

What We're Learning in the Global South: A Conversation on CLTs Across Contexts

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SPEAKERS

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Joanne Cheung 00:01

All right, welcome everyone. Good morning, good day, good evening. We're waiting for a little bit for everyone to get in. So while we're waiting, if you could share your name and if you're joining on behalf of an organization, and also where in the world that you're joining us from in the chat box. I know that we have folks from all around the world, as we are today, our wonderful panelists from all around the world. So it's really, really great to get all that energy from around the world. You WN, nice to see you. Lydia, so we have California CLT network. Kiana from Richmond, Virginia, hello on the East Coast. Elizabeth from Rondo, CLT in St Paul Olympia, Washington. Pay more folks from California. Lisa from Ontario Canada. Welcome. Oh, a few more California, Thailand, hey, Caroline from Thailand, showing me from Chiang Mai. So great. Welcome everyone.

Crystal West 02:02

You

Joanne Cheung 02:10

super well, folks will keep rolling in, but we will get the show started. So nice to be here with you all. My name is Joanne Cheung. I am an artist, a writer, a woodworker, and I'm an environmental organizer. I grew up in China, and now I live in California, in the San Francisco Bay Area, and that's where I'm calling from today, and I will be facilitating today's conversation. So you are all joining from all around the world. You bringing a lot of different experiences, a lot of different expertise, and the goal of today's event, as well as this virtual summit overall, which I'm sure you've joined lots of there's been great conversations before today, more to come after today. So all of this, the intention is to build connections and share inspiration from around the world. So in that spirit, if today's conversations bring up any questions that you want to ask the panelists or just hold as you go forward in your work, post them in the chat box. Those there should be a Q amp a box popping up in a little bit as folks are presenting, and we'll organize them, and we'll have that be a part of our conversation. So the second thing, the session is being recorded, and we'll be sharing out the notes with everybody afterwards. And thirdly, there's live captions and translation, live translation available. So it's using an app called Wordly, so you can accept a zoom prompt in the chat, and you can select the language that you prefer. And if you have any questions, the person to message is Ben Harris or Tamara. So those folks will be helping out with any tech questions you might have with Zoom. So today's event is titled what we're learning in the Global South, and I want to mention that this is one step on the path of a bigger, much bigger initiative, the global south initiative, which is a long term project that one of our panelists, tarsila, will speak more about and also today, it's also a culmination of some sorts. So joining today, we have tarsila from Catalytic Communities and the favela CLT project. We have Makia Griffin from Rondo CLT, Ricardo caniero from CLT, Baro de alta, the covada Mora, and also crystal west from development action group. So we're all coming from different places in the world, but I mentioned that today feels like a bit of a milestone, because all of us, me and everyone on the panel, and also with many other people that you see in this picture. We were all in Rio de Janeiro last month, about exactly a month ago, actually, for a global north and global south exchange. So today we'll learn about each person's work and their

organization's work in their own context. But also it's a time for to reflect on a lot of the connections and inspiration that came up during this really energizing and really heartwarming exchange. And I'm hoping that, you know, today, you'll just meet a few of the panelists. But you know, this is there's a really great group of folks who are working on this work all around the world. So we're just the few representatives here today, and I want to offer a few notes before I turn to our wonderful panelists, which is just the ground us in where I am now. I live in Berkeley. I'm a board member of Richmond land, which is a community land trust on the east side of the San Francisco Bay Area and on the West Coast of the United States. Berkeley is located on the land that belongs to the chochenyo, speaking Ohlone people originally. And I want to ground, since this is a global event, ground a little bit in the in some ways particular, but also in many ways not unique, history of the place. So in 1916 that's over. That's 110 years ago, Berkeley, in fact, where I live in the neighborhood in Berkeley, was the very first place in the all of United States to adopt single family zoning. So that made it illegal in certain neighborhoods to build anything other than one home on one lot. But of course, as you can see here, it's not just that. So no flats, no stores, no apartments, no temporary houses or shacks allowed, no Asians or Africans. You know, this is Berkeley, where we see, now and through the 60s, as the beacon of progressive organizing work. This is where this policy originated, and man, it was celebrated as a policy that, you know, we Californians ahead of most states in adopting the zoning thanks to the persistent proclivity of the heathen Chinese to clean our garments in our midst. And the city attorney at the time said, apartment houses are the bane of the owner of a single family dwelling condemns the whole tract of fine residences for Berkeley is not unique in exclusionary housing policies and single family zoning is merely one instrument a whole history of exclusionary practices, from the outwardly genocide and militant to things that are in buried and coded, that are, you know, even if not outright racist, are expressing and implementing racist practices. So, you know, we look at Berkeley now, and the single families, single family areas, and the ones that are not, and all of these divisions that, for the past 110 years, have not only expressed themselves in the way that the houses are built, but also everything else, access to grocery stores, levels of pollution, levels of shade, you know, all of access to financing, right? These are all sorts of divisions that cut along these lines. And so as I've been thinking about this, and when I was flying from the San Francisco Airport to Rio, a flight that brought me from the global north to the global south. But then when I got to Rio, and my experiences with with the group at the exchange, what I learned, what I saw in Rio, affirmed to me that the struggle over land, over displacement and over belonging, really cuts across the north, south Cartesian geography, this division that I see in Berkeley, I see in Rio, And in fact, I see, you know, in this picture, you have a favela on the right side, and you have not a favela. You have a beautiful single family house on the left side, right next to each other. So what really stood out to me was the underlying questions that we're asking around the world are shared. Who has the right to remain. Who gets to decide what land is for, and how do communities build power to shape their own futures? Right at the foot of the entrance of the very first favela in Rio is the valongol Wharf, and which was the biggest slave port in the history of the Americas. From there, and then we go up to the favelas, and we see incredible histories of resistance. This is a site of reclaiming memory, reclaiming history, building narrative power. And that also reminds me that even though Berkeley's history is segregation by design, it is also a history of resistance, of collective action, right Berkeley became the site of civil rights organizing, this Free Speech Movement, disability rights movement. So there's light and dark and everything. And actually, end of last year, this year marks a pivotal moment, the council member who represents the neighborhood where the single family zoning originated and where I live, she had drafted and pushed through a legislation, historic legislation, to eliminate exclusionary zoning in Berkeley, and she felt that it was she was morally compelled to address the issue. And so effective November 1, last year, almost 110 years later, this practice has ended. And of course, that doesn't mean the struggle ended right. And so these practices manifest in all sorts of ways, but it is but one step in the right direction. And so we see that change is slow, but sometimes change is fast. And this is it's these kinds of you know when we're when we're doing social change work, it's it can be a dilemma and that we have to hold, but also compel us to keep going. And I think that is a theme that our panelists will speak about, as land work land, the history of

