# Planning in Self-Planned Informal Cities

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## 1 ABSTRACT

Post-colonial urban informality is subject to binary interpretations, entrenching or inverting existing practices. There is a renewed attention in urban studies literature to view cities as self-organising systems rather than as an outcome of a top-down hierarchical planning process. With case studies from Khulna city, Bangladesh, the argument presented in this paper reiterates the self-organising system theory where the built-environment is a juxtaposition and spatial negotiation of numerous (micro)informal planning organisations. Land-owner association, housing societies, private land developers, mosque committees, local ward counsellors, young environmental activists, or even individual actors are the true (micro)planners and decision-makers who negotiate everyday spatial arrangement and service provision of post-colonial cities. Such negotiations and arrangements are not necessarily responses to planning failure, but are democratic, aligned to stakeholders' aspirations, and testify the need to incorporate such inputs into the planning code. I then argue, that, qualitative negotiations and arrangements, as such informality,need to be incorporated as planning rule in cities of urban informality.

Keywords: advocacy, negotiated space, urban informality, Khulna, Bangladesh

## 2 INTRODUCTION

The post-1950s planning theories consist of two main branches: town planning and urban design. While the former deals with the procedural aspects of institutional and professional decision making, the latter deals with the structure and norms of society using qualitative models. In this discourse, theorising the built environment is often overlooked. Plans prepared by municipal planning agencies and private developers can hardly control a city. The current procedural planning approaches are incapable of regulating urban form; thus, they should stop avoid making long-term, wide-ranging plans and focus instead on immediate and small scale results (Alfasi and Portugali, 2007). The most recent approach to re-linking town planning and urban design is a uniform code of substantive planning by Alfasi and Portugali (2007). Their model proposes self-organisation of cities where planning decision making rests within the legal and professional boundaries, yet reflects 'bottom-to-top' dynamics of planning at the small-scale built environment.

There is pressure for planningtends to evolve from the modernist processin which planning is a universally accepted valid instrument of progress into a communicative procedural process. This shift indicates a more politically engaged, inclusive, empowering, and integrated process In this conception of planning, theorisation of city planning is termed as "a city that plans" rather than "the planned city." Therefore, a City that plans encompasses and considers every aspect of urban planning, i.e., land use, education, infrastructure, employment, culture, and natural resources. In line with this discussion, the UN-Habitat World Cities Report 2016 highlights adequate shelter and sustainable urban settlements by evaluating it through five lenses: (1) the transition from master planning to grassroots equity/advocacy community visioning; (2) rethinking land use and public space; (3) policy-sector integration and new tangible realities; (4) geographic (scalar) integration; and (5) planning capacity (UN Habitat, 2016, 124).

In this paper, I discuss three of the UN-Habitat lenses with case-studies from Khulna city, Bangladesh. First, I discuss how the shift from master planning to grassroot involvement in the urban built environment is happening. Secondly, I discuss the geographic (scalar)integration process and the evolution of the built environment wheew planning organisations and authorities are failing in their newly defined roles which include implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of urban plans. Thirdly, the UN-Habitat brings in sustainability whereby the rights and responsibilities of citizens to manage resources is a grounded concept that varies in different urban settings. I, therefore, argue that in the absence of concrete planning guidelines, the rights and responsibilities of citizens, and their capacity to plan, is a fluid concept.

Against this background, the second section of the paper explains the evolution of procedural planning as well as the shift from master planning to procedural planning in Khulna city, Bangladesh. The third section presents case studies of geographic integration of the built environment and how ever-changing community

settings influence the built environment. The fourth section explains the new form of urban planning in Khulna, Bangladesh, and how it differs within the country in different settings. The final section is concluding remarks.

