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A. R. Pashayan, Ph.D.

Development in Africa's Informal Settlements

Below the Proletariat

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SERIES IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Summary

This book discusses the effectiveness of international development programs in African informal settlements (slums). It also represents the voices of slum dwellers and how they view the programs offered. With over 60% of Africans living in slums, the book intends to foster dialogue among development professionals to determine how to improve service to their clients, people experiencing extreme poverty. This book examines the critical thinking disconnect between development professionals and slum dwellers. It enables practitioners, professors, and their students to investigate the gap between the types of development programs offered versus what is most beneficial to reduce extreme poverty in slum communities. With a sample of 500 residents from Mukuru Slum in Nairobi, Kenya, and 100 development professionals with expertise in poverty reduction in slums, this book sheds light on the similarities and differences between various programs. Most importantly, this book provides a theoretical way forward (The Theory of Extreme Poverty Reduction) based on Freirean pedagogy to stimulate discussion on how to program new strategies for authentic dialogue with slum dwellers that leads to the critical consciousness necessary for successful poverty reduction.

About the author

Dr. Pashayan is a full-time professor at American University in Washington, DC, in the School of International Service. A Ph.D. graduate from Howard University, Dr. Pashayan was in the top 5% of her class and earned the distinguished status of Pi Sigma Alpha National Honor Society in Political Science. Her expertise in extreme poverty reduction leads the way in the field of International Development for Informal Settlements (slums). Pashayan's multidisciplinary approach to poverty reduction intersects health, human rights, climate impacts, and international relations. Her academic knowledge, backed by 10+ years of field experience, includes poverty reduction work in Peru, India, Nepal, Indonesia, Tanzania, and Kenya. As an Africanist, Realist, and Humanist, Pashayan's research on slum communities embraces ethnography, qualitative, and quantitative research methodology. Her dedication to conducting primary research demonstrates the social capital she has gained working in slums. Pashayan's current research, "Settling the Informal Settlements," is a collaborative effort with a Kenyan team to produce a blueprint for African leaders to reclaim their most significant asset - human capital in urban informal settlements. Having consultative status at the United Nations as a member of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Pashayan spoke on the UN floor in February 2022 during the 60th Commission for Social Development. Dr. Pashayan continues to support and coordinate innovation toward sustainable development for informal settlements on the African continent.

December 2023 | Hardback 236x160mm | 251 Pages | ISBN: 978-1-64889-774-0

SUBJECTS International Economics, Political Theory, Economic Geography

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