MY HOUSE, MY LIFE: DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND LOCAL CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN HOUSING PROJECT MINHA CASA, MINHA VIDA IN SALVADOR DA BAHIA

Kyra Somers¹ and Isa Baud¹

¹Faculteit der Maatschappij-en Gedragswetenschappen, UvA, Plantage Muidergracht 14, 1018 TV AMS (NL) kyra123@hotmail.com and J.S.A.Baud@uva.nl

ABSTRACT:
The involvement of various types of knowledge into governmental activities directs urban governance towards more inclusive and sustainable development. Citizen participation and the inclusion of local knowledge influence the outcomes of government decision-making. However, Government actors tend to give priority to expert sources of knowledge above local citizens and practice-based knowledge. From this observation this article provides an analysis of the implementation of the housing project Minha Casa, Minha Vida in Salvador da Bahia in order to get insight into the significance of the inclusion of local and spatial knowledge in decision-making process for the quality of urban governance in this specific situation. The main question is how the local community based knowledge is included and excluded in the decision-making processes of the implementation of the project Minha Casa, Minha Vida in Salvador da Bahia? The case study of this housing project in Salvador shows considerable shortcomings in citizen-participation in urban governance. It can be concluded that the structures for participatory decision-making are officially installed, but the utilization of the local types of knowledge is not sufficiently implemented.

KEY WORDS
Knowledge types, citizen-participation, mega-projects, urban governance, housing, Brazil
INTRODUCTION

Reforms in governance in the last two decades have created new democratic spaces between the state and society for citizen engagement (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007: 1). Involving citizens in governance processes is expected to lead to better decision-making, more accountable governments and more powerful citizenship (Boulding and Wampler, 2009: 125). The participation of low-income citizens could result in improving their quality of life by redirecting (budget) priorities (World Bank, 2003).

Currently, the global urban population is expected to double within one generation, with growth concentrated in cities of developing countries (Pfeffer et al., 2011). As large cities are increasingly seen as driving forces behind economic growth in developing countries, policy-makers are developing city-centric policies in their economic growth strategies (Kennedy et al. 2011: 3). A popular growth model is promoting large-scale economic and infrastructure projects, which establish the city as a dynamic economic region and/or large-scale public goods (housing). How citizens’ knowledge and participation are incorporated in mega-projects – if they are - is not well documented or debated. In this article the main question is how local communities can participate in such decision-making processes and to what extent their priorities are heard in order to maximize their benefits from such mega-projects.

This study is part of the four-year research program Chance2Sustain (C2S), funded under the EU 7th Framework programme1. ‘Chance 2 Sustain examines how government and citizens in cities with differing patterns of economic growth and social-spatial inequality make use of participatory (or integrated) spatial knowledge management to direct urban governance towards more sustainable development’ (www.chance2sustain.eu). The underlying notion is that participation of stakeholders contributes to urban governance processes, making them more effective and providing greater accountability. A strategic resource concerns the ways that knowledge management is organized within such projects, and citizen participation in building knowledge management processes.

Participatory (knowledge) management is increasingly used in contemporary Brazil. Its success depends on participatory decision-making institutions and the inclusion of various types of knowledge. Therefore, examining how decision-making processes take place in emerging economies and how local knowledge is utilized is a strategic focus. This study was carried out in the city Salvador da Bahia and focuses on the types of knowledge included in decision-making processes during the implementation of a mega-housing project. Although Brazil is growing rapidly, it has one of the world’s highest levels of economic and social inequality. Brazil experienced a process of fast urbanization in the last half century, and poverty has become increasingly concentrated in urban settlements, especially in the Northeast.

The Brazilian government is carrying out mega-investment plans under the Growth Acceleration Program (PAC), of which it launched phase two in 2010, promoting large-scale infrastructure projects throughout the country. PAC 2 focuses on investments in the areas of Logistics, Energy and Social-Urban development. The housing project Minha Casa, Minha Vida (My House, My Life), which is part of PAC2, is the case study used for this study. The question is raised how local community-based knowledge is in- and excluded in the decision-making processes during the implementation of the project Minha Casa, Minha Vida (MCMV) in Salvador da Bahia. This article analyses the significance of the inclusion of local and spatial knowledge in decision-making process for the quality of urban governance.

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1 The C2S programme is coordinated by the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI) in Germany. C2S does comparative research in ten mega-cities in four developing countries; India, South Africa, Peru and Brazil.
MEGA-PROJECT APPROACH AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Mega-projects are not new, but are increasingly used in urban and regional development in emerging economies (Kennedy et al. 2011: 4). They strongly influence the future of large cities at many scales; “through changes in land use, dislocation of people, changes in employment and local economies, distribution of environmental costs, and as such they are influencing the resilience of cities, their future capacity to resist or recover from exogenous shocks” (Kennedy et al. 2011: 4).

A project can be described as “a clearly defined set of activities, concerned with quantifiable costs and benefits, with time-limited activities and budgets” (Cleaver, 1999: 598). Six characteristics of mega-projects are identified by Frick, referred to as the six Cs (Priemus et al. 2008: 2); 1) Colossal in size and scope; 2) Captivating because of size, engineering achievement and aesthetic design; 3) Costly: costs are often underestimated; 4) Controversial: funding, mitigation packages, impacts on third parties; 5) Complex: risk and uncertainty in terms of design, funding and construction; 6) Control issue: who are the key decision-makers, funders, and operators.

Implementing a mega-project is a complex process involving different steps, actors and decisions. The World Bank provides a schematic overview for developing and implementing a mega-project, systematizing the steps in the project cycle; 1) Identification; 2) Preparation; 3) Appraisal; 4) Implementation and Monitoring; 5) Implementation and completion; 6) Evaluation (www.worldbank.org). This model from the World Bank suggests that most mega-projects follow a similar project cycle. The World Bank’s project cycle appears to be straightforward, but it does not take the various levels of governmental institutions involved into account, nor the roles of other stakeholders. The kinds of knowledge needed in each phase are only partially indicated, nor the actors managing each stage of the process. In short, this raises questions about the scale levels, actors and knowledge used during a project-cycle.

