

Improving housing and access to sanitation in informal neighborhoods in Ouagadougou to reduce inequalities

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PITCH

The precarious housing conditions in informal settlements increase inequalities. Restructuring these neighborhoods by providing them with basic social services would be one of the solutions to improve their inhabitants' living conditions, and thus to reduce inequalities.

ISSUES

Population growth in Ouagadougou has come with urban sprawl, resulting in the development of spontaneous dwellings commonly referred to as informal (*non loti*) settlements. These areas, where more than 30% of the city's inhabitants live, are precarious neighborhoods that lack basic socio-economic infrastructure. This urban sprawl, which has not been accompanied by a minimum development of infrastructure, has contributed to increasing inequalities in terms of living conditions between formal and informal settlement areas. Given the nature of the latter, the housing is almost systematically built with rudimentary materials, pending a "formalization" of these neighborhoods. This could result in deteriorating living conditions in general and in an

increase in inequalities. This policy brief presents the evolution of multidimensional poverty in both types of areas, while highlighting the dimensions that feature the greatest inequality.

METHODS

This work is based on an analysis of the dynamics of multidimensional poverty and inequalities in Ouagadougou¹. The calculation of the multidimensional poverty indicator is based on the methodology of the multidimensional poverty index proposed by Alkire and Foster (2011). Not only is this methodology intuitive, it also has the advantage of being decomposed by dimension and by indicator, which is very useful to target interventions. Three dimensions ("Health," "Education," and "Living conditions") were used in this analysis.

RESULTS

• Greater poverty in informal settlement areas

Considering the three dimensions mentioned above, the analysis of the dynamics of multidimensional poverty inequalities in Ouagadougou shows that, in spite of a decrease from 2009

to 2015, multidimensional poverty remains a phenomenon that occurs mainly in informal settlement areas.

Indeed, on the basis of a deprivation of at least one third (1/3) of the weighted indicators, one third (1/3) of the population in informal settlement areas was multidimensionally poor in 2015. This proportion was above 50% in 2009. In formal (*loti*) settlement areas, the rate was only around 5% in 2015 and 15% in 2009. The analysis shows that the multidimensional poor are more deprived in dimensions such as sanitation and housing conditions. Similarly to the results for the entire Observatoire de Population de Ouagadougou area, the percentage of individuals identified as multidimensionally poor, and simultaneously disadvantaged in terms of sanitation and housing conditions, underwent a similar trend in formal and informal settlement areas. The proportion fell from around 15% in 2009 to around 4% in 2015 for formal settlement areas. In informal areas, despite a considerable drop, the share remained relatively high, hovering

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Key words inequalities, living conditions, housing

Geography Burkina Faso

Themes inequalities, multi-dimensional poverty

Find out more about this project: [Analyzing inequalities from the perspective of health, education, and employment trajectories in Burkina Faso](#)

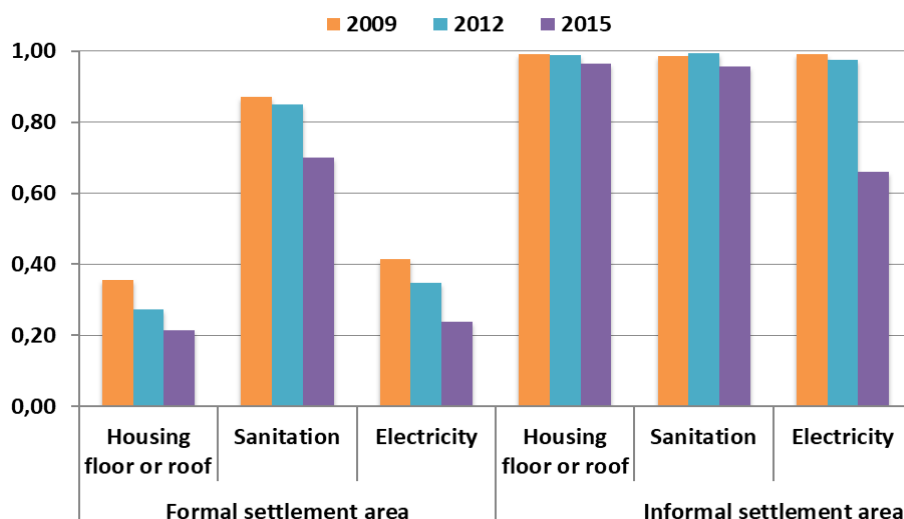
round 30% in 2015, while it was around 56% in 2009.

• A disparity fueled by housing and sanitation conditions

Living in informal settlement areas goes hand in hand with rudimentary housing conditions. Until 2015, almost all the inhabitants of these areas lived in dwellings with floors, walls, or roofs made from natural materials such as wood, earth, or straw. The same is true of sanitation conditions which, like housing conditions, remain equally worrying. Thus, more than 95% of the inhabitants of these areas live in households without improved toilets or latrines. Note that these conditions have hardly changed since 2009.

In connection with housing conditions, and due to the unavailability of the national electrification network, the majority of

Figure 1. The evolution of deprivation between 2009 and 2015 by type of area



Source : [https://www.afd.fr/fr/ressources/Dynamique des inégalités de la Pauvreté Multidimensionnelle à Ouagadougou](https://www.afd.fr/fr/ressources/Dynamique_des_inegalites_de_la_Pauvrete_Multidimensionnelle_a_Ouagadougou) : données de l'Observatoire de Population de Ouagadougou

the inhabitants of peripheral districts are also deprived of electricity. However, there has been a slight improvement over time, probably due to the advent of solar energy in recent years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Ministry in charge of city planning and housing:

- ▶ Restructure peri-urban areas by providing them with basic social services, in particular schools, public health services, and passable roads. This restructuring could encourage residents to imagine a long-term future for themselves in their neighborhoods, and to improve the quality of their housing by building with permanent materials.

For the Ministry in charge of water and sanitation:

- ▶ Make informal settlement areas a priority in terms of promoting good hygiene practices, as well as access to sanitation services in urban areas:
 - Subsidize households for the construction of improved toilets;
 - Build improved community toilets with local management committees;
 - Set up solid waste collection and treatment systems in these neighborhoods.

For the Ministry in charge of energy:

- ▶ Extend the urban electrification project to informal settlement areas by making it easier to connect and sign up.

¹ See Ouili, I., Soura, A., Dianou, K., Guissou, S. and Ramde, S. (2020), « Dynamique des inégalités de la pauvreté multidimensionnelle à Ouagadougou : données de l'Observatoire de Population de Ouagadougou », AFD Research Papers Series, No. 2020-142.