## 3  PROCEDURAL PLANNING AND KHULNA CITY

Two fundamental properties characterise the modern planning system. One is a top-down hierarchical process comprised of three significant tiers of planning bodies. The national planning bodies prepare national plans, regional planning bodies prepare their respective regional plans under the umbrella of national plans, and urban planning authorities prepare urban plans. Depending on the devolution of planning powers, down the hierarchy the city ward councils or communities too can plan their plans. The planning system is thus basically a top-down approach where main ideas come from the top and allow very little space to the community to manoeuvre its built environment. Secondly, current planning theory and practices are relying heavily on predicting the future using scientific techniques when collecting comprehensive data, i.e., demand for housing, transportation, service, and facilities (Portugali, 2011). Planning authorities are aiming at future demand and can dictate the future organisation of cities. New housing estates, i.e., new/satellite towns, transportation, and infrastructures, i.e., rail stations, bypass road to avoid traffic congestion are some of the typical large scale initiatives of the urban planning authorities.

As top-down planning, i.e. master plans, etc. tend to benefit overwhelmingly a minority of urban residents and are often failing to secure socially just cities by comprehensive rationality, demand for a creative and participatory process of urban planning has evolved. The prime example is a shift from master planning to procedural planning, i.e. structure or strategic planning. The procedural form of urban planning is an adaptive, non-rigid methodology which enables the participation of urban stakeholders in urban governance towards sustainable urban development and to account for future uncertainties and changes (Steinberg, 2002). The precondition for sustainable urban planning is to ensure institutionalised and meaningful participation of stakeholders. In the era of competitive market-based policy frameworks, procedural structure planning seems to be a sustainable approach because of its collaborative actions and not aiming at a finite goal. Interactions among the stakeholders, notwithstanding power relations, leave enough space for maneuverability; thus, the procedural structure plan has scope for creating enough space for socially just urban planning (Rahman, 2016; Levy, 2007).

The city planners in current municipal authorities have roadly three key responsibilities. Firstly, they are responsible for initiating planning policies, such as future growth trends in the peripheral area of the city. Part of this job description is to prepare a master- or development/structure plan- or land-use/detail area plan. The success of these plans is questionable, at least in developing countries where urbanisation pressures spill out beyond the planned areas. Secondly, they authenticate their policies with the support of the representatives from public and private bodies, NGOs, and civil society, while they themselves are also part of the liberal democratic policy. Participation remains the key to this step as incorporated in procedural planning. Thirdly, they approve or reject proposals of development/construction schemes based on their approved plans, as they are the sole guardians of city development. In this paper, all developments are foreseen according to plans, yet the urban built environment is often different from what figures on the planning papers.

The planning system practiced in Bangladesh was imported directly by the British during colonial times. The master plan approach applied to urban planning on the Indian sub-continent during the 1950s (Rahman, 2016). The master plan is criticised as blueprint land use plans as it cannot tackle the dynamic nature and complexity of urban growth. Change in the political and bureaucratic system after the liberation in of Bangladesh in 1971 demanded a new form of urban planning, and structure or strategic planning systems were introduced to supersede the British planning system. The strategic planning system counters the limitations of the master plan as it provides an open-ended policy framework (Rahman, 2016; Chowdhury, 2005). Following the master plan of Khulna in 1960, the strategic plan was introduced in 1980. However, the strategic plan is called Khulna Master Plan 2001. The plan is a three-tier hierarchy containing a structure plan, a master plan and a detailed area plan. The structure plan elaborates future development trends and direction of growth, as well as significant development proposals in indicative form (Rahman, 2016). The approach of the structure plan is not to detail out lot-by-lot land use, but to identify where growth and change need local and action plans. The duration of the plan was twenty years, which ended in 2001, and no other

plans have so far been produced for Khulna city. Rahman (2016) argues that the structure plan hardly had any implications on Khulna urban development' but is being used as an instrument of planning permission and development control.

## 4 URBAN SETTINGS OF KHULNA

Khulna is one of the seven divisional cities of more than 6.64 million population in 2011 (BBS, 2011). Though Bangladesh has experienced rapid growth of the urban population, 15 percent over a decade from 2001 to 2011, Khulna has lost 39.45% of its urban population between the census periods (UNFPA, 2015). Khulna is a dying city as its leading economic activity, the jute processing industry, has experienced significant layoffs in recent times as the national economic activities have shifted towards garments and shrimp. About half of the city population (46%) is in the informal economy, and 58.9 % are living in 5080 poor conditions, mainly in slums and squatter settlements (UPPRP, 2011).

