THE POLITICS OF HOME-MAKING:
The case of informal settlements in Viña del Mar, Chile

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The Bartlett Development Planning Unit
University College London

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Second Supervisor: Professor Caren Levy
I, Maria Ignacia Ossul Vermehren, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated accordingly in this thesis.
"In the end, our husbands are probably going to be the ones to put up the money [for the house], but the everyday struggle comes from us, the women. Here, 80% of the people that attend community meetings are women, the ones that participate in the activities are women, the ones that organise the activities are women, the ones that are responsible for handling the paperwork are women. Therefore, we are the ones making the biggest effort to either get out of here or to be able to stay."

Community Leader of Manuel Bustos, December 2015
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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For a thesis concerned with the material and symbolic aspects of home, it goes without saying that London has been an amazing, diverse and complex city in which to live and write the thesis. Many of the current issues in the UK have informed my ways of thinking and caring about them, such as, European and international politics, refugee crisis, climate change, gentrification, homelessness, women's and LBGTQ+ rights. And encouraged me to participate in demonstrations and local politics to safeguard universal rights and local aspirations. To London, my second home.

Finally, thanks to Anton, without his friendship, encouragement and love this thesis and the whole PhD process would have been a completely different experience.
ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the political role of home-making practices in women’s struggles for housing in informal settlements in Viña del Mar, Chile. More specifically, it looks at the conditions in which these practices emerge, and the ways in which they can open space for the advancement of social justice. It takes a case study approach and documents the home-making practices of two specific informal settlements. The research puts forward the analytical framework The Politics of Home-Making to understand how gender inequalities are manifested and contested through housing struggles.

Using feminist geographers’ notion of home as a way to interrogate initiatives of self-help, the thesis tackles a gap in research that tends to conceive of housing for the urban poor in material terms, and often disregards the subjective and political aspects of creating a home. This research is interested in the possibilities that the theoretical notions of home and home-making can offer to housing studies, particularly in understanding how housing mediates gender relations.

The thesis focuses on a case that has hardly been documented in Chilean academia, even though the city of Viña del Mar has the largest number of informal dwellers in the country. Unlike the majority of informal dwellers in Chile, those discussed in this case wish to stay put, and in doing so, challenge Chile’s long-established housing policy. The thesis presents primary data collected through qualitative fieldwork. It uses a set of methods, including participatory photography, as an innovative way of documenting practices and meanings of home in the context of the built environment in the global South.

The key argument that the thesis makes is that home-making practices of maintenance, construction and planning are not only routines of subsistence, but can also have a political function by embodying housing and gender claims. The findings show that, despite operating in a constrained structural landscape, low-income women are able to negotiate class and gender relations through everyday practices. It shows how women have opened space for the redistribution of resources, the recognition of their skills, and have claimed new spaces of representation and participation in the city. As such, this work contributes to the multidisciplinary debate around the role of housing and gender relations, as well as the understanding of everyday politics.
IMPACT STATEMENT

Although informal dwellers are the largest builders of housing in the world (UN-Habitat, 2003), we know little about their subjective motivations and how can housing policies support, rather than disregard, the everyday practices of dwellers in informal settlements, particularly those of women.

The research, an 8-month fieldwork using participatory and visual methods, engaged with over 90 dwellers, policy makers and academics in the region of Valparaíso, Chile. The thesis is grounded in the practices of informal dwellers in an under-researched city and as such, its findings and documentation of the case makes contributions to academia, housing policy, NGOs and the dwellers themselves.

The thesis makes the case for the use of home-making practices as a unit of analysis and an entry point to document women’s practices. It contributes to academia by putting forward a new analytical framework, The Politics of Home-Making, to examine low-income housing within a post-modern approach. The framework is comprised of three dimensions: maintenance, construction and planning of the home.

Each dimension highlights important aspects about the politics of home-making. The research provides evidence on new conditions of informal arrangements of care, updating the research of Dyck (1996); contributes to the gap in documentation of self-help housing in Chile (Arellano, 2005); provides evidence of a high rate of domestic violence and the new strategy of building safer spaces, which differs from Whitzman’s (2007) findings on the use of public space; and evidences counter-planning as a settlement strategy. Differing from Miraftab’s (2009) notion of counter-planning, the findings reveal that principles of inclusion co-exist with a neoliberal logic.

The research confirms the findings of previous feminist work in Chile and Latin America about the key role that motherhood plays in women’s political participation. The thesis updates earlier research (Hardy, 1989; Valdés & Weinstein, 1989; 1993) and puts forward the concept of Feisty Motherhood which emerged from the findings, it builds on the theorisation of Latin American scholars (Chaney, 1979; Álvarez, 1990), but distinguishes itself from them in emphasising not only the
role of motherhood, but its application to struggles for housing. This has implications for the work of feminist urban planners discussing insurgency (Meth, 2010; Miraftab, 2009), as well as for literature on development studies, gender and informal settlements (Chant & McIlwaine, 2016; Moser & Peake, 1987).