land is long, long before us, and this work is generational work, but also in that generational work is where we really can draw our energy and draw inspiration. So I want to welcome our first speaker, which is Tarsila. Tarsila has been the coordinator of the favela CLT project since 2018 and Tarcyla now leads the global south initiative at the internal international center for community land trusts. She holds a PhD in urban and regional planning from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and a master's degree in city law from the State University of Rio de Janeiro and Tarcy is going to share a little bit more about the global south initiative. So welcome.

Tarcyla Fidalgo 12:30

Thank you. Thank you, Joanne, thank you everyone for being here. It's a great pleasure to be here with you, speaking a little bit about the initiative that it's so important for the global movement of community land trust. And I want to use a little bit the Joanne speech to start to talk a little bit about why we should raise awareness about community land trust is in the global south. So first and foremost, it is important to say that the challenge related to housing are there not just in the Global South, but also in the Global North. As Joanne just said to us, the difference is related to the level of precarity, the level of disrespect to human rights, and also how the governments, how people answer to these kind of challenge? Well, here in Brazil, we start to work with the community land trust model in 2018 very inspired by the Puerto Rico experience that have started in 2004 and had a great success in guarantee the security of tenancy, of a bunch of communities in the center of the capital of Puerto Rico, more than 8000 families could stay in their territory Thanks to the community land trust that they have implemented. And with this example, this concrete example, this concrete experience, apply in the community land trust model in informal settlements, we decide to try to bring the model for discussions here in Brazil and during the last eight years, we are definitely convinced that the community land trust is needed by the groups that lives in informal settlements. It's needed to guarantee housing for everyone. But the thing is that while in the Global North, we have a lot of community land trusts already consolidated, we have a lot of published, published materials to go looking for some answers to looking for some guidance in the global south until very until, well, two years ago or something, when we start the global south initiative, and I will get there in a minute, we don't have anything to guide people that wants to guarantee the legal formalization of their collective arrangement, but guarantee that they can stay in their territories. Because here in the Global South, especially when we talk about informal settlements, we have a very true reality that is people fight for a lifetime to see some upgrading in their territories. So at some point, the government goes to the territory with some upgrading, the upgrading, raise the price of the land, raise the price, the cost of living. And the poorest in this territory must go for another precarious place where they will fight for another generation to receive the upgrade. And then the same process will will occurs. So we have a very true dynamics with the informal settlements and the community land trust seems to be a very promising to to guarantee that we will end this, well, very bad cycle that we have related to upgrading gentrification, upgrading gentrification, Joanne and why? Why Community Land Trust is such a promising tool first, because we have the we have proven that it protects against displacement, so the community land trust definitely is able to safeguard communities in face of gentrification and speculation, and these happens because the land will remain on the prop on the ownership of the community and out of the market, so it is impossible for speculators to just buy the land and build something else that has nothing to do with the community's dynamics. The second point is the secure collective land rights, so Community Land Trust can provide a legal tools to formalize tenure in informal settlements, but formalize in a way that protect the communities and not allows their eviction. Community Interest also Center Community governance. So we have a process of empowerment on the communities and people are, for the first time, able to shape and steward their own neighborhoods. CLTs are able to adapt to local context. So we have a very flexible framework rooted in local practice that allows that community interest could be could be applied in the US, also in Brazil and in South Africa or Indonesia and Belgium and France. So we have a bunch of possibilities, considering the flexibility of the model, and also we have data that shows that community land trust is more than able to maintain the affordability of housing in urban areas. So this is something already

consolidated in the global north, and we have also this perspective for the Global South, considering the mechanism of separation of the ownership of the land and the houses the land and the views. So you with the Community Land Trust, we are able to put together something that until very, very close period, we didn't think it was possible we can bring together some individual freedom with the collective power so guaranteeing that the community will remain even if someone wants to leave, and everyone, Of course, have the right to leave and choose to go to another place to build their houses. Joanne, so something really interesting, also in this process of think about the community land trust in the Global South, is to understand that it is a model that could be applied in consolidated and in formal settlements that here in Brazil where I live are named favelas. But also it could be applied in new housing projects. Many countries in the Global South have a public policy, public housing policy related to the building of new homes, new houses. So the possibility to apply the community land trust in both hypotheses makes the model even stronger for the global south context. Joanne, it is important also, of course, to highlight that all these qualities that I have just said about the Community Land Trust are recognized even by the United Nations in the New Urban Agenda, in in the iron 107 they just said that the community land trusts are a model to be encouraged by the countries. And we know that most of the countries in the world are signatories of the New Urban Agenda. So we already have an international legislation that allows the state, that allows the governments to understand better and to apply the community land trust in their countries. Joanne, so considering this context, let me talk a little bit about the global south initiative in the International Center for Community Land Trust. Well, we have started in 2023 trying to support groups that are interested in work to adapt the community land trust model across the global south. At the beginning, this initiative was co led by the International CLT center Catalytic Communities in Brazil and also Connor Martin Pena in Puerto Rico. We had a bunch of regional collaborations with leaders in Puerto Rico, South Africa and also in other countries. It was a first phase, very exploratory. We tried to map groups that could be interesting in understanding better the model and possible adapt the community and trust to the realities. In our first year, our focus was in Latin America and Caribbean, because, of course, Brazil and Puerto Rico, we have all this geographic proximity, and it was really interesting at that point to focus on Latin America, but from 2025 until now, we have expanded our outreach to Asia and Africa. So now we have this global presence trying to support groups and also to map initiative, initiatives related to collective land, 10 re in housing projects. Joanne, so our objectives as the global south initiative are first learn from experience in countries in the Global South. And this is really important, because even considering that the community land trust is not a very well known model in these countries, we have a lot of very interesting and rich experiences related to collective lenterny, related to traditional communities. So it is really important for us to learn and understand how this experience could also help us to make the model better in our own countries. The second objective is to promote South South exchange above community led housing and collective lenterny. And it is really important to decolonize the way we see Community Land Trust, especially considering that it is a model conceded and applied much more easily in the Global North. Another objective is to identify some common challenge, and this is definitely clear, not just among the global south countries, but also between the realities of the global north and Global South. Guarantee affordable housing, guarantee housing for low income people. It is definitely a common challenge throughout the world. We also wanted to raise awareness, of course, about community land trust, and identify some collaboration possibilities with groups that wants to work with the model Joanne and what we have accomplished so far, we have more than 200 organizations mapped across the global south that already works with some model of collective Lane re or wants to work with a model similar to community land trust. We have more than 30 countries represented in multilingual workshops and training sessions that we have been promoting for two years by now, we have supported some CLT pilots, one of them, the both of them will be here, represented by Ricardo in Portugal, covidamoto, and also by Crystal with the DAG in South Africa. We have provided the training and materials to more than 15 groups in six countries. So we have this effort to translate materials and guarantee that everyone will have access to information, qualified information about the community land trust model. We have our also building relationships with a lot of international institutions that have been working historically with