Recently, however, there has been a concerted effort to rejuvenate Khulna's economy, infrastructure, and connectivity. The construction of Padma Bridge connects Khulna with the capital Dhaka to reduce travel time significantly. Infrastructural improvement of Mongla port, Rampal power plant, expansion of Khulna rail station, rail and road networks connecting Khulna city, Mongla port, the Asian highway and Kolkata, India are some of the mega-improvement projects that have been prioritised by the current government. However, there has been no understanding by the Khulna Development Authority (KDA) about how these projects affect the urban structure of Khulna city. One of the main objectives of the Khulna city plan is: "tthe structure plan will interpret the urban strategy and development policies to create the context of Khulna city development" (KDA, 2001). In reality, there is no sign in the Khulna master plan of how it is going to assimilate the national Five Year Economic Development Plan. Subsequently, the plan has no direction on how the mega-infrastructure projects affect industrialisation, population in-migration, demand for housing, waste management, peripheral land speculation, and development.
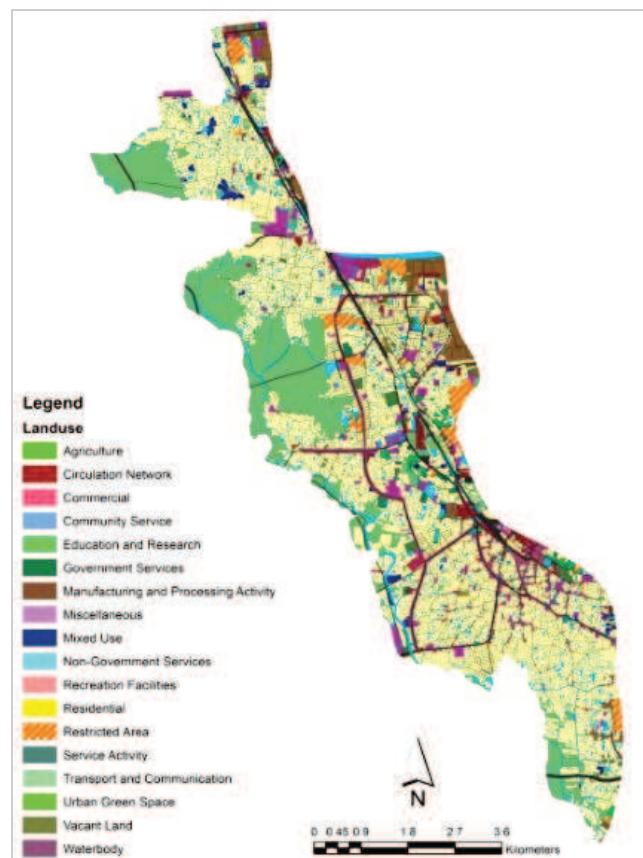


Fig. 1: Land use master plan of Khulna city

Allen and You (2002) explored the political sustainability of procedural planning by acknowledging people's participation in urban planning. Participation in planning is seen to be subject to ensure efficiency planning by addressing and understanding communities' demand where community consensus is a driving force for

sustainable urban planning (Swapan, 2014). The evidence from Khulna city suggests that participation in the Khulna master plan is tokenism and include only relevant public departments, urban planners, university teachers, civil society organisations, business groups, media, and elected political leaders. Therefore the consequence of such tokenism is increasingly evident in its mass rejection by stakeholders leading to total violation of planning and planning regulations. We discuss such violation and self-organisation and planning in the later section of the paper.