The thesis makes methodological contributions for both academia and practitioners in international development. It offers a way to use participatory photography, particularly in the built environment, to examine place-making and home-making. The set of methods as a whole, introduced with the Critical Visual Participatory Wheel, contributes by showing how feminist principles in participatory research can be a transformational tool for participants.

The thesis raises new critiques of the Chilean housing policy. It provides empirical research of a city that has hardly been studied in Chilean academia, showing evidence of a new claim among informal dwellers – the wish to stay put. This has important implications for the country's subsidy-based housing policy, which offers few alternative solutions. By systematising the new upgrading agreement of housing in the region, the research provides fresh evidence of dwellers’ claims, which can be used by local government and policy makers in supporting new housing initiatives.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCN</td>
<td>Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile (Library of the National Congress of Chile)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORE</td>
<td>Consejo Regional (Regional Counsellors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORVI</td>
<td>Caja de Habitación en la Corporación de la Vivienda (Cooperative of Housing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAV</td>
<td>Compañía Refinería de Azúcar Viña de Mar (Company of Sugar Refinery of Viña del Mar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td>Felipe Camiroaga (informal settlement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSV</td>
<td>Fondo Solidario de Vivienda (Solidarity Housing Fund)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORE</td>
<td>Gobierno Regional (Regional Government)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDB</td>
<td>Interamerican Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Manuel Bustos (informal settlement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINVU</td>
<td>Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (Ministry of Housing and Urbanism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERNAM</td>
<td>Servicio Nacional de la Mujer (National Service of Women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEREMI</td>
<td>Servicio Regional Ministerial (Regional Ministry Service)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECPLA</td>
<td>Secretaría Comunal de Planificación (Municipal Department of Planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERVIU</td>
<td>Servicio de Vivienda y Urbanismo (Service of Housing and Urbanism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>United Nations Human Settlements Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEY CHILEAN CONCEPTS RELATED TO HOUSING STRUGGLES

The following terms are used throughout the thesis and refer mainly to Spanish words, used in Chile (some of them slang), in the context of urban informality and housing policies. These are italicised in the thesis as a way to distinguish them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOMA</td>
<td>(Literally: ‘to grab’, ‘invade’, ‘squat’). Refers to the illegal invasions of land by informal dwellers. The term was coined in Chile during the 1960s with the increase of land invasions. They are planned occupations that aim for the upgrading or formalisation of land (Jirón, 2010). Today, many informal dwellers (and other actors) still refer to informal settlements as <strong>toma</strong>, and this is the case in Viña del Mar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMPAMENTO</td>
<td>(Literally: ‘camp’). This is the most common word used to refer to informal settlements in the country. The concept emerged in the 1970s-1980s, when <strong>tomas</strong> became more organised territories. The word indicates the paramilitary characteristic of the settlements, their clear internal organisation and temporary nature, as this were mostly organised by left-wing political parties (Hidalgo, 1999). For the first time in Chilean history, during the 1960s-80s informal dwellers became key political actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRIGENTE/A</td>
<td>(Literally: ‘to direct’). Refers to community leaders in struggles of housing, either of housing committees or neighbourhood associations. The term is associated with the urban social movement of the 1960s-1970s from which it emerged. The role of <strong>dirigentes</strong> was formalised in 1968 when the state recognised housing committees and neighbourhood associations through the Law N° 16.880, which legitimise the organisation around housing struggles. The term is still used today. In the research, I used the female version, <strong>dirigenta</strong>, to refer to female community leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POBLADOR/A</td>
<td>(Literally: ‘settler’, ‘inhabitant’). Refers to dwellers who live in low-income areas, either informal settlements or <strong>poblaciones</strong> which are low-income neighbourhoods. The term is still used today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLEGADO</td>
<td>(Literally: ‘close’, ‘related’). Low-income families who live with extended family in a room or in a shed in the same property. Widely common in Chile, the term was coined in the 1980s when in the dictatorship due to the strict impossibility to form informal settlements and the violent evictions, there was an increase of housing deficit which forced extended families to live together in overcrowded situation. Today, it remains as a hidden manifestation of the housing deficit and poverty. However, the solidarity of being <strong>allegado</strong> has allowed low-income households to share resources and access help in childcare (Ossul Vermehren, 2018a).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROLOGUE

How I got here and why this case study is important

Growing up in the Chilean capital Santiago, which is an extremely segregated and unequal city, I started building emergency houses for families living in informal settlements with the NGO TECHO at the age of 15. I was shocked to see that there were still people living in precarious conditions in a country that prided itself on prosperity and rapid development. I went on to work professionally for the NGO between 2008 and 2011. In Santiago, I worked in housing projects which implemented the national housing policy for informal settlements, overseeing the implementation of social programmes at a national level, and later as regional director in Valparaiso, the region with the largest number of informal dwellers in the country.