the housing situation. So we have a re arc, the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, urbamont, CoHabitat network, HIC habitat and TETO International. They all have worked with us at some point, and we have designed some collaboration with these partners, and we have created a toolkit of resource on CLTs for new audience. As Joanne said, this is just the very beginning of this initiative that is now completing three years, and we have a lot of work to do to raise awareness about the community land trust, to identify how if and how we can strength get guaranteed that the local initiatives will be will be empowered by this knowledge. We have a lot to learn from all the countries in the Global South and their very interesting experience related to collective and 10 Re and we have a big excitement considering what we can do in the next years with these groups, what we can do in next two years to collaborate for the housing policies, for the housing initiatives in countries that need so much, some possibilities, some light in this subject that is really, really hard for us in the global south. So this is what I have here, just to start our conversation we have here the international community letr, International Center for Community Land Trust website where you all can find more information about the global south initiative. And you can also feel free to contact me directly in this email address. Thank you, everyone. And I will be your force for the Q and A and we can discuss a little bit more about the global south initiative. Thank you

Joanne Cheung 29:06

Super. Thank you so much. Tarcyla. All right, next up, I would love to welcome Makia Griffin. Mickey is a proud child of St Paul's Rondo neighborhood and the president and CEO of Rondo Community Land Trust. She's got deep roots in rondo. Her great, great aunt and uncle first settled after migrating from Mississippi, mckea understands firsthand the importance of community driven development. She's dedicated to preserving the legacy of the city's historic black community, while driving innovative solutions to combat displacement and foster economic growth. So Mikeya will share a little bit about her work, but also, you know, the impetus behind the whole north and south exchange that led us to be in Rio,

Mikeya Griffin 29:57

awesome. Thank you so much, Joanne and Tarcyla and crew. Thank you so much for giving the opportunity you know, Rhonda CLT originally originated the idea of this global learning exchange, and we were so grateful to work alongside Catalytic Communities and international CLT center to bring not only the global learning journey, but also this beautiful summit that we're having to fruition as part of today's conversation, I want to ground the learning exchange in black, economic opportunity, community ownership, land justice, and to reflect on how Rondo community, Land Trust in Minnesota and our position within The Global North connect to broader struggles and opportunities for solidarity and with historically franchised, disenfranchised communities across the global south. To truly understand the global community land trust movement, we must also center its roots in us, black history and black American resistance. And at last week's summit, we hosted by Rondo Community Land Trust, we share the the documentary The arc of justice, to reflect on those, on those origins. Again, you know the new communities, which was the first community formalize community land trust in the state, sorry, in the United States, was new communities. It was established in southwest Georgia through the Civil Rights Movement, after leaders from the non the Student Nonviolent committee really wanted to find a way for as one of my favorite and most poignant quotes from the documentary is the Sherr arts, who were the founders of the new new communities said, we went from not having any civil rights to being able to exercise those civil rights, and they really wanted to do that through land tenure and ownership. New communities faced significant barriers and challenges, including access to federal support and devastating drought, which contributed to the loss of land and in 1980s I just want to share this again, because it's the importance of new communities was not only rooted in racial justice, but also in the pursuit of black economic freedom, ownership and opportunity. Those same struggles continue today, just in different ways. The history of land loss in the United States cannot be separated from the histories of black and indigenous communities for centuries, systems of white supremacy,

