UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Brick "bridge" in the district of Diaminar on 23rd September 2012.

1. **Name of practice:**

The brick bridges in Saint Luis, Senegal

The brick «bridges», a mobility adapted in the districts during flooding.

2. **Location(s):**

Districts of Darou, Diaminar, Ndiolofène, Corniche, Pikine, Médina Course/Diaminar, Municipality of Saint-Louis, Senegal.

3. **Actors**

Inhabitants of flooded districts: young people, women, men, old persons.

4. **Issues addressed/ focus**

In African cities more than 70% of trips are pedestrian. This is why researchers have focused on this form of mobility. Flooding in most parts of the districts of St. Louis bring a change about the practice of the district by inhabitants. To avoid breaks in the traditional ways to go to market, neighbourhood shops, or to visit relatives and friends, people have placed brick bridges that allow crossing puddles without bypassing. These practices are essential for pedestrian movements,

which represent the most common mode of urban mobility. People themselves created these low areas using the sand from public spaces, including in areas in front of their houses, to make cinderblock bricks used in the construction of buildings.

5. Stage of implementation

This practice has been used for a long time and served as alternative means to the failure of the local government in terms of sanitation and revitalization of the city. These are individual initiatives implemented in the riparian zones of where polluted water occasionally invades even the front doors of houses and the adjoining yards. The authority does not react against these practices of mobility that affect neighborhood relationships, and the main paths of women who go to the market, workers and children who go to school. This is an efficient practice that allows continuity of life.

6. What was/ is being done?

Building a "bridge" is very simple. It consists of the installation and use of bricks, on which one walks. Although this exercise is not totally safe, it allows people to cross the waters without getting wet. In some neighborhood streets this practice can last several weeks, and sometimes several months during the rainy season.

7. Outcomes and impacts

The state should intervene in the neighborhoods to prevent waters from accumulating, without investing substantial resources. In most cases it would be sufficient to fill in the holes with a sand truck.

8. Sustainability

This strategy suits the creation of neighborhoods and has existed for many years. In these populated neighborhoods, with significant risks of flooding, this management practice is available for population insofar as it requires little financial investment.

9. Replicability

This type of succinct but efficient planning in districts where the state does not plan to intervene in the short and medium term can be implemented, providing a small improvement in terms of safety. This investment is affordable for communities that struggle daily to avoid isolation during the rainy season.

10. Documentation

Coly, (A.), Ndour (N.M.), Gueye (S.), 2011. Evaluation de la vulnérabilité sociale de la ville de Saint-Louis, D5.4 CLUVA, 38p.

Coly, (A.), Ndour (N.M.), Gueye (S.), 2012. Structure du système de planification et de gouvernance urbaine dans la ville de Saint-Louis, D3.1 CLUVA, 65p.

11. Credits

This case study was contributed by Habitat Partner University

Lehrstuhl für Strategie und Management der Landschaftsentwicklung
Technische Universität München

Emil-Ramann-Str. 6
85354 Freising

Contact:

Dipl. Geogr. Sandra Fohlmeister
fohlmeister@mytum.de