In the initial stages of new mega-projects lobby groups often mobilize support for a particular preferred solution (Priemus, 2008: 105). However, a project should start by focusing on the problem to be solved rather than a particular solution. The first step of the decision-making process should be to define and analyze the problem, taking into account that problems are perceived differently by various parties (Priemus, 2008: 106). Therefore, the values and criteria, the boundaries, constraints and objectives of the stakeholders need to be made explicit (Findeisen and Quade in Priemus et al. 2008: 112). Such a formulation of the problem requires various types of knowledge.

The next phase is to find a solution for the problem by identifying, designing and screening alternative options to solving it. The short- and long-term consequences of each alternative, as well as a cost-benefit and risks analyses are required to select optimum solutions. To do so existing knowledge from all actors involved about the issue is needed. Priemus et al. state that in practice, alternatives, which could solve or reduce problems are seldom analyzed at an early stage (2008: 115).

Rakodi outlines the role of government officials as providing actual decision-makers with enough information to make their decisions judiciously (2003: 530). De Bruijn and Leijten compared decision-making processes in several mega-projects and suggested that lack of information as well as the quality of the sources of information were the keys to efficient decision-making on projects (in Priemus et al., 2008: 13). However, they did not spell out which sources or types of information are preferred.

Effective coordination and decision-making among stakeholders is often prevented by conflicting interests (Beall and Fox, 2009: 202). Change, caused by policies and mega-projects, always has political ramifications and the participation of multiple stakeholders in the decision-making needs to be discussed. Many mega-projects are developed, financed and managed by governments (in conjunction with the private sector). When decisions in such projects are made by elected leaders or representatives, the question is whether the limited ‘number of elected representatives is sufficient to...
reflect the views of diverse urban population’ (Rakodi, 2003: 530). Stakeholders may also be excluded altogether. Thorat & Sabharwal define exclusion as a “social process which involves denial of fair and equal opportunities to certain social groups in multiple spheres in society, resulting in the inability of individuals from excluded groups to participate in the basic political, economic and social functioning of the society” (2010: 3). This means that sources of exclusion can be economic, social or political in nature. Groups with social and economic power may have more political influence than other groups (Rueschemeyer 2004: 76). Certain groups are deliberately excluded from a political decision-making process, because they challenge powerful interests (Kennedy et al., 2011: 4). Thus the concept of exclusion relates to power relations, and the mechanisms and institutions through which groups are excluded (de Haan, 1998: 13).

Shared decision-making is a style of management involving different actors to influence policies and projects. Nevertheless, stakeholders are often unequally included in these processes. Baud et al. state that there is a need to include the knowledge of ‘invisible stakeholders’ into decision-making processes’ (2011: 6). The ways in which knowledge from different actors is included in decision-making in mega-projects is not well known, and usually shrouded in some secrecy. The aim of this study is to explore which groups are included and excluded in decision-making processes which are intended to be deliberative, and what kinds of knowledge are incorporated into these processes in the case of Minha Casa, Minha Vida in Salvador.

**KNOWLEDGE AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

The scientific literature reviewed does not offer a clear single definition of knowledge. However, an important distinction can be made between ‘information’ and ‘knowledge’. Information consists of data, facts and (hard) numbers, which can easily be transported or shared. Context should be added to build knowledge from information, according to Hordijk and Baud (2006: 669). They argue that context affects the meaning and value of knowledge, because it is influenced by the perspectives of individuals and organizations. Knowledge involves a personal experience, which means that a variety of knowledge exists among different actors.

Two basic analytical models of knowledge building are found in the literature. The first is the classical linear model of knowledge building, which relies on expert and scientific knowledge systems. The assumption of this model is that codified knowledge is universally applicable independent of the context in which knowledge is produced (Baud et al. 2011, 7). This type of model is criticized, because it is more applicable to natural sciences and experiences limitations in the social sciences because it ignores the influence of contexts in which knowledge has to be applied. The second model sees knowledge building as a social process, produced by interactions between researchers, citizens and organizations. Several types and sources of knowledge are recognized within this model.

Van Ewijk and Baud (2009) identified different types of knowledge, produced by different actors (table 1). The first type is *tacit knowledge*, built up through individual practice and experience. *Contextual-embedded knowledge* is also built up through practice, but is more widespread than tacit knowledge; it is expressed and embedded in technical, social and political networks. The last type is *codified knowledge*, which is based on systematic analysis and laid down in written documentation.

Our case-study focuses on community-based knowledge in Salvador da Bahia. This knowledge has a spatial dimension, because it is related to a specific locality. Spatializing knowledge can link different types of knowledge pertaining to the same locality, from tacit to more codified knowledge (Baud et al., 2011: 10).
Bourdieu’s theory about *habitus* relates to the construction and perception of knowledge. Individuals have a subconscious *habitus*, consisting of socialized norms or tendencies that guide behavior and thinking (Bourdieu, 2008: 170). ‘Every habitus is unique to the extent that it is the product of the individual’s history, past practices, and interactions with social structures; yet it also reflects the objective cultural, social and institutional structures within which the individual lives’ (Contandriapoloulos et al., 2010: 456). In other words, people with comparable social conditions and lifestyles have a corresponding *habitus*.

Bourdieu links the concept of *habitus* to his concept of *field*, described as a social arena in which people maneuver, develop strategies, and struggle about desirable resources. A field is defined as ‘a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions’ (quoted in Wallace et al., 2006: 112). The position of each actor in the field is a result of the interaction between specific social rules in the *field*, the actor’s *habitus* and capital (social, economic, cultural). Bourdieu’s theory underlines the importance of the social construction of tacit and contextual-embedded forms of knowledge.

Hjorth argues that ‘there is a need to combine different ways of knowing and learning to enable different actors to work in concert’ (quoted in Hordijk and Baud, 2006: 669). Thus a distinction can be made between the producers and users of knowledge. In addition, intermediaries contribute to knowledge circulation (Contandriapoloulos et al. 2010: 455). The discussion now turns from knowledge types and knowledge production to utilization of (local spatialized) knowledge. Meanwhile the main question remains how local community-based knowledge can be included and used in decision-making processes.