There have been increasing interests in portraying urban planning as a consensual decision-making process (see, for example, Davies, 2001). However, even after repeated efforts from planning administrations, the level and nature of community/stakeholder participation in urban planning remain unanswered (Swapan, 2014), and institutional forms of participation considering the realities and capacities of the community remain unexplored (Njoh, 2007; Rahman, 2016). The UN-Habitat World Cities Report (2016, 124) notes: "rights and responsibilities of citizens, to land, resources and otherwise, as well as systems for determining and acting on the public interest, are vital to such a conception of planning." The report notes that no one political framework can ensure the participation of a wide variety of urban stakeholders; instead, the culture of participation can be developed and preserved by empowering the citizens and changes in the planning system; thus, procedural planning can lead to new patterns of urban governance.

In the current scenario of Khulna city, where close to half of the urban population are in the informal economy, and more than half are living in impoverished settlements, and with the culture of fending for themselves, ensuring participatory and consensual planning is hard to come by. Rahman (2016) notes that the Khulna city plan draws proposals for slum development and low-cost housing, that is, however, neither clarified nor is there any dedicated land for housing for the poor. The infrastructure based policies are causing social fragmentation in several ways. First, the plan has proposals for new roads that are attracting land speculation by the private land and housing developers, making peripheral land out of reach for the urban poor. Secondly, several land development projects are planned and implemented by KDA, which budgets no land for the urban poor but only for the advantaged groups, i.e., business persons, public service holders, and professionals. Thirdly, social infrastructures, i.e., parks and playgrounds, are allocated disproportionately in the middle and upper-income residential neighbourhoods. Fourthly, essential sanitation services, waste disposal, and access road for the poor communities are beyond the scope of the Khulna master plan. Finally, apart from public and private sectors, NGOs are playing a significant role in providing health, sanitation, and social infrastructure in slums and poor communities of Khulna city; nowhere in the Khulna master plan, is their contribution acknowledged, nor is a framework outlined for NGOs to participate in urban planning.

In general, the planning in Khulna city rests on three groups of agencies: public, private, and NGO/donor agency planning. Below I show with case studies how all three are self-organising or planning, yet informal/violation of the planning code is embedded in all of them. In this section, I have highlighted the shift from master planning to procedural and participatory structure planning in Khulna city. In the following section, I explain the second and third objectives with case studies.

## 5 SELF-ORGANISED URBAN PLANNING AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### 5.1 Self-organisation and Planning

Building constructions in most cases in Khulna city is a three-step process. First, the landowners and developers submit a building plan and structural design according to the guidelines. Secondly, after approval, the construction is done in violation of the submitted plan. Thirdly, although the building permission authority – Khulna Development Authority (KDA) – is aware of the violation, it hardly takes any action against such construction.

Building Construction Act 1996 dictates that for 134-200 sqm area:

- Setback: front – 1.5 m, 1m in both sides and 1 m in the back
- Car parking ramp – slope 1:8 and minimum 3m away from the main road

Below I describe two cases of residential land development – one KDA planned (Nirala) and one privately developed (Nirjon) – where these building construction regulations are not followed. Most of the land and housing owners in Nirala and Nirjon residential area are migrants who are located in Khulna due to

education and/or job placement. With a few exceptions, they are highly educated in Bangladesh standards and supposedly responsible citizens. Yet, almost all housing in Nirala and Nirjon residential area violated the setback regulations. The two figures present a stark violation of Building Construction Act regulations in Bangladesh.



Fig. 2a. Violation of setback regulation,  Fig. 2b. Car parking ramp connected to the road

Based on the setback mentioned above, all but the undeveloped lots have violated the Building Construction Act, 1996 (figure 2a). The regulation is applied to all urban areas (except Dhaka city) without taking into consideration social, economic, environmental, and cultural factors. However, after consultation with owners, the following self-organisation factors are unveiled. First, in figure 2a, the landowners have learned from previous experiences that the planning authorities are hardly following up the initially submitted plans. Secondly, if the neighbouring lots have not followed setback regulations and have left very little space, it is unwise from their side not to do the same. Thirdly, such a setback is to ensure the airflow and privacy of the dwellers. However, many of the landowners nowadays do not rely on natural airflow but install cheaply available air-conditioners to deal with the nine-month summer in Bangladesh.