racial capitalism and forced violence through slavery, genocide, land theft and forced displacement through policy disrupting ancestral relationships to land, community and self determination. Here is some of the data as we look at black ownership, and we're kind of moving to farmland that has such a significance, from the southern roots to today, and how that all is intermingled into homeownership and the continued loss of ownership, whether that's land or home ownership. So in the from the 1910s through the 20s here through the 1997 actually, you know, in the 20s, black ownership, or black people in the United States, really represented 14% of all farm and farm lands here I'm getting trying to make sure I get all my points here. This period marked the height of black LED black landownership in the US history, just from the 1920s and beyond. Between 1990 and 1997 black owned farmland declined more than 98% during that same time period, white farmland ownership largely remained stable. Black Farmers experience widespread dispossession through discriminatory policies, violence, exclusion from financial systems and land theft today, black Americans make up nearly 14% of the US population, but we own less than 1% of any farmland. This represents only 2% of farmers and account for approximately 1% of rural landowners. The economic impact of black land loss in the United States, just from farmland really represents about \$326 billion the majority of these losses occurred in the South and in California, and let's not forget, during the same time period, black homeownership in the US had been largely saved, not necessarily by sudden loss or taking, but more by long term exclusion from wealth building opportunities, especially during the 20th century housing boom. From the 20s to the 30s, black homeownership was already much lower due to segregation, discrimination and limited access to mortgages. The Great Depression worsened those conditions. From the 30s to the 60s, the most critical period federal housing programs like FHA and the GI Bill help millions of white families buy houses, but largely excluded black families through redlining and discriminatory practices. Those same during those same time frames, racial covenants also played a large a large barrier to black ownership, as Joanne mentioned, and it wasn't happening again to just black black people, but to many minorities. As a result, white families built wealth through home equity, while many black families were denied that opportunity creating a very large racial gap. Post 1968 when community land trusts were becoming a well used tool here in the North, especially in the United States, after the first community land trust, there were still laws. Laws were banned, banned discrimination, but disparities persisted due to lower inherited wealth, ongoing biases and unequal access to credit. The 2000 2008 housing crisis hit black homeowners especially hard, and today in the US, black homeownership equals 40% while white home ownership equals 70% and we want to move to the Minnesota context. So in the Minnesota context, black homeownership in the Twin Cities where I live is really we rank 47th in the United States, of 50 states, and our latest survey, we have the widest gap among comparable metros here in the in the Twin Cities. So just 29% of black people own homes in the Twin Cities here, and that's where Rondo is also in the Twin Cities. When we look at as Joanne stated, when my family moved from the south, escaping Jim Crow and violence from the South to the North for better opportunities, they came here to Rondo, and in 1940s you'll see in the Rondo community, which was a very connected, interdependent community when this happened to over 875 communities across the United States, but in Minnesota and St Paul In the Rondo community, when in the 19 650s, and 60s, when they were designing highways and something called Urban Renewal, over 700 homes and 400 businesses were lost to highway construction and the Rondo neighborhood through the 60s that really accounted for over \$157 million of intergenerational wealth. And that, you know, brings us to the work of Rondo Community Land Trust. Rondo Community Land Trust actually was born out of the voice of the community, when continued displacement was happening, a lot amongst folks that were still being displaced out of the neighborhood, and I always say that the highways was the first very deep physical wound to the community. But it did not stop the resilience of the community, because I grew up here and and so really, I want to ground us in the the mission of Rondo community land trust, because when and as people were continuing to getting displaced after the highway was finished in 1971 the community members got together and said, Hey, there's got to be a way that we can preserve affordable housing in the community. And the the first community land trust was started in 1993 here in the state of Minnesota. And then, you know, while discuss some of our

programs last week, I really just want to take a moment to return to the mission and values that continue to guide Rondo community, Land Trust. Purposes, purpose we are, we are meant to strengthen and preserve communities by providing and advocating for permanently affordable and sustainable housing, promote the utilization of the community land trust and support and celebrate cultural diversity. In this moment, as histories of resilience and liberation are increasingly challenged and erased, it is critical that we continue to study, preserve and honor the past in order to build more equitable futures. The global north and global south are deeply interconnected. Decisions made in the United States through policy, economics and political systems have ripple effects that shape realities just across the globe. The learning exchange was created to intentionally connect black and Indigenous histories of liberation and resistance with modern Community Land Trust movements taking shape across different regions and different contexts. At its core, the exchange was about creating space for communities to learn from one another, build solidarity and strengthen relationships rooted in our shared struggle around land displacement, social and economic justice. Rondo community, Land Trust, existing relationships with the International CLT and community based organizations help inform the vision of the exchange and created opportunities for deeper collaboration and dialog. It's really important that marginalized communities have a continued that have continually resisted systems of disposition and displacement and economic exclusion. Today, we have this growing momentum of Community Land Trust, which can help us combat a lot of those things. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to speak today and go through my slides. Thank you.

Crystal West 41:02

Thank

Joanne Cheung 41:02

you so much. Mikeya, all right, there's so much, so many connections from around the world and so much inspiration. So next up, I would love to welcome Ricardo. Ricardo is a co founder and architect at Prairie ferico Since 2018 and he has coordinated and prepared the urban and planning feasibility study, including the strategy for the rehabilitation of the alto, the Cova, the Mora neighborhood. And he's currently a part of the technical support team assisting the neighborhood commission and establishing a CLT in that neighborhood. So, Ricardo, take it away,

Ricardo Carneiro 41:47

perfect. So thank you. Joanne, good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everyone. So I would like just to begin by thanking ICCLT for putting forward these amazing spaces of discussion about collective emancipation, territorial justice and the fundamental right to remain also a strong embrace to you, Joanne, Tarcyla, Crystal, Mikeya, and all our friends participating in the pure exchange. Well for keeping the struggle alive and for the generosity and political clarity brought to Rio. Well to me, working in the past three years with the neighborhood commission of bail dwell to the COVA de MOURA, which is a 50 plus year old self built in formal settlement of about 6000 people, mostly of African origin or descent, where we are working to establish what we hope will become the first community Land Trust in Portugal, the pure exchange was not only a gathering of practitioners, but a collective affirmation against speculative urbanism, against racialized urban inequality and against community Dispossession that deeply, deeply resonated to the history and situation of COVA de MOURA and with the goals the community set forward to putting forward the CLT so taking upon the challenges, the challenge for this session, I would like to share three ideas that emerge in my personal view, from the collective experiences we are shared in Rio that relate for to the President and hopefully the possible future of COVA de MOURA. Well, the first idea is that we probably need to move beyond this new this, those misleading categories of global north and Global South. For me, they obscure historical and contemporary symmetries and inequalities in the global distribution of wealth, power, label and the capacity of self, self determination, either between or within countries, within or over, people's over