The thesis is motivated by my experience in the region of Valparaíso. Contrary to the rest of the country, in which social housing has been a final aim for informal dwellers, those living in the city of Viña del Mar have strongly rejected social housing and expressed a firm desire to stay put. In a collaborative work between authorities, dwellers and TECHO, a first upgrading pilot project was agreed for one of the settlements in the region in 2011, and a later regional agreement in 2013.

Working with a range of actors to find new and relevant housing solutions made evident the importance of articulating the knowledge and skills of different people and disciplines. It also showed me the pressing need to move away from a technical, and one-discipline approach, to a more comprehensive understanding of housing. Having been trained as a psychologist, the journey of understanding housing from its legal, political, constructive and subjective aspects has been a stimulating one – learning from the people that I worked with (architects, engineers, sociologists, economists, politicians, and from dwellers themselves) and from different bodies of literature, in order to find entry points to understand housing critically. The thesis sets out to navigate the complexities of building bridges between disciplines, with the final aim of addressing the practices and meanings of home in the context of informality.

This work is driven by the love and admiration I have for informal dwellers of Viña del Mar and their struggle to create a home in the hills of the city.

London, July 2018

1 Youth-led non-profit organisation that provides emergency and permanent housing for informal settlements throughout Latin America. See more in www.techo.org/en
In Chile, families living in informal settlements wait several years to access social housing. They organise, save and attend community meetings while their lives continue, raising children, working, starting and ending relationships. In the meantime, the informal home is made through everyday practices, and is unmade constantly, through processes of eviction, natural disasters, the separation of families and domestic violence. In Chile today, 30,000 households create homes in informal settlements, while struggling and waiting for a permanent home (MINVU, 2013). In the case of the informal settlements of the city of Viña del Mar in the region of Valparaíso, dwellers have decided to stay put, rejecting the option of living in social housing to make the informal home their permanent home.
The thesis is situated within this context and looks at the new housing claims of informal dwellers of Viña del Mar. The research examines the political role of home-making practices in women’s struggles for housing in informal settlements\(^2\). More specifically, it looks at the conditions in which these practices emerge, and the ways in which they can open space for the advancement of social justice.

Using feminist geographers’ notion of home as a way to interrogate initiatives of self-help, the thesis tackles a gap in research that tends to conceive of housing for the urban poor in material terms, and often disregards the subjective and political aspects of creating a home. This research is interested in the possibilities that the theoretical notion of home and home-making can offer to housing studies, particularly in understanding how housing mediates gender relations. The main research question that the thesis addresses is: What is the political role of home-making practices in women’s struggles for housing in informal settlements of Viña del Mar, Chile?

The thesis contributes to the current conversation within a post-modern approach to housing, on the theorisation of low-income housing as a complex and diverse material and symbolic space, and the need for new frameworks that sustain this understanding (Clapham, 2002, 2005; Harrison & Davis, 2011). It contributes to the conversations within planning and sociology scholarship, on the role of everyday practices in struggles for housing (Bayat, 2013; Holston, 2008), particularly for women (Meth, 2010; Miraftab, 2009). It also seeks to contribute to the literature on

\(^2\) I use the term ‘informal settlement’ in this thesis and not ‘slum’ in order to move away from the pejorative connotation of the latter (purposely avoiding the word when referring to dwellers). In the literature, there is an on-going debate on the use of the term. Although it has been considered problematic, as Mitlin & Satterthwaite (2012) affirm, “The term “slum” usually has derogatory connotations and can suggest that a settlement needs replacement or can legitimize the evictions of its residents.” (p.395). The authors affirm that it is a difficult term to avoid, as for example some dwellers themselves use the term to legitimise their actions (i.e. Slum Dwellers International). For similar reasons, other authors have decided to use the term. Chant & Mclwaine (2016) support the word as it is strongly linked with informality, in terms of land, housing and economy, and it is used by international organisations (e.g. UNICEF, UN-Habitat, and specifically in the goals of the SDG). Furthermore, the authors use the work in the centre of their framework “gender-urban-slum interface”, to highlight the specific spatial characteristics of gender inequalities in informal settlements.

The Ministry of Housing and Urbanism in Chile, based on the UN-Habitat definition, defines informal settlements as “Eight or more families in informal possession of land, with the lack of at least one of the basic formal services (i.e. electricity, water and sewage system) and with houses that are grouped and near each other” (MINVU, 2011, author’s translation). As Chile is extremely formal and legal, an informal settlement’s condition is mostly defined, not by the quality of access to services (i.e. amount of water) but by the legality of the access or land tenure. Informal settlements have been called campamentos since the 1990s, however some dwellers still call themselves toma as it has a political and confrontational element which emerged in the 1960s (see Key Chilean Concepts related to Housing Struggles).
development studies, gender and informal settlements (Chant & McIlwaine, 2016; Moser, 1993; Moser & Peake, 1987; Miraftab, 2006), as a way to better understand the impact that home-making practices can have on gender relations and housing struggles, and the role they play in the advancement of women's equality in cities of the global South.

