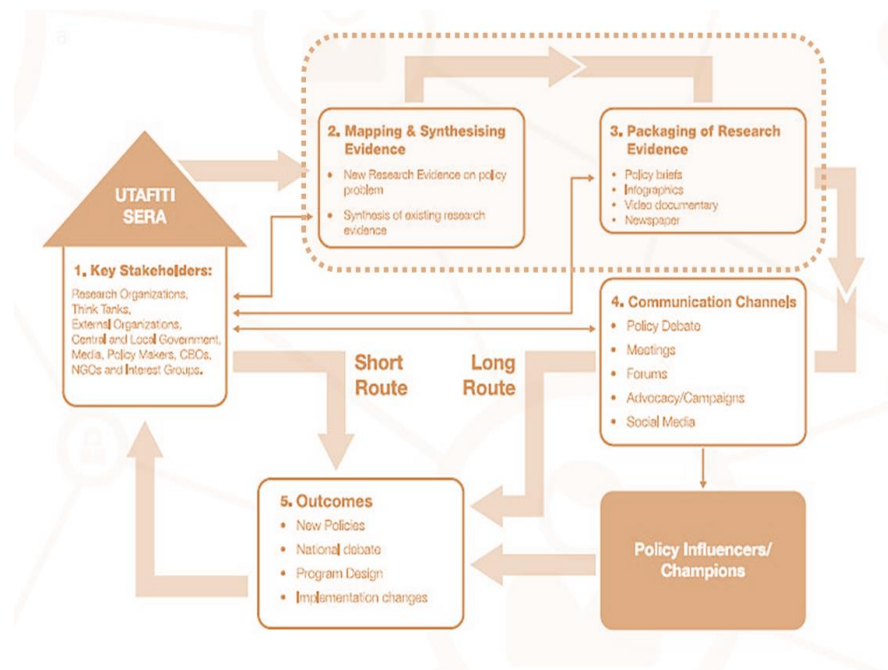


Utafiti Sera House on Urban Governance and City Transformation



Think shop on Facilitating Uptake of Research Evidence

October 4th and 5th 2019,



Background

The urban Africa has become both space and place where the promise of postcolonial progress gets manifested. For this reason, urban growth, innovations, and mode of governance continue to have a significant bearing on the way many citizens explain and make claims of belonging beyond the border of urban places. In 2017/ 2018, Pamoja Trust (PT) convened an *Utafiti Sera* House on urban governance in partnership with Partnership for African social and Governance Research (PASGR).

The House focused on the developmental intervention seen mainly through the recent acceleration by the state and the World Bank to invest in infrastructure. Evidence from our background work as well as synthesis of various documents from the House members and interactions with social movements indicate that while these infrastructures and the related investments have been undertaken with the promise of enhancing well-being for all, it largely negated the pre-existing property relationships as well as the ongoing quest to build inclusive governance in Kenya's urban areas. The learning derived from phase one of *Utafiti Sera* is that cities are composed of effects, charges, fear, desire, and hope. The House further established the glaring absence of synchronized guidelines used by development agencies and recurrent development challenges that stem from uninformed governance that end up displacing and dispossessing the poor. The house worked with keys stakeholders and developed a framework that would enhance inclusive and good governance.

It is therefore apparent that the manner in which decisions on various urban matters are made shall influence greatly the quality of lives of the urban poor. Pamoja Trust retains its conviction that inadequate housing, slums unlawful eviction and demolitions are the consequence of the combined effects of failed policies, bad governance, inappropriate legal and regulatory frameworks, dysfunctional markets, unresponsive financial systems, the lack of political will, and the absence of effective public or private service delivery organizations. It also sees the condition of slums and the indignity that accompany it as a manifestation of both power asymmetries