working class and black and indigenous communities. So what we saw in Rio and what COVA de Mora also reveals, is that the same capitalist relations of urban production operates seamlessly across our different geographies, based on exploitation, on extraction, on speculation, on displacement and Dispossession, and with race deeply embedded in all of them. But of course, with difference in degrees like Tarcyla mentioned. So this is why, 50 years later, of the first houses of COVA de MOURA, just like in the favelas in Rio, the black working class community continues to face territorial stigma, criminalization, institutional amendment, housing precarity, land insecurity and the permanent exposure to displacement. So all of these issues were bluntly confirmed in last year Portuguese local elections campaign, during which a center right party candidate used as campaign motto to eradicate COVA de MOURA. So these narratives, of course, are produced through historical inequalities, many of them rooted in colonialism and reproduced today through housing markets, Urban Policy, financialization and racialized exclusion. So we should probably collectively move ourselves out of these categories and the global the peers change and the global summit, this idea of building a network of territories defined by their relationship to land speculation, to the right of remain, linking favelas in formal settlements and working class neighborhoods into a common anti racist and anti capitalist struggle for land dignity, memory, equality and collective permanence is definitely our collective goal. So the second idea was beautifully summarized by John Davis in one of our workshops, when he said that all power comes from land. So land is power, because under capitalism, permanence is power. And this is not a metaphor, because whoever controls land ultimately decides who can stay and who must leave. And this is really in Brazil, as in Puerto Rico, Argentina, paraguaa, the US, Canada, South Africa, UK, Kenya, Indonesia. And is also it is also true in Portugal, 85% of the land in COVA, mora is privately owned, and the remainder is public. Is public land. So families invested for decades, decades of labor building the neighborhood, but without any collective control of the territory itself. So this, this issue here is structural, is not an accident, because precarious land regimes create permanent vulnerability to speculation, displacement, selective enforcement and political dependency. So across different territories, from favelas in Rio to European racialized peripheries, we are facing much the same aggressions, Land and Housing increasingly, increasingly treated not as social goods, but as financial assets. Global investment funds, real estate speculation and housing financialization are not only transforming but really terraforming our societies everywhere. So land is not a secondary issue, but the key urban question, because if we want to demand change from our communities, we must first fight for the right to remain in it so, and this is how, precisely why CLTs matter, offering through democratic community stewardship, the right to remain, without which there's no right to housing, There's no right to land, no right to the city, and ultimately no right to a collective future. So the third idea is that in formality is not a neutral condition or a natural condition. It's socially and political produced. And the key issue is that urban capitalism creates artificial housing shortages, produces informality and then criminalizes it. It applies regulation over pre existing urban areas, then called them legal. It builds on racist lending practices and state neglect and then discriminate self built territories so without collective control over land, rehabilitation really becomes displacement. Regeneration becomes expulsion and infrastructure are badly needed, becomes another mechanism of extraction. All of these our communities experience today, or have historically experienced, they transform legal and urban irregularities in human illegality and racism operates spatially in this process. So what we need to affirm is that communities like COVA da Mora are not urban failures, but collective responses, with all their inherent contradictions, to the limits of formal planning and capital, capitalist urbanism, which public institutions have historically been unwilling to recognize. So colonialism, racialization and housing, Dispossession are not only realities of the so called Global South, they are global Urban Realities, and the pure exchange made visible how these how similar these dynamics are across different territories, different histories, different legal systems, different scales, but the same underlying process. And this is also, of course, where why CLT model becomes politically irrelevant for COVA DAMAIA as capitalist and nao neoliberal dogmas teach us that private landownership, rivalry and capital accumulation are the natural conditions for human progress. History and anthropology show us something different, that humanity thrives through cooperation, diversity, solidarity and collective organization, but really with us

under exclusion, inequality and permanent instability. So CLTs propose not simply an ownership alternative, but in my opinion, an alternative urban logic. So they provide a framework for collective property, democratic governance, anti speculative protection, but more importantly, a political infrastructure through which communities themselves can decide their urban future. And this deeply relates with COVA, damora zone, history of self organization, cultural resistance and COLECTIVE care, because it's no coincidence, coincidence that after decades of neglect and fulfilled promises and in top down, imposed planning solutions by public authorities, solidarity practices like junta mo hands together, cultural expressions like think ape and festivities such as Kola, St John. So st John festivities is now recognized as Portuguese, Portuguese, intangible cultural heritage. So these, all of these offer a powerful glimpse into the transformative potential of COLECTIVE organization, memory and resistance. So with the feasibility study, what will that we will launch with the European CLT network. On the May 20 session, the community is proposing an alternative path that, instead of demolishing, rehabilitates, instead of displacing, provides security with the technical design. And here, here the technical design matters because legal structures are not, are not and are never neutral. They are either protect COLECTIVE life or facilitate extraction. And so ultimately, the question is not whether communities like COVA de Mora have the capacity to produce the city because they already did, and they already do so. The real question is whether political institutions are finally prepared to see beyond Excel tables and recognize the right to remain in it, to see that property itself is not neutral, and that that is the real conflict, not architecture, not esthetics, not even infrastructure, it's permanence. So the challenge for us, and I'm concluding here, the challenges for us will be in COVA de MOURA, as we trying to put forward, the CLT is not institutional integration, neither conformity with the existing urban order, but how to transform the very rules through which legitimacy, legality and urban value are defined, and ultimately, the recognition of self built communities as legitimate producers of the city. So thank you. We'll keep on fighting u futurobai, the future is within the community. Thank you.

Joanne Cheung 52:34

Thank you. Thank you so much. Big, tough questions, but also there's so much COLECTIVE power inherent right in the community. Finally, if I could welcome crystal West. Crystal is a program manager at development Action Group, and she leads large scale human settlements and community capacity initiatives across South Africa, especially in inclusive neighborhood development. And her work reflects a deep commitment to enabling people to drive their own development through sustainable community driven solutions. Welcome crystal.

Crystal West 53:16

Thank you Joanne and thank you so much for the opportunity. I have a challenge. We've just come through a really bad storm, and my connectivity is not good, so I keep getting kicked out. I'm going to switch my video of just for for the presentation, so that I don't get kicked out again. Good evening, everyone. So my presentation is very looking at South Africa, and why are we thinking about CLTs in South Africa? Why now would CLTs be something that we would be considering, and I would like to propose that we look at this as a case study of structural urban inequality and the innovation opportunity that it presents. Chan, South Africa presents a paradox. We have one of the world's most progressive constitutional and policy frameworks on housing, yet we have an escalating human settlements crisis, South Africa's human settlements crisis is really demonstrating a system under pressure. The current registered housing need exceeds 3.4 million households and is acknowledged that this is an undercount. Meanwhile, government delivery of both housing units and service sites has declined significantly, leaving a widening gap between need and provision. And we see now that we have a new human settlements white paper that is the first time in 2020, years that the new policy is being proposed, but we've also identified that it lacks clear transformative implementation pathways, and we are yet to see what that would look like in The human settlements code. Next slide. So in formality has become the default urban reality. Informality is not marginal. It is central to South Africa's urban reality. Millions access shelter outside of the formal systems, in in formal settlements, in