Additionally, all newly constructed buildings use Thai-glass on windows, and indoor is completely invisible from the outside. I found several cases where dwellers never open their curtains for religious purposes. Demand for large rooms and impetus for maximum utilisation of land eventually acts as a catalyst for such setback violations.

In figure 2b, the car parking ramp is directly connected to the front road, which is a violation, and also, the slope of the ramp is steeper than recommended. However, in-depth consultation with the house owners reveals several inherent factors of such illegality. First, heavy rain often innundates the area, and rainwater may enter the basement or car parking area if the plinth of the building is not high enough; thus, the slope of the ramp needs to be higher than recommended. Secondly, deteriorated roads are often refurbished by adding layers every few years. Therefore, the decrease between road and plinth elevation in the future needs to be accounted for during building construction. Thirdly, this is a low-density residential area with low car ownership. The road width is enough for current and future needs. Therefore it is not necessary to leave space for footpaths in this area. This scenario raises the question about the applicability of borrowed planning standards from western developed countries where car ownership is higher than in Bangladesh.

Usually, such planning code violations are tolerated by urban planning authority - in this case, by the KDA - without any repercussion. The KDA is fully aware of the dissimilarity between the permitted building plan and the actual development but puts a blind eye to such a setback violation. Additionally, landowners have formal housing committees and are organised in powerful groups. KDA is neither aufficiently staffed nor willing to go against the housing committee. Only when there is an accident like a fire hazard, KDA takes up its duty by stating that the buildings have violated the planning codes. Very often, there is a disagreement between two landowners or disputes regarding land development. However, these disputes and disagreements are solved by the housing committee and are rarely taken to court. Such a neighbourhood and housing development is typical for both public and private domains and is an example of self-organisation, co-learning, and inadequacy/inapplicability of planning regulations in the context of Khulna city.

REAL CORP 2020 Proceedings/Tagungsband
15-18 September 2020 – https://www.corp.at

ISBN 978-3-9504173-8-8 (CD), 978-3-9504173-9-5 (print)
Editors: Manfred SCHRENK, Vasily V. POPOVICH, Peter  ZEILE, Pietro ELISEI,
Clemens BEYER, Judith RYSER, Christa REICHER, Canan ÇELIK

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Conversely, in Dhaka, there are residential areas where car ownership is high, and builders and developers dedicate the complete basement and first floor to car parking, even though the minimum requirement is just one parking space per dwelling. The allocation of more parking space than required is due to the demand by renters for car parking; otherwise, house rent is often low. At the same time, in low-income residential areas, where car ownership is low, developers budget less space for parking; the same applies to the availability of elevators and heights of buildings. Therefore, building design is dictated by grounded reality and local demand, which a unified building code cannot ensure. This study points to the scalar arrangement in urban geography where the built environment is a function of local economy, environment, culture, and demand. Such scalar adjustment in urban geography needs to be incorporated in the formal planning process of a self-organizsd city.

## 5.2 Self-organiation and waste collection

Lack of public services often prompts communities to opt for self-management, i.e., household garbage disposal. I use the same examples, in fact, the same building blocks to explain the self-organisation in waste collection and disposal. In both residential areas, community associations have taken the responsibility on themselves to dispose of household waste. The associations have hired several people to collect waste door-to-door daily, which costs around one US dollar per month. The communities take-up the responsibility and relinquish the city corporation from the responsibility of garbage collection. Similarly, the



Fig. 3a. Self-organized waste collection, Fig. 3b. Waste littering in vacant plots

community associations are responsible for solving interpersonal conflicts and for ensuring security by employing nightguards. Much too often, such community approaches are hailed as a success story of a responsible society (see, for example, BBC, 2019).