The research brings these themes together – housing, everyday practices and gender relations - by examining the notion of home-making and the role of women in the creation of home. It looks specifically at practices of maintenance, construction and planning of the home, with the aim of understanding how gender inequalities are manifested and contested through housing struggles, and how they can open space for the advancement of social justice.

1.1 The value of (informal) home and how it mediates gender relations

Self-help & urban informality

The collective effort of informal dwellers in building their homes across the world is undeniable (UN-Habitat, 2003). Through diverse strategies and innovations, informal dwellers have been able to secure housing, services, public areas, and essentially extend the margins of the urban system. As Hernández & Kellett (2010) assert, “(...) informal settlements are by definition unfinished projects in which agency and creativity of the occupants-builders is central” (p.12).

The British architect John Turner (1976) revolutionised the way we think about self-help housing today. His work in Peru during the 1970s introduced the idea of housing as a verb, in which the value of housing is determined by the involvement and autonomy of residents in the decision-making process, rather than the final material outcome. Turner defended self-help as an alternative to the massive construction of housing by the state, which was prominent at the time. At the heart of his critique lies the importance of the lived experience of residents, and the meaning and value that dwellers give to their houses. Turner's ideas are still relevant today, particularly in times when the provision of low-income housing has been commodified and is seen mostly as a material need.
The self-help versus whole-housing system debate has been one of the most prominent in housing literature (Fiori & Ramirez, 1992). Burgess (1978) contested Turner’s position, stating that the self-help provision of housing undermines the role of the state – with implications for citizenship status and distributional justice. In order to explain the importance of the debate, Marcussen (1990) gives a key insight into how housing has been conceived in different housing literature, as he reveals that the difference between both positions is in the underlying conception of housing. The author argues that Turner focuses on the use value of housing – the social and cultural attributes of housing for residents - while Burgess refers to its exchange value – the value of housing as an asset. Marcussen asserts that these two housing epistemologies fail to generate a common conceptual framework, increasing the gap between theory and practice. The underlying notion of what housing is and what is it for, is at the heart of the housing discussion, especially when thinking about the role it plays for informal dwellers.

These two theoretical positions - exchange value and use value - help us identify some of the challenges that housing policies and practices face today. On the one hand, the exchange value of housing refers to the potential access to income and wealth through housing. This is particularly relevant in countries like Chile, where home-ownership is fundamental and prevalent (Cummings & Dipasquale, 2002). In terms of social change, Marxist scholars affirm the exchange value of housing can either reinforce existing inequalities or be used to tackle the redistribution of resources. On the other hand, post-structuralist scholars argue that the use value of housing addresses the cultural recognition of people's unique needs and aspirations (Appadurai, 2004; Clapham 2010), focusing on what it does for people, instead of its intrinsic characteristics (Turner, 1976).

The research positions itself at the cross-section of this discussion by looking both at the material and symbolic value of housing for dwellers. In order to do so, it applies Nancy Fraser’s model of social justice (1995; 2000; 2006), based on claims of recognition, redistribution and representation. It distinguishes claims based on material needs (access to housing), symbolic claims (recognition of dwellers specific needs and aspirations, particularly of women), and how these can be voiced and taken forward in formal and informal spaces of representation.
As I discuss in the next chapter, the struggle for low-income housing does not affect men and women in the same way. Research shows how access to housing is gendered, reflected, for example, by the fact that women own considerably less property than men in the world, and their rights are less secure (World Bank, 2011). Furthermore, although women make significant contributions to building and consolidating infrastructure in their neighbourhoods, their efforts tend to be invisible and thus go unrecognised (Tacoli & Satterthwaite, 2013). This is the case in Latin America, where women's active participation in urban housing movements is not reflected in formal ownership (Deere & León, 2014).

The documentation of women's home-making practices is offered in the thesis as one way of better understanding women’s engagement and contribution to the creation of home. They can highlight points of tension and of agency in women’s everyday life, and as such, shed light on wider housing and gender inequalities.

The thesis is therefore interested in the everyday life as a source of social change, and how women can make gender and housing claims around issues of redistribution, recognition and representation, through home-making practices. The research does this by looking at the social, spatial and political manifestation of women’s home-making practices in informal settlements. The claims and practices develop in a specific spatial and material environment that can represent evident constraints for women, while also providing possibilities for agency and solidarity.

By looking at the interface between housing, gender and everyday practices, the research engages with the gap in the literature identified by Sylvia Chant and Cathy McIlwaine (2016), where they affirm that “… there is a real need to focus on the Global South in its own right (...) but also to broaden our knowledge and appreciation of gender in relation to intra-urban heterogeneity by considering the socio-spatial significance of residence, especially as this pertains to slums” (p.4).

