. THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL HOUSING THROUGH THE REHABILITATION OF EMPTY BUILDINGS IN DOWNTOWN SÃO PAULO: EVALUATION OF SIXTEEN YEARS OF EXPERIENCES (2001-2016)



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Exhibit III – UN Habitat Overview on Minha Casa Minha Vida (MCMV), (UN-Habitat 2013, Scaling-up Affordable Housing Supply in Brazil: The 'My House My Life' Programme)⁴⁰

Launched in 2009, MCMV prioritized low income households (through high subsidy) and offered alternative packages to low-middle class families (through combined subsidy and finance mechanisms), with a wide eligibility range for families with incomes of: up to 3 minimum wages; 3 to 6 minimum wages; and 6 to 10 minimum wages. It used various funding streams with refundable and non-refundable funds. But it generated criticism, especially from housing movements, with critics arguing it perpetuated large-scale developments that didn't work, leading to poor quality housing on cheap land in the periphery, lacking infrastructure, public services and jobs, thus reinforcing the perception the poor had to live further away. But it was the allocation of 94% of its budget to contractors that tarnished the program's reputation (and the Ministry of Cities') the most

Still, the 2013 UN-HABITAT report praised MCMV for its articulation between government tiers and institutions and especially the autonomy of municipalities. UN-Habitat applauded the upfront subsidies, engagement and investment of other public, private, and social actors; and the fact that MCMV drew on a 10 year consolidation of the urban and housing sectors, which included as milestones the creation of the Ministry of Cities, the National System for Social Interest Housing and the National Housing Plan. UN Habitat went on to state that the ideas underlying MCMV could be useful for other countries developing similar social housing policies. But it also stressed MCMV was not a directly replicable model in that key social, political and economic events had made its formulation, design, and implementation suitable for Brazil's context. UN-Habitat praised MCMV program's innovation in combining subsidy and financing mechanisms to cater for a wider household income variety, helping from the poorest up to low middle-class families; in amalgamating with the Growth Acceleration Program; and in introducing self-governance models delivered under MCMVE.

MCMVE was created in 2010 in response to campaigns by housing movements. Allocated to cooperatives and community-based organizations registered with the main finance operator, CAIXA, MCMVE's budget of BRL 0.5 billion (a fraction compared to MCMV's budget of BRL 16.5 billion) funded a variety of construction modalities, catering for different scales of project, including: 'Mutirões', with organized beneficiaries self-managing the whole project and actively participating in construction; 'administração global', with beneficiaries managing the project whilst outsourcing construction work; and 'empreitada global', with project management and construction works both outsourced. To access funding, MCMVE beneficiaries had to register with a housing movement and add their name to a social service register – CADÚnico – indicating their household monthly income. Once projects were completed and units allocated, beneficiaries had to repay a small monthly portion of the subsidy, calculated on their salary, for a period of 10 years, after which, the title deeds were transferred to them. Typically, 80% of the beneficiaries involved were women and most families were also headed by women – “this is the social economic reality of Brazil. There are more men dying owing to violence and in many families the woman is far more determined, as she looks after the family”, said a movement member.

UN-Habitat highlighted MCMVE as a vital complement to the market-oriented production that allowed for inclusion and social participation in housing production, despite its smaller scale housing production. UN-Habitat concluded, the participation of beneficiaries in MCMVE and its non-profit nature made this a sustainable model that could be adapted to different environments and social contexts, whenever individual engagement was possible. And it recommended a more balanced provision of affordable and social housing, suggesting MCMVE would benefit from capacity building, mobilization and knowledge sharing between the participating entities. Brazil's economy started to shift right after the UN report was published, and in 2015 funding began to dry up, owing to a tax adjustment as part of President Dilma Rousseff's austerity policy

⁴⁰ Lonardoní, F et al, Scaling-up Affordable Housing Supply in Brazil – The 'My House My Life' Programme (Programa Minha Casa Minha Vida), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 2013

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(2011-16), worsening with President Temer (2016-18). As committed funds for specific projects started to be reallocated by the authorities, the view appeared to support the State removing itself from such projects.

Exhibit IV – Favela in Cidade Tiradentes with a state-funded housing complex in the background; and the Mutirão Florestan Fernandes / José Maria Amaral



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Exhibit V – Logs to Control Meeting Attendance and Participation in Mutirões (*)

(*) 'Faltas' or 'F' means absences; 'P' means participation; 'FR' means 'justified absence'; If the absentee justifies the absence, it isn't counted as an absence. No points are added, but the absentee doesn't risk exclusion from the house allocation process – see line 2 of the first exhibit: several FR but only one absence ('Falta') registered in the totals.