backyard dwellings, occupied buildings and tenure in secure housing. This reflects not failure by communities, but it's a failure of adaptive responses. But it's adaptive responses to the systemic exclusion that are faced by millions in South Africa. These spaces also face disproportionate exposure to flooding, fire and service, deprivation, and the last two days are really indicative. The pictures that you are seeing on your screen at the moment were taken yesterday and today in the informal settlements in which we are working, and the one at the bottom, the picture at the bottom, is taken in the informal settlement of that I'm going to speak about now in terms of our partner communities. So the next slide please. So we were approached by two informal settlements named we need madikanzilla, Mandela and Seis corner, and they are based in PHILIPPI in Cape Town. And the they were approaching dag through the support organization's beautiful gate and the PHILIPPI Economic Development Initiative, they have major recurring challenges. It's an annual reality, flooding, fires and most significantly, tenure in security. And they said, in addition to wanting to address the challenges of climate change, the big ask is we want to own our own land. Can you assist us in doing that? And so through collaborative processes, through mapping community participation, we are busy building the the building blocks of of a strengthened agency of the strength and capacity for these community leaders and the residents to start making informed decisions about what the options are for them. Next slide, homelessness has quadrupled since 1996 growing land occupations, unsafe living conditions are the reality that 1000s faced every day. We've realized that state lead delivery alone cannot close the gap. There's a need for tenure, secure, affordable and community controlled alternatives, so community ownership modalities now offer a pathway for us worth exploring. The scale of housing insecurities requires a shift in thinking traditional state led housing delivery, whilst it's important, is insufficient to meet the scale and the complexity of demand. And so CLTs become relevant in this context because they offer a mechanism for collective tenure security, for affordability, preservation and for community stewardship, particularly important in our rapidly urbanizing context across the global south. So the problem has thus presented us with an opportunity Next slide. So communal landownership modalities are not new in South Africa, they are existing structures, and these include cooperatives, community property associations, share block initiatives and trust structures. So why are we saying, let's explore CLTs? Because unfortunately, CLTs do not have a good reputation of being the silver bullet to address the challenges in South Africa, several limitations have been identified with existing communal or Shared Equity modalities. CPAs, for example, requires centralized boards that can create governance complexity. Our share block schemes are prohibitively expensive. Existing systems do not easily accommodate bundles of rights. Approaches and South African common law generally treats ownership rights as indivisible, and so these are critical questions that need to be answered if we wanting to employ a CLT approach. So we are now working as a COLECTIVE, in partnership with the International Center for Communal Land Trust, as well as different stakeholders in South Africa, throughout South Africa and and, of course, abroad, to look at what are the principles and conditions required to design a viable landownership model for informal settlement upgrading, and we want to move beyond theoretical models. We really want to focus on what is, what is the practical implementability, and so this needs to be grounded in existing land practices, in existing governance, or in in the reality of governance in South Africa, as well as institutional and political constraints. Next slide. So we have undertaken a process of focus groups. We've got five focus groups that we are gathering information from, and the stakeholder approach requires that each group contributes a distinct layer of insight to identify constraints, to extract principles and to assess what is realistically implementable. The principle is that we want to integrate these perspectives, to move from understanding what exists currently to what must work in practice. And so we've got different stakeholder groups, from the residents, community leaders that are expressing their lived tenure, the lived realities, to legal experts, implementation practice practitioners, context experts and government officials. Next slide. So this model that we're wanting to design must align with legal, institutional, social, political and practical realities. We really are facing a massive challenge in South Africa, with over 4000 informal settlement, informal settlements that are not being upgraded. And it's an upgrading is not happening at scale or at at the even a fast pace. And so we're looking at this, you know, tenure

security. So what exists currently? Who governs the land? How does governance, yeah, how is it implemented in different models? What is legally possible. This is a really important question within our South African context, because at the moment, our common law does not allow for the separation of between the buildings that are constructed versus the landownership there's, of course, political economy dynamics that we are pursuing and and then, of course, what you know, what are those implementation pathways and risks, what would be practically achievable and possible? And my last slide, then all of this information, essentially, is what we are using to build towards our international learning exchange happening next month. So we are saying the defining characteristics of CLTs, which include separate ownership of land and buildings. It focuses on community participation and leadership. And of course, it focuses on long term stewardship, which is so important to prevent gentrification, which is a massive challenge within our society. How can we co create a CONTEXTUALLY appropriate model that will thus advance dignified housing solutions for our communities, and so we're bringing all of these different stakeholders together, those that I've mentioned in our stakeholder groups, our international partners and local experts and our community partners. And this journey will culminate in a exchange in June, we will see, is there a model that is feasible for us to pursue further? Thank you very much, and I look forward to the questions.

Joanne Cheung 1:04:56

Thank you so much, Crystal. We'll bring everybody back, so we have a round of discussions, but I want to first thank all of our speakers for sharing. So we have about 20 minutes for a collective reflection, and I'll just kick us off, and then we also have some questions from our audiences as well. And so you all mentioned the deep, deep context in which you're all working in your particular places, as well as these patterns that you're seeing from our experiences in Rio, and how that mirrors and resonates and complicates this notion of global north and global South, all of these inequalities, the capitalistic playbook that's used globally, the financialization that is happening, you know, in the peripheries in Portugal, but also in the favelas in Rio. And I wanted to invite you to share a little bit more. You know, so much of this is where we're seeing the political power in the CLT model to act to build power in the Global South. And I would love to hear kind of what are some of the things that you think could also strengthen CLTs as a movement. From your experiences that you've seen in Rio, what were some of the things that give you hope? What were some of the things that you felt like, oh, wow, I didn't know that that was possible, even though every all of this work is ongoing, what were some of the things that you are bringing back to this ongoing and long term struggle, and feel free to chime in. Nicky, you look like you're about to say something.

Mikeya Griffin 1:06:55

I am curious as to what other folks think I just for me and ensuring that taking this learning journey really was a continued confirmation that there still is such a struggle, even In today, and what is the solidarity that we can have together as it pertains to land tenure and land land rights? And yeah, so

Tarcyla Fidalgo 1:07:33

maybe I can jump in. Well, I believe that the individual model that we have now for well, house ownership and another aspect of our life is just something that cannot remain for long. So I think we need COLECTIVE options. We need to go deeper in create and raise awareness about these COLECTIVE models, life will be well unbearable in Earth if we keep the society so individualist and so well each one just looking at their own challenge and everything. So I truly believe that community land trust is a way to rescue this COLECTIVE aspect from our society, and I truly believe that this will be vital for the humanity, and at some point, a really close point in our in our history. So this is why I am so passionate, and this is something that makes me keep doing my work, raising awareness and making the model even better and even more flexible and applicable to different contexts.