*Why Home?*

Housing for the urban poor has usually been understood by housing studies and international organisations as a matter of improving provision, access and affordability. While access to housing is still a major problem, overstating housing as
a material need can be problematic, as it undermines not only the full potential of housing (King, 1996; 2003), but the multiple needs and aspirations of its residents (Walker, Frediani & Trani, 2013), disregarding the subjective and political aspects of creating a home for dwellers (Brickell, 2012a).

Phenomenological approaches to housing have addressed part of this gap by focusing on the experience of the dwelling for residents (see Bachelard 1969; Heidegger, 1971; King, 2005), without necessarily engaging with power relations embedded in housing, or acknowledging the experience of social relations.

Feminist geographers and feminist theorists (see Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Young, 2000) have introduced the theoretical notion of home as a way of exploring the personal and subjective feelings of home, at the same time challenging patriarchal ideas of public and private spheres, and unequal power relations in the home space. Yet, this concept has hardly been used in low-income housing, mostly because housing studies tend to use the notion of ‘home’ as encompassing only the personal and private realm, and not as the subject of housing policy. However, throughout this thesis, I argue that if we engage with the concept of home in a critical way, it has the potential to open new spaces to examine issues of gender inequality in struggles for housing.

In the next chapter, I put forward a definition of home and home-making practices adapted to low-income housing, building on the literature of critical geography of home. I understand home, referring to housing or shelter, as a space of contestation, grounded in multiple scales, time and feelings, and embodied by its dwellers, as a site of vulnerability and conflict, but also of empowerment and agency. This definition of home differs from the traditional understanding of housing, as it takes into account the non-material aspects, such as activities, relationships and emotions, as well as power relations in the creation of the home space.

For residents in informal settlements, making a home usually develops within an adverse context. Home-making practices are related to the land invasion itself, the on-going construction of the house, the possibility of connecting to basic services and the ability to live an everyday life in the settlement. The main argument of the thesis is that home-making practices do not only have a practical role, but have a political function by embodying housing and gender claims. In order to address this,
I develop theoretical and analytical distinctions for home-making practices, between practices of maintenance, construction and planning of the home.

In this research, I am interested in the potential that home and home-making, as theoretical notions, offer to the housing literature, namely unveiling power relations, multiple scales, diversity and intersectionality of social identities and emotions, and particularly how housing mediates gender relations.

1.2 Empirical Context

*How the poor have historically accessed housing in Chile*

Housing policy plays a key role in understanding the way in which the urban poor access housing in Chile, as the main strategy for acquiring a permanent home is through targeted housing subsidies. Chile’s housing policy is known as an established and effective policy within Latin America. For the last 40 years it has consisted of large-scale direct subsidy programmes, which are constructed mainly by the private sector and financed by the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism (UN-Habitat, 2011).

During the 1990s, the historical housing deficit was successfully reduced through the massive production of subsidised housing. However, while the housing deficit seemed to have been addressed, other urban and social problems emerged as a result. Extensive construction on low cost land at the peripheries of cities created greater inequality and urban segregation, a phenomenon that was referred to in Chilean academia as "the problem of those with a roof" (Rodríguez & Sugranyes, 2004, p.53). This showed that households living in social housing were afraid and felt ashamed of their neighbourhoods. They were overcrowded and had a higher concentration of domestic violence than any other type of housing (Rodríguez & Sugranyes, 2004), contributing to the overall phenomenon of *ghettoisation* of poverty (Sabatini & Brain, 2008).

Since the 1990s, the housing policy has developed more comprehensive programmes, aiming to tackle not only housing, but also poverty, and as such has included social programmes as well as specific interventions for informal settlements. However, despite changes in administration and the incorporation of
new social programmes, the approach remains similar and housing subsidies are still the main tool used to address housing informality (Jirón, 2010).

The specific case study examined in the thesis puts into evidence the negative perception that contemporary informal dwellers have of social housing. Thousands of dwellers reject social housing due to the conditions that it offers (i.e. housing in the peripheries of cities, small spaces, low participation in housing project) and as such see moving to social housing as detrimental to their quality of life (Ossul-Vermehren, 2018; Pino & Ojeda, 2013). The rejection of social housing and the idea of building their own house through self-help, is an indication of dwellers' wishes to regain control over their housing conditions, and thus of their lives.

In the case of Chile, understanding the urban and spatial aspect of poverty is fundamental, as although social policies have been effective in reducing absolute poverty (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2015), they have not translated into the creation of more equal cities (Cociña, 2017; Zunino & Hidalgo, 2009), and socio-economic inequality and urban segregation remains a fundamental issue in the country (UNDP, 2017).

