

Community association in the pandemic regime: how to develop an autonomous agenda in the future

Redy Wilson Lima

[Higher Institute of Legal and Social Sciences, Cabo Verde]

The Impact of Covid Restrictions on Low and Middle-Income Countries, King's College, London, 26th April 2023



Context (INE, 2019)

- In Praia, a lot of money circulates daily based on street economy (informal and illicit);
- 43% of the population survive in the informal economy sector;
- It is known that many people in the formal sector have in the informal sector an expedient to adjust their salaries;
- Around 80% of the city of Praia is considered informal settlement;
- 14,9% of the population in urban area lives in one-room house.

Lockdown, March 28, 2020

- The model of health securitization (stay at home policy) was been very punitive and exclusionary for those whose survival depends exclusively on the informal sector;
- Stigmatisation and criminalisation of the poor and young people.



Political measures

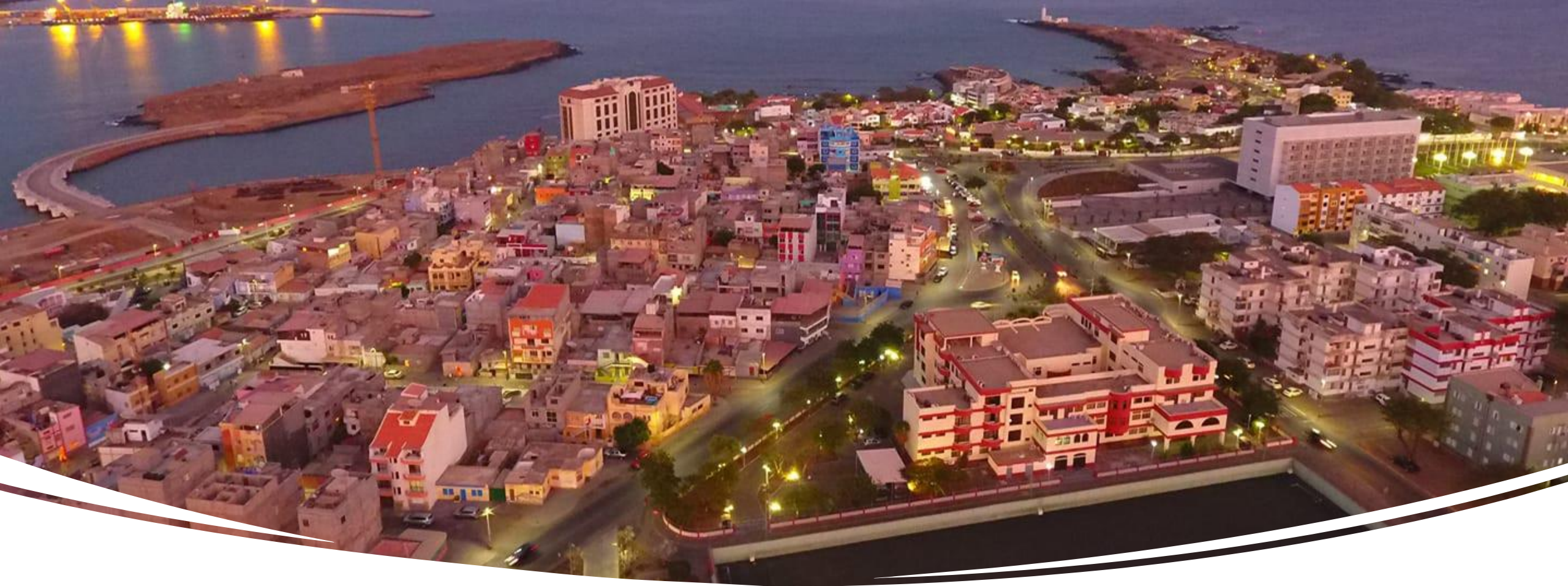
- The government implements a set of measures to provide some protection for the most vulnerable families, such as food assistance and 80 pounds, especially for families that are economically dependent on the informal sector;
- It was the responsibility of civil society organizations headed by the platform of NGO to support the executed of these measures implement by the Municipal Council and led by the Minister of Family and Social Inclusions.



Problems during the lockdown

- 20,5% of poor families would be excluded from food assistance and 36,7% of children from more vulnerable families;
- Many families were not registered in the social services or the social workers could not identify them on the ground;
- The size of the food baskets did not take in account the number of families members and there have been cases of party-political discriminations against families identify with the opposition.





Exposed the relative absence of the state

- These situations exposed the existence of gaps in the social protections system and placed the community base-organizations (led particularly from youth and woman) under pressure from families.

The social movement solutions

- Mobilization of the community solidarity movement outside the institutional sphere with a strong presence in social media (Facebook) focused mostly on the cape-verdeans diaspora in Europe and United States;
- For better performance and articulation they create a network of community association and social movements.



Network goals

- A better coordination between community base-organizations and state institutions;
- Put right in the place of charity;
- Build one own agenda through a collaborative methodology in a context marked by party-political, institutional and social colonisation.



Network goals

- In 2021, we will begin a process of mapping 17 neighbourhoods in the city, with the aim of knowing the social, economic, urban and criminological reality and, based on this local knowledge, working on the self-organisation of local associations and thinking a horizontal model of community governance;
- Changing the narrative from a new normality to other normality.



Thank you