Joanne Cheung 1:09:16

yeah. I mean, I know, you know crystal Ricardo, you're both in the midst of it. And so I'm hoping some evidence, some, you know, some power that you can apply back home.

Ricardo Carneiro 1:09:27

Yeah, Crystal and I are chasing the dream. So I just wanted to point out that, well, one of the key issues that we brought from Rio, and we were extremely fortunate, because one of our consultants in our feasibility study was Tarcyla. So we were very fortunate because we had since the beginning, given given the experience of everybody in Rio working in well, extremely difficult conditions, We were very fortunate because some of the issues which were similar, but in which Tarcyla also gave us some give us some input regarding the all the history and experiences of of the favela, the favela CLT project, help us greatly also to shape our our own, our own legal framework, the Proposed legal framework, and also to frame the the initial the the initial, the initial discussions with the community, because one of the issues that we first discussed discuss with the neighborhood commission was that no before we knew that the model was transposable, I think, is always said to Portugal, we shouldn't begin with discussions in with the community. We have 4040, years of people, also people being neglected, neglected of unfinished processes that mostly dependent, depended on individual clarity and and awareness, and not on structural approaches to the neighborhood. So this was for us, it was a great, a great opportunity, and it was great to have Tarcyla on board. And one of the issues that for me, also resonates with our own experience here in Portugal, is that and that we brought from Rio is that the diversity of experiences within CLT. Movement is really our great, our great asset, because we can't, we can't build 111, size fits all. Model. But as the CLT model is quite adaptable, I would think that one of the issues is and one of the challenges, really is to Overpass this idea of COLECTIVE ownership and really engage communities. Really keep working, keep discussing it, keep advocating it, but really trying to connect with communities to support the model. But yeah,

Crystal West 1:13:14

and I'm just going to be echoing what was said nao and especially what Ricardo was saying. I think for me, one of the important lessons that was cemented was that horizontal learning is so important. Communities learn from each other, and we saw that very clearly in Rio, and it's a really important tactic within our toolbox of you know, of activities, of processes that communities are afforded opportunities to engage, and that was really important. I think one of the the the issues that Ricardo also mentioned is that the CLTs they start, you know, this model starts to grapple with context based, reality, sensitive solutions. And so we, for example, visited the occupied building. And really, you know, we have occupied buildings in South Africa. It's a huge challenge, but we were able to see how this model can advance dignified housing solutions for communities, and we were able to see a clear example of how it was breaking the cycle of public investment. That could, you know, reduce affordability, because affordability was not protected. So when we were in this occupied building, I recall us all standing upstairs and and the communities, the leaders, were telling us that all of these developments had happened in the last 10 years, and so there's this massive urban regeneration, but they are safe and secure, and they are not displaced. And for me, the collective ownership and the strength that comes from from really investing in deep engagement at a level where communities understand and can take ownership and can take can lead their own process. For me, that's really important. It preserves that affordability. It does enable, you know, generational wealth, because it enables that generational succession we seeing in Cape Town, for example, in our partner communities in the work of how people are being displaced because they cannot afford rates anymore, and so now our communities in PHILIPPI that are saying, Help us to take ownership of this land, because this is where our kids are going to school. This is where we are building social networks. This is where our economic livelihood strategies are being, you know, cemented or or grounded. Help us to maintain this so that we're not displaced again. Thanks,

Joanne Cheung 1:16:14

something that struck me in everything that you said, and also a couple of the questions that we have from our audience has to do with contradiction. So, you know the Ricardo You had said that Informality, it's produced and then criminalized. And Crystal, you said that this marginal condition, it is marginal. It is, in fact, Central, but it's permanent marginalization, permanent vulnerabilization. And so CLTs exist in a kind of contradiction that is produced by the system. And we have two questions from the audience that I think speak also to contradiction at two different levels. One is, you know, we're seeing this growing, growing need, or CLTs as a growing as a model that's applicable to to the global south, to areas, to informal settlements. And wondering, well, is that also a signal of the growing westernization or commodification and financialization of Land and Housing in general in the global south? So you know, is this method of resistance signaling a greater power of financialization. You know, that is just another way of export of the Western models. So that's that's kind of one meta, big level contradiction. Another contradiction is within the history of the CLT itself. So the CLT. So the question is reconciling the contradiction within the CLT movement. And you know, as the origin story goes from going to Israel to learn about to the qiblahs to learn about how to formalize that model, so that in the context of land theft and genocide and what's happening in Palestine

Mikeya Griffin 1:18:06

understood.

Joanne Cheung 1:18:07

And this is all, it's heavy. But you know, we're doing heavy work here, and as well as, and this might particularly pertain to CLTs in the Global North. So CLTs struggling, CLTs that sometimes in when facing financial challenges, are also evicting their tenants. So that is, can be a particular challenge that an entity attendee have brought up. So I think what that brings up for me, and what I would love first to think through is, you know, we live in a context that doesn't make sense. We're trying to create an alternate world that Ricardo, as you said, has a completely different urban logic, right? And so, you know, I don't suppose we can come up with answers right now, but I'm just curious about your reflections on this. How do we live, you know, how do we live within, live and deal with these contradictions, transcend these contradictions, how do we move forward while recognizing the histories and the challenges?

Mikeya Griffin 1:19:06

I think, you know, there are very deep, wooded histories for many of us, and I will say that for me, the Community Land Trust movement is rooted in the collectivism. Of history of even when we think about one of the things I thought about when we were in Brazil in the favelas, is those deep rooted African history of collectiveness, and that's where I take the community land trust and COLECTIVE Ness. That's how we grew up here. My grew up here. My our segregation here in the United States forced communities to be community, to be together, but that is something that we grew up with in our indigenous and African roots. And so what's happened is colonization and commodification of housing and land, has, has, has made us want to depart from the history of collectiveness. And so while I'm not going to come I'm not the founder of the CLT movement. I just want to know that it's, it's directly related to the black suffering through the Civil Rights Movement. And what I want to say is that we, we have already lived the answers we seek as people, that we this is, for me, the CLT movement is built on those collective the COLECTIVE thoughts of togetherness as people and so and those come deeply from African and indigenous roots.

