

STREET ENVELOPE

THE **STREET'S** SYNERGY FOR PLACEMAKING WITHIN THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Upgrading of informal settlements in South Africa is fast becoming a reality. One of the reasons progressive government policies in settlement upgrade fails to be implemented is because creative design and planning strategies have yet to be introduced. Upgrading informal settlements entails creating an environment that would help communities improve their social and economic status. This can be achieved by offering design elements that the communities can exploit in different ways as well as creating points of contact, in the plan of the area, which will generate social and economic encounters that will be beneficial to the community.

This idea is made possible by the streets. This research looks at how people in the local community live their lives in the streets and spaces between the buildings and it tries to unearth the dynamics of these spaces so that these spatial dynamics can be reproduced, aligning modern forms of architecture with the traditional cultural praxis of community. The street is an element that is a vital source of life and commercial activities. This element can also work as a stage, theatre, market and playground, yet maintaining its primary function of movement, transit, orientation and connectivity. The infrastructure of the streets can work in conjunction with the building, in doing so the architecture embraces social and urban qualities resulting in a structure that breaks away from the idea of the building object and the conceptions of what we perceive architecture, urbanism and planning to be. In achieving this, the street is re-envisioned in a different way than usual.

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