There are several drawbacks to such responsible communities and success stories. First, the waste collection is optional, and households may opt for self-management if they are not willing to pay. Many households dispose of waste directly to drains and empty lots located nearby in the absence of frequent owner oversight. Secondly, the community associations are not allowing the city corporation to put garbage tanks, which the city corporation empties every day. These waste collectors gather household waste, separate recyclable waste for their benefit, mostly non-electronics, shoes, old clothes and metallic objects, and throw away waste in public waste bins. Usually, the waste collection bins supplied by the city corporation are in the closeby impoverished communities, due to the Not-in-My-Backyard issue. Finally, and most importantly, such door-

to-door garbage collection is a compensatory mechanism for people's sheer unwillingness to dispose of garbage responsibly. Subsequently, the availability of cheap labour is a market mechanism behind such a market solution to public services in both the residential areas.

## 5.3 Other forms of Self-Organisation

Besides the public and private dichotomy, NGOs and donor agencies are catalysts of other forms of self-organisation in cities of developing countries. Especially in Khulna city, where more then half of the city population lives in poor settlements dominated by slums and squatters. Among these two, squatter settlements are without legal tenure and usually are located on public land. These are inhabited by city dwellers employed mostly in informal sectors and who resorted to squatter settlements due to their inadequate income level and social capital.

Generally, the squatters have to maintain informal relations with local elected leaders, musclemen, and law enforcement agencies, i.e., the police, KDA, and the city corporation. Many studies have highlighted this aspect of squatter existence. For example, Hackenbroch (2013) noted the informal relationships of street vendors with the local political leaders and the police to secure access to public spaces. Hossain (2016) noted how the slum and squatter settlers use their voting right as collateral to access basic public service. Many of the squatter leaders keep close cooperation with the present government's political wing, a way of ensuring their existence in urban geography. Sowgat (2012) showed that in Khulna city, slum dwellers support current political leaders so that they can continue living illegally and rely on the political leaders to solve the intra-community conflict.



Fig. 4a. Squatter door with NGO markings, Fig. 4b. Road by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale)

Figure 4a is the door of a squatter household with markings of different surveys done by NGOs, donor agencies, and public agencies. The planning agency (KDA) does not recognise the squatter settlements on the map as they are invisible in the Khulna master plan, even though their vote counts for national and city elections. The existence of these squatter settlements is political. Therefore, access to public services, i.e., water and sanitation, road connectivity, and electricity are given through a political process, as explained by Hossain (2016) and Sowgat (2012). The ward counsellors are the key to this political access to services. However, squatters are frequently evicted or displaced during eviction drives by the city corporation, and often their access to services is limited to election promises rather than actual delivery. Temporary stay and lack of tenure security are the two most prominent barriers to service provision by the city corporation. In

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this void, NGOs and donor agencies play a crucial role, especially for community and utility facility provision.

Figure 4b shows a road constructed by GIZ in Mitaly Colony, a squatter settlement in the central part of Khulna city. In the same area, Nobolok a local NGO has provided handpump tubewells and toilets. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Bangladesh in collaboration with the city corporation has constructed toilets and drainages, and Japan Association of Drainage and Environment (JADE) has provided drinking water supply. Another two NGOs are providing micro-credits and training for livelihood improvement of the squatter settlers of Mitaly Colony. Connecting road, water supply, and sanitation facilities, drainage provision, and micro-credit distribution are all based on workshops with the community people, thus are examples of participatory self-organizstion by the community, NGOs, and donor agencies. Similar activities by NGOs and donor agencies are noticeable in Khulna and other major cities of Bangladesh. However, the Khulna master plan hardly recognises in planning their contribution for services and facilities to the poorest of the poor of the city.

## 6  PITFALLS OF SELF-ORGANISATION

Strategic planning is now an expired ideology and planning is considered a dead profession (Fuller, 1998). Under the influence of neo-liberal market-led development, essential components of urban planning like land and housing development, transportation network, and utility facilities are ever-changing, and age-old master planning and strategic planning can hardly comprehend the urban dynamics. Procedural and strategic planning hypothesises that participation is the key to the new urban dynamics and complexity. The hypothesis is based on peoples' participation and responsible citizenry. While participation is the consensual form of decision making (Davies, 2001), the level and nature of participation in urban decision making are yet to be explored (Swapan, 2014). Apart from the institutional form of participation, active participation requires motivation and capacity of the participant to generate consensus. Disappropriated citizens, i.e., slum and squatter settlements, have developed their informal circumventing mechanisms to access basic needs, and the city administration has at best tolerated them or shown a bit of mercy. Developing the culture of participation and weighing their voice equally cannot be achieved just by changing the planning system from master planning to procedural planning.