Obra do dia 06/10/2018	Assembleia do dia 21/10/2018	Vigília Noturna Outubro/2018	Obra do dia 04/11/2018	Assembleia do dia 18/11/2018	Vigília Noturna Novembro/2018	Obra do dia 24/11/2018	Assembleia do dia 02/12/2018	Vigília Noturna Dezembro/2018	Obra do dia 09/12/2018	Assembleia do dia 13/01/2019	Obra do dia 19/01/2019	Obra do dia 26/01/2019	Obra do dia 27/01/2019	TOTAL DE FALTAS
P	P	P	P	P	P	F	P	P	P	P	P	F	P	7
P	P	P	P	P	FR	P	FR	P	P	P	FR	P	P	1
FR	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	0
F	P	P	F	P	P	F	P	F	F	F	P	F	F	16
P	P	P	P	F	P	P	P	F	P	P	P	P	P	3
F	P	P	F	P	P	F	F	P	F	P	F	F	F	29
F	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	FR	3

BLOCO B

Nome	Bloco	1 ^o de ago	2 ^o de ago	3 ^o de ago	4 ^o de ago	5 ^o de ago	6 ^o de ago	7 ^o de ago	8 ^o de ago	9 ^o de ago	10 ^o de ago	11 ^o de ago	12 ^o de ago	13 ^o de ago	14 ^o de ago	15 ^o de ago	16 ^o de ago	17 ^o de ago	18 ^o de ago	19 ^o de ago	20 ^o de ago	21 ^o de ago	22 ^o de ago	23 ^o de ago	24 ^o de ago	25 ^o de ago	26 ^o de ago	27 ^o de ago	28 ^o de ago	29 ^o de ago	30 ^o de ago	31 ^o de ago				
Adilson José Ferreira	B02																																			
Aldeide Maria dos Santos	B02																																			
Ama Antunes de	B02																																			
André Brito	B02																																			
Supl. Emanoel Soteli	B02																																			
Carolina Diniz de Oliveira	B01																																			
Aracelis Vieira de Matos	B01																																			
Supl. Valéria Pereira da Silva	B01																																			
Beatriz Maria da Silva	B01																																			
Supl. Carlos Roberto Gadel	B01																																			
Carlos Aldeir da Silva Almeida	B01																																			
Estelinda Andrade da Silva	B01																																			
Edison Barbosa Vitor	B02																																			
Emilene dos Santos Costa	B02																																			
Supl. Fabiano Mendes da Silva	B02																																			
Fabiane Alves Araújo	B02																																			
Supl. Rosevânia S. Calisto	B02																																			
Jonas Leite	B02																																			
Francisco Mendes da Silva	B02																																			
Gerlanilda dos Santos	B02																																			
Janete Maria dos Santos	B02																																			
Janete Carvalho da Silva	B02																																			
Supl. Jadir José da Silva	B02																																			
Janete Luana Gomes de Almeida	B02																																			
Jonas Moreira Paiva	B01																																			
Janete Zélia Pereira Martins	B02																																			
Supl. Francisco Pedro Neto	B02																																			
Adilson Pereira dos Santos	B01																																			
Katia Cristina de S. da Silva	B01																																			
Larissa Natividade S. Silva	B02																																			
Larissa da Silva	B01																																			

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Exhibit VI – Logs to Control Meeting Attendance and Participation in Housing Projects – Cortiço

MOVIMENTO DE LUTA POR MORADIA - PROJETO FILIADO A ULCM											
<i>CONTROLE DE PRESENÇA E PARTICIPAÇÃO</i>											
GRUPO _____						ANO _____					
JANEIRO	CONTR.	EVENTOS	FEVEREIRO	CONTR.	EVENTOS	JULHO	CONTR.	EVENTOS	AGOSTO	CONTR.	EVENTOS
MARÇO			ABRIL			SETEMBRO			OUTUBRO		
MAIO			JUNHO			NOVEMBRO					
NOME _____						CADASTRO N° _____					
INÍCIO _____ / _____ / _____											



<p style="text-align: center;">Anotações</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table>											<p style="text-align: center;">UNIFICAÇÃO DAS LUTAS DE CORTIÇOS E MORADIA</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">GRUPOS</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">ULCM FILIADO A UMM E CMP</p>				

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Exhibit VII – Rehabilitated occupied building – Conselheiro Crispiniano / Iracema Eusébio

