

Jonathan Kalan - Bringing Mod Cons To The Slums

bbc.com. March 26, 2013

There's an urgent need for sustainable housing solutions for the urban poor around the world. Meet the people hoping to revolutionise slum living with their hi-tech, low-cost ideas.

Migration of people to cities has reached unprecedented levels in recent human history. Over a third of these people – around one billion in total – now live in slums, informal settlements and shantytowns, often in little more than corrugated iron and zinc sheet shacks lacking access to even the most basic sanitation, clean water, security, or clean energy sources.

Africa boasts the fastest rate of urbanisation, and it has the highest share of informal settlement residents (62% of sub-Saharan Africa's urban population live in slums). If trends continue, by 2050, there will be an estimated 1.2 billion people inhabiting Africa's swelling slums, according to the UN.

Slums are often hubs of impressive innovation and creativity by residents working to get by – rigging electricity, sanitation and water systems in the absence of real infrastructure. But there is an enormous and urgent need for better, more sustainable solutions to house the urban poor in Africa, and worldwide.

Read more: bbc.com-Bringing-Mod-Cons-To-The-Slums

Maseeh Rahman - India's Slumdog Census Reveals Poor Conditions

For One In Six Urban Dwellers



Photo:

en.wikipedia.org

guardian.co.uk. March 22, 2013

Report says 64 million Indians live in degrading conditions and that a full survey would uncover even more.

One in six urban Indians lives in slum housing that is cramped, poorly ventilated, unclean and “unfit for human habitation”, according to the country’s first complete census of its vast slum population. In other words, nearly 64 million Indians live in a degrading urban environment very similar to the shantytowns portrayed in the Oscar-winning movie *Slumdog Millionaire*.

The first-ever nationwide report – prepared from data collated for the 2011 national census – looks at urban slums in around 4,000 towns across India. (A slum was defined as a settlement of at least 60 households deemed unfit for human habitation, but the report does not cover every town and city in this vast country.)

India’s Planning Commission has recommended that urban clusters with as few as 20 households should be classed as slums. “We will be analysing the census data on the basis of the new definition also,” said Dr C Chandramouli, the registrar general. “This is likely to increase the number of slum households across the country.”

Read more: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/India-Slumdog-Census-Poor-Conditions>

Census: 1 in 6 in Indian cities live in slums



Photo: Times Herald

timesherald.com - Mumbai, India (AP), March 22, 2013

A new census report says one in six people in Indian cities live in some 100,000 sprawling slums with conditions “unfit for human habitation.” The statistics are India’s first complete count of its vast slum population.

The census identified 13.8 million households — about 64 million people — located in slums in urban areas around the country.

A whopping 41 percent of households in Mumbai, India’s financial capital and largest city, were located in overcrowded shantytowns, where most residents are squatting illegally and many have little access to basic sanitation.

More than one-third of slum homes surveyed had no indoor toilet and 64 percent were not connected to sewerage systems.

However, 70 percent had televisions and 64 percent had cellphones.

Read more:
<http://www.timesherald.com/census-1-in-6-in-indian-cities-live-in-slums>

Flavie Halais - Sheltering The

World - Beyond Architecture

archrecord.construction.com. March 2013. As the world's population of informal-settlement dwellers races to the 1.5 billion mark, designers and planners must play a central, if redefined, role.

This century's biggest architectural challenge is taking place in the developing world. There, already overcrowded cities must absorb a constant influx of migrants fleeing the lack of economic opportunities or the armed conflicts plaguing their rural hometowns. Soon the world will house 1.5 billion slum dwellers, half of them in Asia, with the 2 billion mark scheduled to be reached by 2030

Read more: <http://archrecord.construction.com/Beyond-Architecture>

Caroline Ashley - Toilet Teachings: 2 Toilet Ventures Illustrate Strategies For Success In Inclusive Business



Photo: businessfightspoverty.org

businessfightspoverty.org. March 18, 2013

I've learned more than I ever expected about toilets the past 6 months. But understanding toilet ventures has taught me a lot about how inclusive business works.

In fact, the challenges and innovations that we can see in two sanitation projects

in slums of Kenya and India illustrate typical issues for businesses that are solving a 'problem' and meeting a 'need' in a market where this is not yet expressed as 'demand'.

3S Shramik is working in Pune and other cities in India, supported by the Business Innovation Facility, and Sanergy is in Nairobi slums, supported by Innovations Against Poverty. Both ventures are developing business models for private provision of sanitation in slums, covering everything from careful toilet design to evacuation of waste.

The current health affects of poor sanitation are clear and huge. But slum dwellers are used to open defecation or low quality public/community toilet blocks, both usually free. Current provision is inadequate but it's not customary to pay fees to use toilets. So what are they doing to build demand, change attitudes and habits, and find a revenue-cost model that will be sustainable?

Here are 6 of their strategies for success:

Read more: <http://www.businessfightspoverty.org/toilet-teachings>

Paul Bruins - Watch: 129 Years Of Cape Town In 30 Seconds

futurecapetown.com - March 6, 2013.

Paul Bruins on creating the video: I was recently commissioned to recreate a panorama of Cape Town and Table Mountain, captured from Signal Hill in 1884 by W.F.H. Pocock.

Not only did the brief require me to recapture the panorama from the exact same vantage point as the original, but I also had to find the current owner of the original prints (now in the possession of John Rennie), scan the photos, and then

hand-stitch them into one seamless panorama (the original four photos had no overlap). And since there was a fair amount of dust, hairs and scratches on the originals, I also had to spend a couple of hours cleaning everything up after stitching the panorama.

Fortunately I managed to find the exact same spot where the original photos were captured, so I was able to shoot my modern version of Mr. Pocock's amazing 1884 panorama. And fortunately I correctly guessed the focal length that was used to capture the original photos, so my panorama came out looking almost exactly the same as the original.

Watch: <http://futurecapetown.com/cape-town-in-30-seconds/#.UWUp7t10Xbp>