Secondly, participation does not ensure consensus. The community is not a homogeneous entity, and there are power relations and conflict of interests extending from political to personal, among the participants. The residential areas mentioned above – public (Nirala) and private (Nirjon) – have community elected committees. The committees consist of influential political leaders, police officers, and school teachers, and not everyone's voice is equally weighed. Similarly, the slum and squatters do vary in their nature, and dwellers, too, have varying personal capacity. Rupsha slum is the biggest in Khulna city with more than 10,000 voters, while Mitaly Colony has around 200 registered voters. Community leaders of Rupsha slum have the upper hand over Mitaly Colony leaders due to the difference in their voter numbers. City planners think twice before an eviction drive in Rupsha as their community mobilisation capacity and political influence is much higher than Mitaly Colony.

Finally, self-organisation does not necessarily ensure sustainability, i.e., health and safety in rapidly urbanising cities of developing countries like Bangladesh. Studies point to different hazards like water-logging, earthquake vulnerability, fire hazard, lack of community facilities, and traffic management (see, for example, Rahardjo, Hary and Morry 2020 and Ahmed, Nahiduzzaman and Hasan, 2018). These aspects are beyond the scope of this paper. Understandably, the role of the planner in twenty-first-century procedural planning is to strike a balance between top-down planning and self-organising fragments of cities.

## 7  CONCLUSION

The change from master planning to procedural planning or structure planning is a significant step towards devolution of power from the professional planner to consensus based planning by the stakeholders. However, such devolution of power is often restricted to tokenism as the authoritative planning continues to prevail. Naming the Khulna master plan a structure plan signifies that the age-old master planning remains behind the scene of all forms of planning. Both master planning and procedural planning are copied from the British planning system and applied irrespective of local contexts. Mass rejection of the planning process and codes leaves much of the urban geography illegal, which is often termed as 'informal' because the public

administration continues to tolerate such informality. The informal urban geography in most of the developing countries is self-organised without any direct intervention from the planning authority.

The case studies discussed in this paper show how planning codes are incapable of comprehending local dynamics, change in technology, and cultural context. Additionally, it shows how the self-organised waste collection, which is often hailed as community success stories in cities, fail to ensure environmental responsibility as they create a disparity between the rich and poor communities. Besides the public-private dichotomy, this paper also discusses the NGO and donor agency planning for half of the urban community, especially the slum and squatter settlements, who are left to fend for themselves. Even after the shift from master planning to consensus-oriented participatory planning, the Khulna master plan does not acknowledge the self-planning for half of the urban dwellers. Finally, participation does not ensure consensus. The capacity of the participant and equal opportunity leading to the equal voice of participants remain crucial as the community is not a homogenous entity. For Khulna city, where more than half of the city dwellers live in poor settlements, city planning cannot be possible without empowering them. In line with this argument, a comment from Christine Platt, President, Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) is notable: "we have ten, maybe fifteen years, to get on to a new track. After that the slum problem, environmental damage and urban insecurity will become so entrenched that they will dominate international relations for the rest of the century" (The Daily Star, 2020).

In conclusion, the big question is: what can the planner do in self-organising cities? Planner intervention can be and must be equity-based. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, the existence of much of the poor settlements in urban geography is political/informal rather than legal/formal. Therefore, planners must acknowledge the squatters in urban space in maps of city plans, a step towards future permanence and legality. Thirdly, planners must change the planning system, which can lead to new patterns of space governance. The devolution of planning power to ward level (or lowest level elected entity) to create political space for planning is one way of doing so. Finally, traditional planning as a profession has been declared dead. Thus instead of planning, planners must be the catalyst for wide-range dialogue among the great variety of urban stakeholders just to keep the profession alive.

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