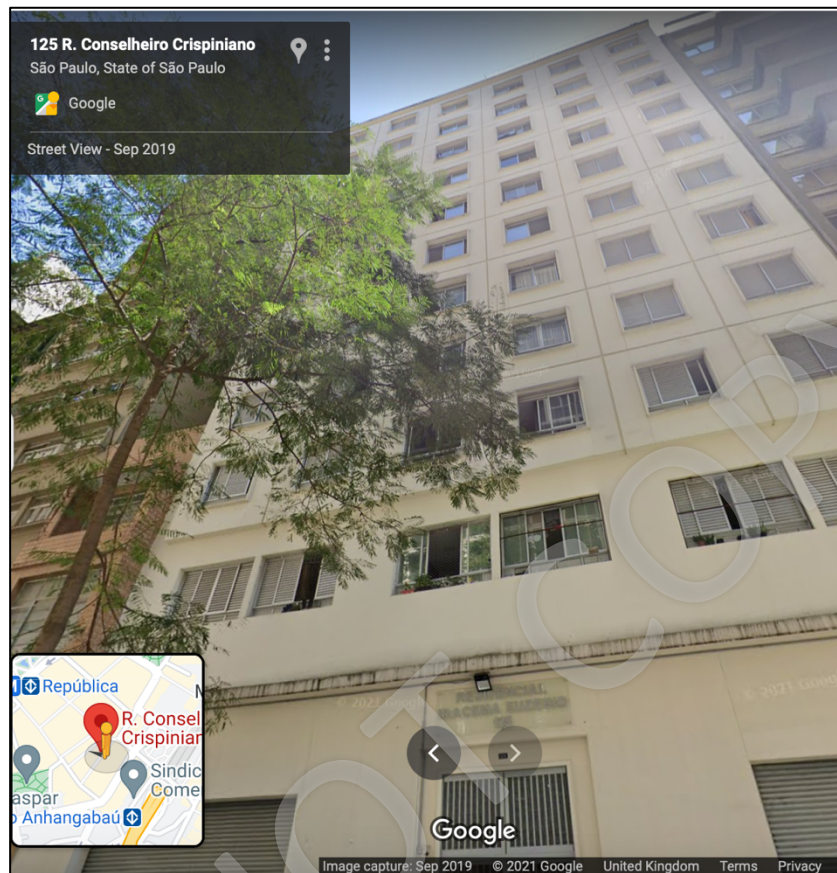


Exhibit VIII – Cortiço Rehabilitation – Casarão do Carmo

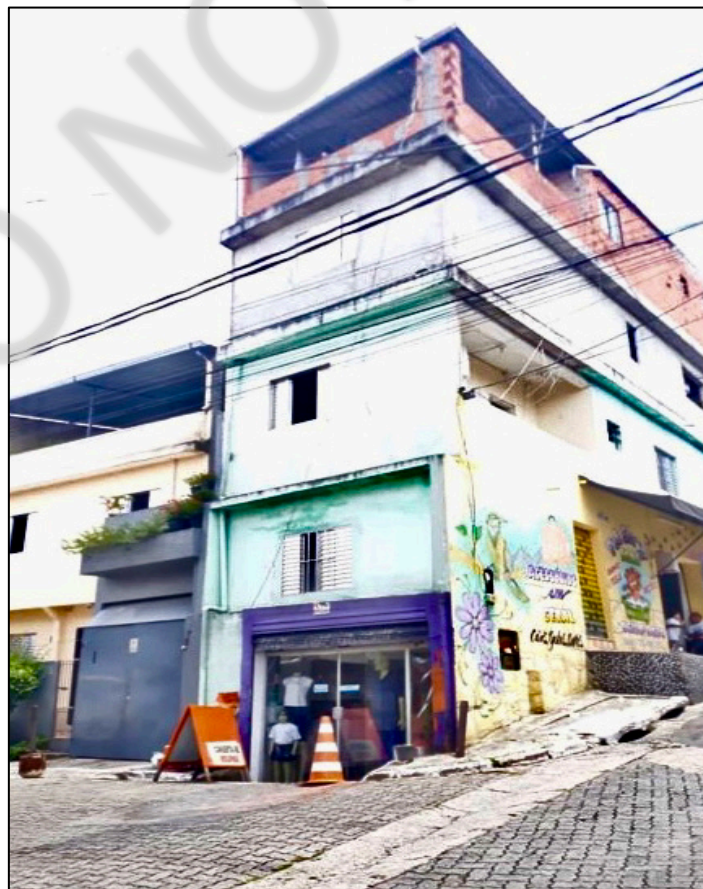


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Exhibit IX – Street in Heliópolis (combined use self-builds: commercial and residential)



Exhibit X – Combined use multistory self-built in Heliópolis, featuring unfinished additional level



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Exhibit XI – Housing Movement Headquarters in Heliópolis, and their library



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