Although informal settlements in the country are not as prevalent as in the rest of Latin America (UN-Habitat, 2003), the number of informal settlements has increased consistently in the last 20 years (MINVU, 2013). Furthermore, women and children are the ones most affected, as there are more women in poverty (54%) (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2015), and more women live in informal settlements than men (MINVU, 2013). Therefore, the relationship between informal settlements, social housing and gender becomes a fundamental area of enquiry in order to address some of the challenges of social and urban segregation in Chile.

“It must be the love that we all have for the hill”

Viña del Mar city is located in region of Valparaíso. The region is the second most densely populated in the country and more than 90% of its population live in urban areas (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2017). In the mid-19th century, Valparaíso city was the most important city-port in the country and a centre of European

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3 Quote by community leader of Manuel Bustos, explaining why dwellers would like to stay put (Interview September 2014).
immigration. As a result, the adjacent city of Viña del Mar was populated by Europeans, and their legacy is still evident in the architecture of the city. Since the 1980s, Viña del Mar has enjoyed one of the highest rates of national and international tourism in the country, due to its beautiful beaches and entertainment options.

Until recently, the high number of informal settlements in the city of Viña del Mar was relatively unknown. The image of the city, branded as the “Beautiful City”, contradicts the figures: Viña del Mar has the highest number of informal dwellers of any city in the country (MINVU, 2013). The informal settlements are concentrated in the hills, and are built on gorges and steep slopes (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1| Informal Settlements in Valparaíso Region**

In contrast to the visible and politicised land invasions in the capital city of Santiago between the 1960s and 1980s (Castells, 1983), and active social movements demanding better housing during the 1990s, the land invasions in the city of Viña del Mar were less visible. Most of the land invasions occurred later during the 2000s and as such, informal settlements in Viña del Mar have been called the *silent land invasion* by historian Luis Vildósola (2011). This is due to the lack of wider coverage,
the relatively low level of confrontation with political authority, and the gradual take-over of land⁴.

In Viña del Mar, the urban poor have historically moved further and further from the city centre or plan [flat area] to the steep hills that surround the city. Despite the evident difficulties in accessing the settlements - mainly because of the steepness of the hills, the few roads that connect them to the city centre and the limited transport options – dwellers hold a desire to stay put. Their claims are based on an opposition to the historical negative effects that social housing has had on informal dwellers in the country and, in turn, the value they see in self-help housing as a process which is autonomous and over which they have control (Arellano, 2004; 2005; Vildósola, 2011).

The research focuses on the case of Viña del Mar city and its large number of informal settlements. The thesis looks at two specific research sites, the informal settlements of Manuel Bustos and Felipe Camiroaga, which are both the largest in the city and the country as a whole, with approximately 900 households each (MINVU, 2013). The former is one of the most established settlements, formed almost 20 years ago and is currently engaged in an upgrading pilot project. The latter, formed less than 5 years ago, does not have any clear housing solution.

The study of the city of Viña del Mar posits a unique case, which has been under-interrogated in Chilean housing literature. While there has been wide coverage and analysis of the effects of the whole-housing system policy on the capital city of Santiago (see Ducci, 1997; Márquez, 2008; Mora, Sabatini, Fulgueiras & Innocenti, 2014; Rodríguez & Sugranyes, 2004), there has been less research on how the housing policy implemented in the 1990s affected other cities in the country, and almost no contemporary examination of in-situ upgrading options and informal dwellers' wishes to stay put (Some exceptions are Arellano 2005; Pino, 2015; Vildósola, 1999; 2004; 2011). Furthermore, the analysis of housing claims has focused on urban social movements, widely studied in the country, with less attention given to gradual and less visible housing claims. In terms of gender relations, Chilean feminists have played a fundamental role in documenting and analysing social change (see Hardy, 1989; Kirkwood, 2010; Valdés & Weinstein,

⁴ What Patrick Wakely (2018) calls “squatting by accretion” (pp. 5-6).
1993). However, the intersection of gender and the urban environment in contemporary research has not been a priority (Some exceptions are Fadda, Jirón, & Allen, 2000; Jirón, 2007).

**How to position gender equality within Chile’s political landscape**

Liesl Haas (2010) shares her first impressions from when she worked with low-income rural women in Chile during the 1990s:

> These were not women who had internalized or acquiesced in the limitations of their social roles. Many could clearly articulate their inequality but felt trapped not only by a *machista* culture but by laws that failed to guarantee their socioeconomic and political equality (p. x).

The author’s perception resonates with my experience with female informal dwellers. The quotation reveals two parallel realities for low-income women in Chile. On the one hand, an awareness of their gender and class position and the willingness to engage in social change. On the other hand, the structural elements that condition their development and participation in public life.

Chile is one of the most conservative countries in Latin America as far as women’s rights are concerned (Willmott, 2002; Staab, 2017). It was the last country in the region to have a divorce law, and abortion was completely illegal under any circumstance until 2017. Although Chile has driven to more liberal economic reforms since the 1980s, social rights are dependent on a conservative society and a controlling state (Haas, 2010).