Hordijk and Baud emphasize that knowledge tends to remain where it is generated (2006: 671). Scientific research results often remain within academic circles, not reaching governmental officials. Local residents have no means to share their experiences with policy makers, and politicians typically have a political-life cycle of three to five years (Hordijk and Baud, 2006: 672). In contrast, mega-projects are usually long-term processes, implying that project tasks are transmitted to new politicians with a loss in essential knowledge regarding the project.

In a project cycle, types of knowledge are produced and exchanged in different ways. *Tacit knowledge* is personalized and could only be accessed in face-to-face contacts (Ewijk and Baud, 2009: 220). *Contextual embedded knowledge* is also interactive knowledge, learned through practice and exchanged within different networks or associations. *Codified knowledge* is explicitly expressed and widely accessible through written documentation.

Different types of knowledge in urban governance are valued unequally. In urban governance the focus tends toward empirical information rather than contextual knowledge (Hordijk and Baud 2006: 671). Governmental officials and business actors do use scientific information strategically to claim authority and enlarge their influence in the decision-making processes (Baud et al., 2011: 7). What kind of knowledge is used is linked to power struggles between groups who want their priorities to be recognized. Connections between researchers and policymakers, politicians and NGOs or civic-based...
organizations (CBOs) have to be constructed ways that better recognize the use of different types of knowledge in urban development processes (Hordijk and Baud, 2006: 671).

Science-based policy-making has been challenged and the relative power of scientific knowledge seems to be decreasing (Baud et al., 2011: 4). Governments are shifting from bureaucratic decision-making to more knowledge-based decision-making. The authority of local governments is increasing and the influence of citizens in decision-making is growing in Brazil (Lavalle et al., 2010). The underlying assumption is that a decentralized government should be more knowledgeable about local circumstances and therefore better capable to match resources to local needs and priorities (Rakodi, 2003: 525). The broader debate is about how local knowledge is constructed and how it should be integrated in decision-making processes. Therefore, a discussion on what knowledge is incorporated in the new spaces for citizen engagement and the politics of participation is strategic (Baud et al., 2011).

Reforms in governance in the last twenty years have created new democratic spaces between the state and society for citizen engagement (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007: 1). Decentralisation policies and politics of public policy-making were designed to bring government closer to ‘the people’. Even the World Bank suggests that participation of low-income citizens in decision-making could result in improving their quality of life by redirecting (budget) priorities toward the issues that matter: poverty, education, and healthcare (Boulding and Wampler, 2009: 125). Different forms of citizen-participation exist in many countries, and the Brazilian examples are notable (Houtzager et al., 2003; Cabannes, 2004).

It is argued that the involvement of citizens in the process of governance should lead to better decisions, better government and better citizenship. The underlying premise is ‘the belief the citizens are ready to participate and share their political agendas with bureaucrats as long as they are offered appropriate opportunities - and that bureaucrats are willing to listen and respond’ (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007: 5). However, there is a gap between the normative expectations and the empirical realities of citizen-participation (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007; Reiter, 2008).

Cornwall and Coelho address several critical issues of state-society relations that effective citizen-participation. They argue that people have to recognize themselves first as citizens and have an understanding of what could be gained by participation (ibid. 2007: 8). Furthermore, inequalities in status, knowledge and power can lead to ineffective participation. Uneducated, poor and excluded people often do not have special knowledge and communicative skills to participate effectively. Therefore, professionals can perceive their participation as chaotic, irrelevant and disruptive (ibid. 2007: 13). Furthermore good facilitation plays an important role for successful participation (Cornwall and Coelho, 2007: 16).

How effective citizen-participation is in decision-making is analyzed by Irvin and Stansbury (2004). They indicate the possible advantages and disadvantages of citizen-participation in government decision-making (table 2). One benefit is the mutual “education” of government and citizens, through their mutual exchange of knowledge. Greater citizen influence on government and higher negotiating skill levels for activist citizenship lead to forms of increased contextual-embedded knowledge within political and social networks. In such circumstances, the involvement of citizens should lead to better decisions and more benefits. One of the most important disadvantages of citizen participation is that it is costly and time-consuming, conclude Irvin and Stansbury. Another negative aspect is that “public participation generally fails to democratically include all stakeholders equitably in decision-making processes” according to Baud et al. (2011: 6).
Advantages of citizen participation in government decision making  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision process</th>
<th>Advantages to Citizen participation</th>
<th>Advantages to Government</th>
<th>Disadvantages to Citizen participation</th>
<th>Disadvantages to Government</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Education (learn from and inform government representatives) - Persuade and enlighten government - Gain Skills for activist citizenship</td>
<td>- Time consuming (even dull) - Pointless if decisions are ignored</td>
<td>- Break gridlock; achieve outcomes - Avoid litigation costs - Better policy and implementation decisions</td>
<td>- Loss of decision-making control - Possibility of bad decision that is politically impossible to ignore - Less budget for implementation of actual projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>- Break gridlock; achieve outcomes - Gain some control over policy process - Better policy and implementation decisions</td>
<td>- Worse policy decision heavily influenced by opposing interest groups</td>
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Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of citizen participation in government decision-making

MINHA CASA, MINHA VIDA IN SALVADOR DA BAHIA

Based on the discussion above, this paper examines how local community-based knowledge is included and excluded in the decision-making processes during project implementation of the programme Minha Casa, Minha Vida (MCMV) in Salvador da Bahia.

Figure 1 indicates the relations between actors, decision-making processes and the resources and types of knowledge produced by those actors. On the left, the way Brazilian national institutional regulations and policies influence decision-making processes at the local level is indicated. Certain project priorities that influence project design and decision-making processes in the following phases of project implementation are shown on the right. The figure indicates that project implementation is a multi-dimensional process at different scale levels. MCMV can therefore be considered an extended case study, since broader social forces and processes in the Brazilian society shape case conditions (Small 2009: 19). The goal is to understand how these processes interact and how the local community knowledge is embedded in decisions and project execution.
The analysis is based on fieldwork carried out in Salvador over a period of three months². Several methods were combined as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Overview of applied research methods during the fieldwork in August - October 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Actors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews (16)</td>
<td>Government actors (7), community leaders and coordinators of social movements (6), professors and researchers (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participative observation (9)</td>
<td>Meetings, reunions, congresses, seminars and visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire (22)</td>
<td>Beneficiary families old (11) and new (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis (16)</td>
<td>Primary documents: Reports, laws, records, primers, policy plans, newsletters and other documents</td>
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</table>

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The federal housing project *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* in the city of Salvador da Bahia in Brazil was selected as case-study, since this mega-project directly affects the lives of many low-income families in the city. It is therefore strategic to analyze local processes of citizen-participation in the implementation of this housing project. Our research on decision-making processes in implementing MCMV in Salvador should be seen against the background of broader political, demographic and social-economic processes.