between the governed and the governors as well as systematic exclusion of a majority of the Urban Poor. PT remit and theory of change is that for urban areas to thrive, there needs to be greater impetus placed on improving the lives of the urban poor. Pamoja Trust believes that the urban poor should have the space and voice with support from other social groups and progressive Civil Society Organizations to transform the State and the market through effective citizenship and demonstrating effective models for realizing socio-economic rights for the urban poor and thus improve their livelihood and enhance wellbeing for all. Therefore, inclusive and good governance starts by engaging the urban dwellers as co-producers of the urban through initiatives that enhance stakeholder engagement and urban citizenship. Such models of stakeholder engagement (as developed by PT) pay attention to rebalancing power relations and contribute towards outcomes of building inclusive economies and accountable political order. As such, the heart of our work is enabling collective agency and duty bearers' responsiveness in reversing the circumstances and policy choices which deny the urban African dignity and voice; strengthening people's capacities in engaging with county, national and international authorities and leaders in the accountable governance of resources for common benefit and becoming actors in their own right. This is mainly on matters of land and housing and in the context of socio-economic and formal political processes.

It is on this premise that Pamoja Trust proposes to host a second phase of the Urban Utafiti Sera House that will further build on the theory of change and experience above. It will endeavour to support the model of stakeholder engagement as an effective mechanism for promoting good urban governance. The house shall be based on three inter-related interventions that are sites where condensations of culture and power in the urban areas are visible in infrastructural, representational, and social practices. These are:

1. Developing the capabilities of the people's movements
2. Promoting institutions of Devolution
3. Infusing existing evidence into policy formulation and practices



To enable the above, PT suggests expanding the structure of the Urban Utafiti Sera house and operationalizing it at two layers. One layer would be a collation of actors in various locations where there are active processes and need for enabling collective agency and duty bearers' responsiveness in reversing the circumstances and policy choices which deny the urban African dignity and voice. Such circumstances exist in Kisumu for local physical development plan (LPDP), Mombasa, duelling Mombasa – Mariakani Road and Nairobi, Rehabilitation and Capacity Enhancement of the James Gichuru Road Junction – Rironi Highway (A104). We see the need for a house that would engage and promote a stakeholder's engagement.

The second tire of the Utafiti Sera House will be anchored within the structures of the Council of Governors (CoGs). This will include:

1. The Urban Development Committee (UDC) of the Council of Governors formed in April 2014 to drive the urban development, planning and lands agenda of the counties of Kenya. The committee has 10 members.
2. The Urban Sector Reference Group (USRG) established in 2014. USRG has become a vehicle through which the CoG - UDC pools skills, resources, and experiences as well as best practices to inspire change in the urban sector in Kenya.

Pamoja Trust therefore suggests working with the reference committee (a collaboration between Directorate of housing, Directorate of Urban Development Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, UNHABTAT and Pamoja Trust) and expand it to meet the criteria for the Urban Sector Reference Group that shall work with UDC Utafiti Sera House towards infusing existing evidence into policy formulation and practices.

Based on this underpinning, Pamoja *Trust* seeks to convene a “Think Shop’ to further expand on ways and means which evidence can be used to spur public discourse that can be channelled to develop public policies that are inclusionary through a process of participatory urban governance. The Think shop will involve select stakeholders with



vast expertise on Urban Governance and Policy Question. The main output of the Think Shop will be development of a two-year proposal that will seek to influence the uptake of research evidence in policy formulation as well as project design and implementation.

Key stakeholders

The Think Shop will bring on board various urban actors with multi-sectoral perspectives. The stakeholders will include: *Pamoja Trust, PASGR, Civil Society Urban Development Platform, Council of Governors, stakeholders from the Urban Sector Reference Group Lake Region Economic Bloc stakeholders (LREB), Academia, Development agencies and representation of Social Movements.* The Lake Region Economic Bloc has recently been enacted as a legal entity that seeks to exploit opportunities in infrastructure around fourteen counties and would therefore be an important member of the House.

We therefore propose to hold a one-day residential forum on the 1st week of October 2019 to help us build on the concept further and develop a full project document with input from stakeholders in the spirit of participation and leaving no one behind.

Forum Objectives

1. Map out and identify all key stakeholders.
2. Identify dispositional urban governance factors that undermine development
3. Develop a strategy aimed at widening and enhancing research uptake in Kenya during project design and implementation.