Historically, due to constrained participation in political life, particularly during the dictatorship in the 1980s, women found alternative ways to engage in politics. As Chilean feminist literature affirms, women of all classes in the country have opened space in politics through untraditional forms of politics, particularly by politicising everyday life (Kirkwood, 2010; Richards, 2004). Well-known examples in Chile are the *cacerolazos* [March of the Pots and Pans] during the 1970s, in which women, independent of their political position and class, marched through the streets banging pots to demand better living conditions during the socialist government of Salvador Allende (1970-1973), and how low-income women tackled food scarcity during the military regime of General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1989) through the
creation of *ollas communes* [Communal Kitchens]. These examples show how women have used elements of the domestic realm, mostly through their identity as mothers, to open space in the public realm. In this context, the study of home-making practices is a relevant entry point to discuss women’s involvement in social change.

Although it is a constrained environment, Chile has also made significant progress in the representation of women’s needs. It was the first country in Latin America to establish a department of women’s services in the 1990s (*Servicio Nacional de la Mujer*, known as SERNAM). This has recently become the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality, formed in 2015. Chile also had a female president Michelle Bachelet for two periods (2006-2010 and 2014-2018). She was also the founding Executive Director of UN Women (in the period 2010-2013), and in her governments, many of the most progressive gender bills were put forward (Haas, 2010). For example, the newly passed abortion law under three clauses.

In terms of civil society both in the country and Latin America, the social movements which advocate for the end of gender violence like the *“Ni Una Menos”* [Not One More] (2016-2017) campaign, are signs of gender awareness and moves towards greater protection of women’s rights in Chile.

1.3 Research aim and research questions

The research examines the political role of home-making practices in women's struggles for housing in informal settlements in Viña del Mar. More specifically, it looks at the conditions in which these practices emerge, and the ways in which these practices can open space for the advancement of social justice in gender and housing.

I had two aims in mind when I started this research: to understand the use of the theoretical notion of home for the study of low-income housing, and to explore the possibility of establishing a relationship between home-making practices and housing claims.

The main question, *what is the political role of home-making practices?* is divided into two sub-questions (as shown in Table 1). Sub-question 1 addresses the
conditions in which practices emerge, particularly looking at housing and gender as sites of inequality; and sub-question 2 addresses how home-making practices can open space for social change, through the lens of recognition, redistribution and representation.

**Table 1| Research Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION</th>
<th>What is the political role of home-making practices in women’s struggles for housing in informal settlements of Viña del Mar, Chile?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Sub-Question 1:</td>
<td>Under what conditions do home-making practices emerge? How are those inequalities reflected in dwellers’ practices?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How do the home-making practices of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar reflect current gender and housing inequalities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Sub-Question 2:</td>
<td>How can home-making practices make claims? If they do, how can they open space for women in struggles for housing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In what ways do the home-making practices of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar open space for the advancement of social justice for women in struggles for housing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

More specifically, sub-question 1 aims to identify the structural landscape in which home-making practices of female dwellers of Viña del Mar take place, looking at the legal framework, social policies and programmes, institutions, and hegemonic norms and values. Sub-question 2 identifies home-making practices, the types of claims they make and how they challenge, contest or perpetuate power relations in struggles for housing.

The research questions start from the basis that home-making practices are important, and that everyday life can be a source of social change. By doing this, the research positions itself in specific social theories, particularly in feminist and post-modern theories, engaging with assumptions of power and how change can be
produced. The research works on the basis that 'power is everywhere'\(^5\) (Foucault, 1980), and that everyday practices can contest, assimilate and/or reproduce wider power structures. In particular, the research looks at the political function of everyday practices, working closely with the notion of resistance (Scott, 1985; Bayat, 2013) and insurgency (Holston, 2008; Miraftab, 2009), as particular types of social practice. This position acknowledges the importance of social structures and ideologies in defining the possibilities for change, as well as recognising the agency of individuals through everyday practices. In doing so, it states a specific relationship between structure and agency, moving away from the structuralist understanding of Marxist theorists, in which change is determined mostly by class relations, and towards a more feminist understanding, as a reiterative relationship between agency and structure (Chouinard, 1997). The research therefore focuses on the agency of subjects, particularly on the experience of women in informal settlements, thus placing emphasis on human experience over structure.

The thesis purposely highlights the capacities and agency of women in their daily activities, rather than only focusing on structural and spatial constraints. It focuses on the idea that although low-income women may have fewer visible ways in which to express agency, they still find ways to do so through specific and creative practices. It is important for the analysis not to assume that all actions of women in vulnerable positions are transformative just because they come from a more excluded position (Meth, 2010). It is also important to keep in mind that women’s agency is shaped by complex social relations and material precariousness. So even in the cases where women are able to show agency, the structural conditions of class and gender leave them in a constant tension between empowerment and vulnerability, in respect to a patriarchal and unequal class system (Moser, 1989).

