

Methodology of the Innerburbs of Santo Domingo

This section briefly explains the methodology behind our definition and subsequent identification of the 'innerburbs' (i.e., the process of defining and identifying the innerurb boundaries), and discusses general characteristics of the innerburbs in the context of Santo Domingo.

Study Plan

The study encompasses several rounds of methodological analysis including contextual analysis of the chosen settlements, application of survey questionnaires, and intensive (unstructured) interviews of "interesting" case studies at the latter end of the research process. It will comprise part of the analysis for one city, in this case Santo Domingo, as part of the wider research network led by Dr. Ward.

For the contextual analysis, I used historical maps, census data, and GIS software to obtain a detail socio-spatial diagnostic of the characteristics of informal settlements established in the 1960-1980s. This enabled me to identify specific neighborhoods for analysis and provided detailed information on the socio-economic characteristics of the study area.

The survey questionnaires were randomly administered to 100 residents of one settlement in Santo Domingo (Cristo Rey). The survey collected information on: lot acquisition, household structures, dwelling units on the lot relationships to the owner, lot title, inheritance/succession plans and dwelling characteristics. Participants were asked to answer a questionnaire survey in their own homes. The survey takes from 20-30 minutes to complete. From the information obtained through the survey, "interesting cases" will be chosen for more in-depth analysis. Participants will be asked to participate in intensive interviews that will last about half a day.

Finally, from the survey questionnaire we will identify 4-6 "interesting" case studies that will be analyzed in more detail. The criteria for choosing these case studies were those lots that offered significant insights into a particular aspect of the research question (for example lots that are successful in renovating their dwelling to their own particular needs, dwellings that show great deterioration or seem to pose substantial hazards to residents, cases where household arrangements create intra-household conflict, etc.). The techniques for analysis will include participant observation and one-on-one interviews.