National policies in Brazil influence decision-making processes at the local level. Democratization and decentralization processes started with the new constitution of 1988. Social programs and policies increased after the Workers' Party (PT) came to power in 2003. Brazil has a fast-growing economy, but the country has a legacy of one of the highest levels of economic and social inequality globally. Brazil experienced a process of fast urbanization in the last half century resulting in poverty becoming increasingly concentrated in urban areas (Gordilho-Souza, 2008: 43). The city of Salvador is located in

² Our research is part of the Chance 2 Sustain Programme, which does comparative research in ten mega-cities in four developing countries; India, South Africa, Peru and Brazil. Dr. Denise Vitale, researcher at the Faculty of Arquitecture and Urbanism of the Federal University of Bahia, provided supervision for the first author during the fieldwork in Salvador da Bahia.
Bahia state in the northeast of Brazil. This is the most impoverished and unequal region of the country, although poverty and inequality are decreasing slowly.

Brazil has a population of 190 million according to the 2010 Census (IBGE, 2011). With 2.7 million inhabitants Salvador is the third most populous city in the country. Salvador experienced a process of rapid urbanization, with uncontrolled growth, poorly serviced neighborhoods and immense housing shortages. The Municipal Housing Plan of Salvador expects the population of Salvador to exceed 3.25 million in 2025 (SEDHAM, 2008: 30), with a further increase in housing needs.

The estimated housing deficit in Brazil corresponds to 5.5 million homes, of which 83% are needed in urban areas (FJP, 2011: 29). The Metropolitan Region of Salvador has a housing deficit of 116,014 in absolute numbers, which is 10.1% of the total permanent private households. The distribution of this housing deficit across social groups distinguished by average monthly family income shows that 97.7% of Salvador’s housing deficit exists in the group of urban households in the lowest income range (FJP, 2011: 29).

The Brazilian government launched the mega-project *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* in March 2009 with the objective of reducing the housing deficit, stimulating the construction sector, generating jobs, promoting a better distribution of income and social inclusion (Gesor do PAC, 2010: 48). MCMV aims to produce one million properties for low-income families in all towns of Brazil within 2 years, in partnership with states, municipalities and the private sector. The country never had a clearly designed social housing program to provide houses at such a large scale (Valença and Bonates, 2009: 7). The program has received great attention and its initial success led to the second phase of the program, which will produce an additional 2 million houses in the period 2011-2014. MCMV is the largest social housing program in Latin America, and will be copied in Venezuela.

**ACTORS IN PROJECT MCMV**

The federal housing project *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* is embedded in the complex Brazilian housing sector involving actors at multiple scale levels. The roles, priorities and connections of the actors in the MCMV project provide insight into the ways in which knowledge is produced and exchanged. Figure 2 gives a schematic representation of the housing sector, showing relations between actors and programs as background to the further discussion.
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Brazilian housing sector consists of several governmental departments at national, state and municipal level. The Ministry of Cities (MCidades)\(^3\) is responsible for housing in Brazil and monitors the Mega-project MCMV nationally. At provincial level, the State Secretariat of Urban Development (SEDUR)\(^4\) and the Urban Development Company (CONDER)\(^5\), formulate and implement the state policy of urban development, housing, sanitation and provide technical assistance to municipalities in Bahia state. These organizations plan, coordinate, implement and control the activities of public programs such as Minha Casa, Minha Vida. Both work according to the State Policy for Social Housing (PEHIS)\(^6\), which promotes access to decent housing, defined as housing that provides inhabitants with adequate shelter, basic infrastructure and social services such as transportation, education, health, and recreation areas (PEHIS, 2006: 9). A major instrument of PEHIS is the State Plan of Social Housing and Land regulation of the State Bahia (PLANEHAB)\(^7\). Municipalities create their own plans linked to the state Plan, to obtain access to federal funds and programmes such as MCMV, facilitated through SEDUR.

At the Municipal level, the Secretariat for Urban Development, Housing and Environment (SEDHAM)\(^8\) is responsible for the program Minha Casa, Minha Vida. Another influential local

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$7$ PLANEHAB - Plano Estadual de Habitação de Interesse Social e Regularização Fundiária do Estado.

$8$ SEDHAM - Secretaria Municipal de Desenvolvimento Urbano, Habitação e Meio Ambiente.
governmental organization in housing is the Coordination of Civil Defense in Salvador (CODESAL)\(^9\), which identifies areas and situations posing risks to the population (www.defesacivil.salvador.ba.gov.br). CODESAL plays a significant role in the project *Minha Casa, Minha Vida*, since families living in high-risk areas are prioritized for relocation.

The City Statute (*Estatuto da Cidade*)\(^10\) is a constitutional law from 2001, which for the first time, included a specific chapter on urban policy (*Estatuto da Cidade, 2001: 21*). The City Statute recognizes the fundamental right for everyone to live in the city without discrimination of class, gender, age and race. A central instrument of the Statute is participatory budget management and the local *Plan of Urban Development (PDDU)*\(^11\). The PDDU, also called the master plan, lays out how cities will develop and it is an instrument of urban participation. This master plan should be based on professional and local forms of knowledge obtained through participatory meetings. The PDDU defines Zones of Special Social Interest (ZEIS) and can indicate areas for housing construction in the MCMV program.

The websites of governmental organizations provide relevant information for citizens regarding procedures and progress of housing projects and participatory meetings. Unfortunately, many low-income citizens cannot access Internet, as several local community leaders indicated.