Tarcyla Fidalgo 1:20:54

Well, just to jump in once again, I would like to reflect a little bit about this commodification and financialization process, because it's really important considering informal settlement and the possibilities of the community land trust in these territories, informal settlements have this name because the ownership of land is not formalize it, so the commodification and financialization process depends of the formalization of land. And the formalization of land usually lead us at a scenario where we have the rise of the costs, the living costs, and the rise of the value of the land and the buildings, and consequently, it give us the gentrification scenario And the eviction of the poorest in the territory. So of course, things are connected. Of course, this commodification, financialization, Wordly process, put some pressure in the global south countries to formalize the land, to formalize the houses and informal settlements, and this is a threat for the communities. And in this context, community land trusts is even more needed raise awareness about collective ownership possibilities, collective land stewardship possibilities is even more needed. So this is this is one thing really important. And I also want to highlight that for us, at least in the Global South, and I can almost guarantee that for all of us that work with community land trust, world, widely, the Community Land Trust is very interesting answer, because we use The ownership, we use a very capitalist institution to bring together the community, to empower people, to guarantee that they will remain in their territories. And of course, this has nothing to do with theft, with robbery, with any violent action. Of course, we the roots are something historical. We don't have the control about what's happened, but I can definitely guarantee that from now on, the Community Land Trust is a global movement definitely related to the empowerment of low income people, the affordability of housing, the guarantee of housing rights everywhere. So this is something really important,

Joanne Cheung 1:24:19
yes,

Crystal West 1:24:22
and Joanne, I mean, in South Africa, I think it's important that we, you know, we do understand about 60% of South Africans hold land or dwellings outside of formal property systems, and this is amongst the poorest South Africans. The vulnerabilities are also intensified by socio economic marginality, marginality and geographical isolation. In fact, South Africa, in South Africa, we have a model, or a Yeah, modeled by Professor verily, that speaks about a 40 by 40 by 40 reality, and this is, you know, economist and urban planners use this to try and sense it as people to the reality that, you know, our typical size houses are 40 square meters, With being 40 kilometers away, on average, from economic hubs and households spend 40% of the income on transport to and from work. So if we speak about, you know, collectivism, and we speak about, you know, are we? Are we? Is this something that we are? Is a Western you know, reality. I want to affirm what has been said by Tarcyla and by Mikeya. You know, our history is rooted in in collectivism. In fact, if you if you think about it, South Africa's democracy came about because of collective struggles. And if you look even post democracy in terms of the way in which human settlements have been rolled out, if you're looking at the most successful developments, it was rooted in the people's housing process, where people were driving the process, they were taking the decisions and so, yeah, I'm not going to repeat what CLTs said, but I think this model, we are not, you know, copying and pasting. We're not parachuting in. We're looking to see what would be CONTEXTUALLY relevant, because the principles are so important. And again, just reminding me of what was said in the Rio, you know, the C in CLT is where the importance lays. The community led aspect around this Communal Land Trust is really critical.

Mikeya Griffin 1:26:57
That's the call. Sorry,

Ricardo Carneiro 1:27:03

no, go ahead. Nickya, no, no, just just to point out regarding, regarding the first question is that when we have, or when we, when we, when we adopt an historical view, then the financialization of what we may call global south is really deep rooted in colonialism. And colonialism is not only circumscribed to that, to the specific period, because under capitalism, economical colonialism, cultural colonialism, all of these layers impose, as I have mentioned, kind of a terraforming of societies. So first the economical structure is changed, and then all the the other structures, economical, social, and it all relates to these, this exploitation of peoples of labor throughout colonial period and post colonial period, and we are just getting the consequences still and still, because we living in the same system, despite this different organization that we are experiencing today. I just recall, for instance, the bid on viol in France in the 60s and 70s, where 1000s of Portuguese people living lived in shacks. So we don't feel the shacks. So it's it's an ongoing process, and it's a very uneven and equal development throughout the world. So this is one of the issues, the issue the second question, regarding the contradictions I get the question. I really don't think we're talking about a contradiction, because despite this idea of collective property within the kibbutz, the kibbutz are only for for Israeli people, and they are used by the State of Israel to enforce a colonial an occupation presence. So it's not really quite the same, but this could just poses a question. Is that, despite, as Tarcyla mentioned, we are using as we must, the rules and the mechanisms offered by us, by the by the system and by the reality we all work upon or work within. What would probably, I would say, is that this really opens quite a discussion on the need to defend CLTs for future co optation, because we don't want CLTs to be used as A colonial instrument, quite the opposite. So all just these two ideas.

Joanne Cheung 1:30:24

Thank you so much. We've this is an ongoing discussion, and so you know, if you're interested, I think these are things that we're going to be not only thinking about, but also working through day to day, right? And so these are not questions that are just theoretical. They're day to day questions. And I just want to close this out today with a reflection, which is that, you know, when things become acronyms, community, land, trust be in the beginning, there was not a word for it, and then it got a name, and then became an acronym. And when things become an acronym, it becomes a tool, and then you think that it's just a thing like a hammer, right? And then that can be a sort of a black box, and we stop thinking about it or challenging it. And I want us to come back to this is a thing that was created by people who were trying to reclaim history and claim power and and to really think about what are all the parts of this thing, this practice that we're trying to keep alive. And I want to share a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr, that I come back time and time again when I have questions and doubts. Because I think for me, it really goes to what this work is, community, Land Trust. This is work about love power and justice. Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love. So this is our work. This is the work of community land trusts to keep all of these ingredients in balance and using that towards our COLECTIVE liberation. So thank you everyone. Thank you Mikey, Ricardo, Tarcyla Crystal, thank you Ben Tamar for being our CO hosts, and thank you everyone for joining us today. There will be more events as a part of the summit. So through that QR code, you'll see everything that's coming up. We hope you all join, and we also hope that you stay in touch. So after we exit out from this webinar, there's going to be an exit survey, so if you leave your name and email, we can all be connected. All right. Thank you very much, everyone and see you again soon.