**COUNCILS**

Councils (*conselhos*) are public spaces for negotiation and co-management of public policies, where power is shared between representatives of government and society. Special conferences are organized by the government at all three scale levels to realize participative decision-making within councils (Gurzal Lavalle et al., 2005). They provide platforms for direct exchanges of knowledge by citizens and experts. Councils exist in both housing and urban planning sectors, as well as in health and education.

The creation of the National Council of Cities (ConCidades)\(^12\) in 2004 represents the realization of an important instrument of democratic management linked to the National Urban Development Policy. ConCidades enables a continuous debate on urban policy. The Council of Cities is in this sense an example of negotiation in which social actors participate in the process of decision-making on policies implemented by the Ministry of Cities in housing, sanitation, transport and urban mobility. The City Council of Bahia (ConCidades/BA)\(^13\) has an important role in ensuring citizen participation and social control in urban development (www.concidadesba.blogspot.com). The State Council of Cities organizes monthly meetings. ConCidades/BA consists of 40 members, defined by law; 20 of them are representatives of civic-based organizations and the other 20 are members from state and municipal governmental departments. The Municipal Housing Council of Salvador (CFMH)\(^14\), officially installed 2009, organizes meetings every four months. This council consists of 32 titular members, equally divided between civil society and government.

**CIVIL SOCIETY**

Civil society consists of social movements, unions, nongovernmental organizations and other interested citizens related to housing. In Salvador eight social movements are actively fighting for the right to the city, and to decent housing and better living conditions. These movements participate in various struggles, contributing to the process of democratization and decentralization during the last decades in Brazil. Applying the City Statute a crucial result of their activities.

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\(^9\) CODESAL - *Coordenação de Defesa civil de Salvador*
\(^12\) ConCidades - *Conselho das Cidades*.
\(^13\) ConCidades/BA - *Conselho das Cidades de Bahia*.
The Homeless Movement of Salvador/Bahia (MSTS/MSTB)\(^{15}\) is the largest social movement in the housing sector, bringing together around forty squatting groups in Salvador. It tries to improve the living conditions of an estimated 4500 families living in abandoned buildings. Every occupying group has a coordinator, who organizes meetings to exchange information and prepare city council meetings.

Some civic-based organizations are linked to national movements, while others operate only locally or regionally; all have official representatives in the city councils. The majority of these social movements have a website or blog to disseminate information to their members and to mobilize citizens to fight for their rights. Democratization and decentralization processes since the eighties created new spaces for civil mobilization, giving rise to these forms of social organization (Koonings, 2004: 82).

**INFORMATION SOURCES**

Governmental departments use external information sources for developing and implementing policies and programs. A significant instrument is the Single Registry for Social Programs (CADÚNICO)\(^{16}\), which identifies the socio-economic characteristics of Brazilian families with a monthly income of up to half the minimum wage per person or three minimum wages in total. Currently, the Single Registry has more than 19 million families enrolled. It is obligatory to use the Single Registry in selecting beneficiaries for social programs such as *Minha Casa, Minha Vida*.

**Design and Decisions of project MCMV (980)**

The program *MCMV* was designed by the federal government and important decisions are taken at national level. The Ministry of Cities allocates the resources of MCMV across municipalities, based on their local projects and housing deficits. Municipalities are prioritized when local government provides a financial contribution, infrastructure for the project, land and release of taxes. The city of Salvador was assigned to receive 12,000 units from the first phase of the housing program and an additional twenty thousand housing units are expected during MCMV2. The central government determines standard specifications and predefines costs for the housing project. Requirements concern terrain, location, accessibility, sustainability and security.

The project MCMV has two types of housing units; a detached house of 35 m\(^2\) and an apartment of 42 m\(^2\) with an internal surface of 37 m\(^2\). In large cities, such as Salvador, only apartments are being constructed. The houses have to meet certain conditions with respect to size, architecture, the use of materials and dimensions applied. Progress of the construction work is monitored by the Federal Bank Caixa until the units are sold and beneficiary families have moved in. Beneficiary families have to pay 10% of their income during ten years, with a minimum of 50 Brazilian Reais\(^{17}\) per month. Remaining costs are subsidized by the government and the Caixa bank.

Families must meet certain conditions in order to participate in the program MCMV. The first condition is that families are only eligible if they have a monthly income to three times the minimum wage, which is R$ 1,395 for the whole family. Another criterion is that families have never benefited from a governmental housing program before. A third condition is that they are not homeowners nor participate in any other finance program. A fourth criterion is that families living in so-called high-risk areas are given priority. A final national selection criterion for beneficiaries is that female heads of household are prioritized in allocation. Besides conditions set by the national government, decisions are taken at the local level, which is our main focus.

The main processes and decisions in implementing the housing project in Salvador are summarized in table 4. Decisions and processes are linked to the actors responsible for them. The final column indicates the sources of information on which decisions are based. The table shows that many

\(^{15}\) MSTS/MSTB - *Movimento dos Sem Teto de Salvador/Bahia*.
\(^{17}\) Exchange Rate: 1 Brazilian Real = 0.42 United States Dollar and 0.31 Euro (August 21, 2013).
decisions are centralized at the bank CAIXA. The Municipal Secretariat for Urban Development, Housing and Environment (SEDHAM) also plays a central role in implementing MCMV. The influence of local communities is limited, as will be discussed.

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<tr>
<th>Local Decisions and Processes</th>
<th>Actors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Registration of beneficiaries</td>
<td>Municipal government (SEDHAM), the bank CAIXA and Social Movements</td>
<td>Personal documents of identity, income etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining 3 local selection criteria</td>
<td>Municipal government (SEDHAM), Municipal Council, civil society/ Social movements</td>
<td>Discussions in public meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation of housing units over social movements</td>
<td>State government (SEDUR), Council of Bahia, Social movements</td>
<td>Discussions in public meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting beneficiaries</td>
<td>Municipal government (SEDHAM) and the bank CAIXA</td>
<td>National and local selection criteria. National register CADÚNICO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicating areas of risk</td>
<td>Coordination of Civil Defense (CODESAL) and Municipal government (SEDHAM)</td>
<td>Reports of investigations about risks and hazard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining territory of constructions</td>
<td>Municipal government (SEDHAM) and State government (SEDUR)</td>
<td>City master plan (PDDU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting construction company</td>
<td>The bank CAIXA</td>
<td>Tendering, best/cheapest offer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing and constructing apartments</td>
<td>Construction company, monitored by the bank CAIXA and controlled by the municipal Government (SEDHAM)</td>
<td>Architecture plan according to the national project requirements?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Overview of the local processes and decisions of the implementation of the Minha Casa, Minha Vida project in Salvador da Bahia, related to actors’ information sources and type of knowledge

States and municipalities have to carry out the registration of beneficiaries and indicate families for selection. Potential beneficiaries can register at the city hall, at State secretariat SEDUR or online. These families have to submit personal documents and proofs of their income (formal or informal). They also have to be registered at the national registry Cadastro Único. The State Government of Bahia opened registrations for the program MCMV in 2009, when the program was created. Around 300,000 applicants registered for MCMV in Salvador. Social movements play a crucial role in this process by organizing the registration for their own members.

An important decision made locally is determining three local selection criteria, in addition to the criteria established by the federal government. These local criteria must be approved by the local city councils (conselhos). The City Council of Bahia decided that 60% of MCMV units will be allocated through the social movements in Bahia state. A local criterion in Rio de Janeiro is that many units being constructed, are destined for groups displaced by development for the upcoming World Cup and Olympic Games (Rio Times, 17-5-2011). The three local selection criteria for MCMV in the municipality Salvador were decided in the Municipal City Council, during a special meeting on June 17th, 2010. These selection criteria, published in the Municipal Statute Book 18 (2010) are: 1) Families linked to social movements for the right to housing with a seat in the Management Council of the Municipal Housing Fund or the municipal council of Salvador and proven performance in Bahia for over two years. 2) Families who live in occupations or in conflict situations for more than two years. 3) Families in Social Rental or situation of relocation due to public works.

The selection of beneficiaries is made by the governmental bank Caixa Econômica Federal, based on national and local criteria, and is directly controlled by the Ministry of Finance. The selection for the housing project should reserve 75% for candidates who meet four or five criteria among those defined by the Union, states and municipalities. The remaining 25% will be allocated to applicants who meet up to three criteria. Furthermore 3% of the units of the projects are reserved for people with physical disabilities and 3% for the elderly enrolled in the program. A lottery is be held by CAIXA when the

public demand is higher than the number of reserved houses. **Areas of risks** are those with geological risk or unhealthy conditions, such as erosion, falling blocks, flood, slopes, areas subject to landslide as well as other defined by Civil Defense (CODESAL).

The municipal and state government define **areas for constructions**. Almost all of the *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* housing units are located in the outskirts of Salvador. Future residents have no influence and knowledge about the location of their new apartments. Governmental actors and professors interviewed argued that this decision was made because terrains on the edge of the town were available, and are significantly cheaper than central locations, which are scarce, expensive and lucrative for more commercial purposes. Moreover, large parts of the city are the property of international corporations, who invest in hotels and commerce.

**LOCAL COMMUNITY-BASED KNOWLEDGE AND PROJECT MCMV**

Using local community knowledge in decision-making improves the quality and effectiveness of the program. Government actors in Salvador recognize this, and during public meetings it was constantly stated that participation of civil society is crucial for better housing and that the presence of civil society members and coordinators of social movements is strongly appreciated. The manager of the City Council of Salvador reiterated during an interview that citizen-participation is important to achieve societal priorities more effectively (03-10-2011). The day-to-day experience of local citizens is important, since the government perspectives differ from ground realities.

Many local citizens in Salvador are in need of decent cheap housing. MCMV promises to fulfill this need. However, **enrollment** in the program was difficult for many citizens in Salvador, since it remained unclear to them how to register and submit the required documents. Once enrolled, these families were uncertain about when they were going to be selected and where the houses would be constructed.

The first completed building blocks in Salvador were located in *Jardim das Margaridas*, a neighborhood where 380 families are living since April 2011. These beneficiaries are generally satisfied with their new apartments. Having their own house with sufficient facilities and privacy is a great improvement compared to their previous situation. However, the majority preferred and had hoped for a detached house, because of the misleading name of the programme *‘Minha Casa’* and not *‘Meu Apartamento’* (My Apartment). The size of the apartment was another misconception. Some beneficiaries did not know the meaning of square meters and expected to be living in an apartment of 42 m in length instead of 42 m². All apartments have the same size and divisions, appropriate for four family members, but too small for families consisting of more people.

Many MCMV residents find it difficult to meet their monthly payments. Most beneficiaries used to live in miserable circumstances, with no or very low housing costs and were unprepared for additional expenditures. Now these beneficiaries have to pay a monthly rent, plus services and a condominium contribution, while the majority is unemployed and only receive contributions from the social welfare program *Bolsa Família*.

Another significant problem for MCMV residents is the lack of social infrastructure in their new living area. Basic facilities such as schools, health posts, proper transport, commerce, police, security and employment opportunities are not yet provided. These issues are addressed in public meetings and the governmental actors are aware of them. The government stated they were working on solutions and residents do believe in future improvements. However, beneficiaries complain that things move too slowly and regret that they cannot influence decisions about the location of the houses constructed. A recently completed MCMV construction is in an area called *Bairro Novo* (New Neighborhood). This territory contains a total of 2560 housing units where about 10,000 people will live, of whom half
moved in last November 2011. Besides the building blocks and one large access road, there is nothing in this neighborhood.

Almost all MCMV constructions are located on the far outskirts of the city. Many residents complained about the lack of accessibility of their new neighborhoods. Busses are the only public transport available in Salvador, but they go irregularly, infrequently and indirectly to these areas. The social life of residents takes place in their previous neighborhoods. Several beneficiaries stated that their lives worsened because of the lack of social infrastructure and their financial problems, despite their satisfaction with the apartments. Some residents had already sold their MCMV apartments illegally and had returned to their previous poor living situation. Beneficiaries of *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* have achieved decent housing, but without decent living conditions so far.

Representatives of social movements are generally positive about their influence on urban policies. They argue that the new housing policy is more participative and that the Council of Cities contributes to public policy-making. The government utilizes the ideas of the public, through the participating representatives from civil society. The knowledge of local citizens is exchanged in this manner and systematically integrated into the government programs. A more participative culture in the housing sector in Salvador is growing, with the councils as public space between the government and civil society. However, conditions for citizen participation are not optimal and many aspects could be improved.

The coordinators from social movements put a lot of energy in meeting the needs of their community members, but receive little recognition for their efforts. There is also no immediate return, because the results of their effort are delayed, invisible or absent. The active citizens interviewed argue that more people should commit to the process of participation. However, many local citizens do not believe in politics nor understand the importance of fighting for their own rights. Disadvantages of citizen-participation are that it is costly, time-consuming, not well located and scheduled for many local people. Moreover, many local citizens lack awareness of participatory meetings. Finally, many people do not possess the required vocabulary to fully understand what is being said at these meetings.

The City Statute regulating citizen-participation was evaluated and critiqued during its tenth anniversary, at a national two-day seminar in Salvador about the rights to the city in relation to territorial responsibility (13/14-10-2011). Professors, citizens and various government actors agreed that the City Statute in practice is extremely complicated. Although the government was able to create human and participatory rights, it faces difficulties in putting them into practice, because of the patrimonial culture (professor Ana Fernandes).

Including community-based knowledge is mandatory in preparing the master plan of Salvador (PDDU). However, the PDDU was prepared in 2002 without any citizen-participation, contrary to the City Statute (Reiter, 2008: 343). Citizen participation in the formation of the PDDU in 2008 also remained very limited (Baltrusis, 2009). The PDDU is an important source of information in assigning construction areas for MCMV building blocks. Local knowledge about the lack of social infrastructure in the areas of MCMV constructions and difficulties in transport and accessibility could be included through participatory meetings for the PDDU. However, the preparation of the city master plan is controlled by economic forces and has lost its social function, stated the procurator of the state Bahia, Luiz Viano Queiroz (14-10-2011).

The majority of MCMV beneficiaries feel they cannot influence anything regarding the housing project. However, active participants in policy-making are convinced that government actors listen to their contributions in public meetings and that their local knowledge is used. Representatives from social movements usually prepare their inputs in internal meetings. They contribute tacit and contextual-embedded knowledge, based on personal experiences in local networks. However, no participant could explain how their contributions and recommendations were used precisely in
decision-making processes. Their community-based knowledge was only used directly for defining the three local selection criteria for MCMV and in allocating housing units across the social movements.

Nevertheless, leaders and coordinators of social movements constantly fulfill an active and crucial role in the implementation of MCMV by communicating information from the government to their own community members. The representatives have gained skills for active citizenship through years of participation, during which they obtained contextual embedded knowledge about political and social networks. This knowledge is used to disseminate information about the project and explaining procedures to their members. Moreover, coordinators literally assist their community members with registrations, visitations, signing contracts and solving problems.

Local community-based knowledge is utilized when the Coordination of Civil Defense in Salvador (CODESAL) identifies areas and situations of risk. CODESAL visits local areas and conducts qualitative interviews with citizens to obtain local knowledge based on daily experience. Thus, community-based knowledge is indirectly included in the project MCMV through the reports of CODESAL. In this manner tacit and contextual-embedded knowledge is incorporated into the codified knowledge of the written reports.

The main aspects of community-based knowledge included in the housing project MCMV are listed in figure 3. This knowledge is orally exchanged through social movements, in the city councils and in other public meetings. However, citizen-participation remained consultative and the utilization of the community-based knowledge for the housing project is limited. There is still a need for more structural incorporation of their knowledge into government programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local community based knowledge</th>
<th>Exchange</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In need of decent, cheap housing</td>
<td>Orally exchanged through social movements, in the city councils and in other public meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulties with registration for MCMV</td>
<td>Limited utilization of local knowledge in project MCMV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MCMV apartments are good in general</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Financial problems and unemployment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Great lack of social infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accessibility and transport difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Fig. 3] Exchange and utilization of local community based knowledge

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Citizen participation is increasingly used as an instrument to include local knowledge in decision-making processes, assumed to lead to more effective governance (Boulding and Wampler, 2009; Vitale, 2008). However, there is still limited information on how such inclusion works in practice, and what use is made of community-based knowledge in mega-projects driving urban development. Our study has addressed this issue and examined to what extent community-based knowledge was included in decision-making processes in implementing the housing project *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* in Salvador da Bahia in Brazil.

Large-scale economic and infrastructure projects are increasingly used as growth strategy in city-centric policies (Kennedy et al. 2011). The aim of the housing project MCMV was to reduce housing deficits, generate employment and reduce existing inequalities, by producing houses for low-income families. MCMV is mainly designed by federal government and has clearly established rules and requirements. Local governments are responsible for implementing the project, since they are more knowledgeable about local circumstances. However, implementing such a mega-project is not as straightforward as the World Bank suggests in describing project cycles. The implementation of
MCMV is a complicated and dynamic process, partly because it involves the construction of multiple buildings blocks, which are all small projects. The project involves actors from government, the bank, the private sector and civil society.

The study has shown that the project MCMV is embedded overall in the Brazilian housing sector and urban governance at three levels of government. The City Councils (conselhos) are the public spaces for negotiation and co-management of public policies, where power is shared between representatives of the government and civil society. These are new democratic arenas for negotiation and knowledge exchange, as discussed by Cornwall and Coelho (2007) and Vitale (2008). Citizens could participate in the councils, mandated by the City Statute. In this manner, local community-based knowledge could be exchanged and included in decision-making processes.

The main findings of our research are summarized in Table 5. The first three columns indicate the local processes and decisions in implementing the MCMV project in Salvador da Bahia, related to the actors and sources of knowledge on which decisions were based. These results are then linked to the knowledge classification, based on the typology of Baud et al. (2011). The final column indicates when and how local community-based knowledge is included. It shows that local knowledge is included in two decisions; defining three local selection criteria and allocating housing units across social movements. Further, local knowledge is indirectly included in the registration and selection process of beneficiaries and in prioritizing families who live in high-risk areas. Local community-based knowledge is excluded in defining the terrains for constructions, in selecting the construction company and in the design and construction of the apartments. This shows that the mobility of knowledge remains limited in the large-scale housing project in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local decisions and processes</th>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Type of knowledge</th>
<th>Local community based knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registration of beneficiaries</td>
<td>Municipal government (SEDHAM), the bank CAIXA and Social Movements</td>
<td>Personal documents of identity, Income etc.</td>
<td>Codified</td>
<td>Indirectly included through the facilitation of registration by social movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining 3 local selection criteria</td>
<td>Municipal government Municipal Council, civil society/ Social movements</td>
<td>Discussions in public meetings of city council</td>
<td>Tacit and contextual embedded: based on community experiences, spatialized</td>
<td>Included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation of housing units over social movements</td>
<td>Council of Bahia, Social movements and State government</td>
<td>Discussions in public meetings</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: community based, spread by social networks</td>
<td>Included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting beneficiaries</td>
<td>Municipal government and the bank National and local selection criteria. National register</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contextual embedded and Codified: regulatory standards</td>
<td>Indirectly included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicating areas of risk</td>
<td>Coordination of Civil Defense and Municipal government</td>
<td>Reports of investigations about risks and hazard</td>
<td>Contextual-embedded and codified: technical knowledge of sector professionals, specialized</td>
<td>Indirectly included through reports of investigations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining territory of constructions</td>
<td>Municipal government and State government</td>
<td>City master plan</td>
<td>Contextual embedded and codified: technical, economic, community based, political and academical, specialized</td>
<td>Excluded, but should officially be indirectly be included through the city master plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting construction company</td>
<td>The bank</td>
<td>Tendering</td>
<td>Contextual embedded: technical and economic</td>
<td>Excluded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Designing and constructing apartments | Construction company, monitored by the bank CAIXA and controlled by the municipal government (SEDHAM) | Architecture plan according to the national project requirements | Contextual-embedded: technical | Excluded

Table 5: The local processes and decisions of the implementation of the Minha Casa, Minha Vida project in Salvador da Bahia, related to the actors, sources, type of knowledge and local community based knowledge

The case study confirms that stakeholders and their knowledge are unequally included, in line with the debate (Baud et al. 2011). The majority of local decisions is made by the Federal Bank Caixa and local government. These are mainly based on written documents (codified knowledge) which can easily be transported and shared, in line with the existing debate (Baud et al. 2011). However, tacit and contextual-embedded forms of knowledge are frequently incorporated in such written documentation, as they incorporate empirical research, interviews, workshops, oral discussions and seminars. Reports of Civil Defense about risky areas include local community knowledge and technical knowledge. The Municipal Housing Plan of Salvador, based on quantitative and qualitative research among local citizens, is another example. Civil society only directly influences decisions in determining local selection criteria and the allocation of housing units over the social movements. These criteria were discussed in city councils and at other participative meetings.

Local residents share and exchange their experiences with governmental actors through social movements and the city councils, but their influence in decision-making processes remains mainly consultative. Representatives of social movements mainly participate in public policy-making, not citizens. These representatives are relatively optimistic about their influence on local urban politics, because their possibilities to participate are increasing since changes in the Brazilian constitution and the installation of the city councils. Nevertheless, the conditions for citizen-participation are not optimal and strongly critiqued.

It is remarkable that no participant in the city councils was capable of explaining how their inputs and recommendations were used exactly in governmental decisions. The City Master Plan (PDDU), an important source for determination where the MCMV building blocks should be located, should include local community-based knowledge, but do not. Citizen-participation remained consultative. Social movements do fulfill an important role in MCMV implementation by facilitating communication with communities and beneficiaries. The leaders from social movements are intermediaries contributing to knowledge circulation (Contandriapoloulos et al., 2010). However, they do not directly influence several important decisions of the MCMV housing project.

Our findings support the argument made by Reiter (2008) and Cornwall and Coelho (2007) that there is a wide gap between the legal instruments created to institutionalize citizen-participation and the effective inclusion of local knowledge in practice. The case of Minha Casa, Minha Vida in Salvador clearly points out considerable shortcomings in participatory governance. The structures for participatory decision-making are officially installed, but utilization of local types of knowledge is still partial and limited. This suggests that knowledge mobility is limited, and barriers exist that prevent it being exchanged on a wider scale and with more political power.

It is argued that democratization and citizen-participation are in development, but it is a slow and bureaucratic process in which many aspects have to be improved. Local community knowledge should be more included in urban planning projects. Further, the federal program MCMV should be better integrated in terms of urban policies, plans, programs and projects. It has to do with problems of coordination, planning, cooperation and use of instruments, which are well-known issues in Brazil.
One of the goals of MCMV was to reduce social inequalities. But one of the conclusions of our research is that many dwellers in the new building blocks felt their lives had worsened due to the remote location, the lack of social infrastructure and financial problems. Moreover, residents became socially excluded at the far outskirts of the city. These problems that local communities and beneficiaries experience, could have been addressed in an earlier phase if local knowledge had been better included in the decision-making processes during implementation of the MCMV project.

Our research is limited to the decision-making process in the implementation of the MCMV project in Salvador. It would be interesting for instance to compare these outcomes with the implementation of the same project in Porto Alegre. The culture of citizen-participation and the utilization of various types of knowledge in urban governance are more developed in this Brazilian city. A shared and integrated urban management is a permanent challenge. Future studies should discuss more in-depth how local community-based knowledge can be included successfully in mega-projects and how these could be utilized for more sustainable urban development.

EPILOGUE

Only a part of the housing program is analyzed in our research. An additional 2 million housing units will be constructed in Brazil until 2014. Some changes were made in the design of the project since this study. First, a higher percentage of units is being assigned to low-income families. Second, the surface per housing unit is being increased. Further improvements are being made in the quality of the housing units. MCMV 2 also provides more protection to women. Initially, they needed the signature of the spouse, which hindered their access to the program. Women who are the head of a household may now sign contracts, regardless of their marital status. Further there will be a greater input of municipalities. They will receive extra funds for the development of social work, such as mobilization programs and community organization aspects, environmental education and the creation of jobs. These changes recognize many of the dimensions brought into the Council discussions by local civil society representatives.

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