\(^5\) Foucault’s (1980) conceptualisation of power understands it as diffused and embodied in discourse and knowledge. By stating that ‘power is everywhere’ and ‘comes from everywhere’, he asserts that power is not agency nor structure. Instead, it is a ‘metapower’ which is in constant negotiation.
Relevance of the case study

The case study of informal settlements in Viña del Mar is relevant for this research as it allows for the study of:

- The notion of home: The specific housing claims of staying put (and rejection of social housing) pose questions about the value of self-help housing in the city and in the country. If home is not legally owned, with access to services and improved infrastructure, *what is home for informal dwellers in Viña del Mar? How is home experienced and practised?*

- The political role of home-making practices: The case offers a distinct opportunity to analyse covert and gradual claim-making. Historically, these informal dwellers have not made overt housing claims like in Santiago, but instead have slowly and incrementally invaded the hills of the city, resulting in the city with the highest number of informal dwellers in the country. What housing and gender claims are reflected in home-making practices? *What are the most important home-making practices of informal dwellers? Under what conditions do they emerge?*

- Gender relations: In Chile, 80% of community leaders in informal settlements are women (Pizarro, Atria & Undurraga, 2008). In Viña del Mar women have had an active role in the everyday creation and maintenance of home, as well as in negotiating housing solutions for their informal settlements in the last few years, particularly female community leaders (hereafter *dirigentas*). On the other hand, gender issues have gradually been introduced to the political agenda and have gained a more prominent role in the last decade. *How can low-income women open space for the advancement of social justice in a constrained environment? What types of strategies are they developing?*
Expected outcomes

The object of analysis of the research is the home making practices of female informal dwellers. Home-making practices are described and discussed in relation to the conditions in which they emerge and how they challenge or navigate specific inequalities. By the end of the thesis, the research identifies:

- The most important home-making practices in the maintenance, construction and planning of the home in two informal settlements in Viña del Mar, Chile, and the relationships between them.

- The conditions under which these home-making practices emerge, making reference to specific gender and housing inequalities, which may take the form of laws, social policies and programmes, and/or hegemonic norms and values.

- The types of housing and gender claims that home-making practices make (material and symbolic claims), and the ways in which they are making them.

- The spaces that practices open in the advancement of social justice for women in struggles for housing, especially in terms of recognition, redistribution and representation.

1.4 Key argument of the thesis

The main argument that the thesis makes is that home-making practices not only have a practical role, but can also have a political function by embodying housing and gender claims.

The argument of the thesis can be unpacked through the following interrelated elements.

The first and overarching argument of the thesis is that housing is not the same as home, and that home includes not only the material, but also the symbolic and political aspects of housing. By looking at housing through the notion of home, the research proposes that low-income housing is a site that operates on multiple scales, mobilises intersecting identities and emotions, and has a key political dimension.
The second argument the thesis makes is that housing in informal settlements is not only a final outcome, but a process which is made (and unmade) in everyday life, through home-making practices of maintenance, construction and planning.

The third argument relates to the use of home-making practices as the object of analysis. Women's participation in struggles for housing tends to be unrecognised, and as such, home-making practices are a useful entry point to understanding women's roles, as they capture their everyday, and often invisible efforts. They can also reflect wider housing and gender inequalities, and looking at the micro level can therefore allow for an understanding of a wider set of relationships at the macro level.

The fourth argument is that home-making practices can be a way of making claims, and by embodying a claim, dwellers can be resisting, challenging or navigating hegemonic structures of power. As such, the research on home-making practices can open a new space for understanding covert resistance.

The thesis also makes a methodological argument. The set of qualitative methods, mostly participatory and visual, is presented as an innovative and valuable way of researching the built environment, specifically home. The methods used made home-making practices more visible and engaged with embodied and subjective aspects of housing. I argue that engagement through this set of methods holds the potential for transformation in its participants, both male and female.

1.5 Outline of the thesis

The thesis is organised into nine chapters. The first three chapters (Chapter 1, 2, & 3) introduce the research and provide the theoretical and methodological context for the empirical analysis. They position the research within a particular epistemology and allow the reader to familiarise themselves with the analytical framework. Chapter 4 provides the context and case study. The analysis and discussion follows in three empirical chapters (Chapter 5, 6, & 7), with a following chapter that does a comparative analysis between the two informal settlements using the data provided in the previous empirical chapters (Chapter 8). The final
chapter of the thesis (Chapter 9) brings together the findings and provides a conclusion. The structure of the thesis is shown in Figure 2.

**Chapter 2** positions the research in a theoretical context. It brings together literature from geographies of home, the sociology of resistance and insurgency in urban planning, and development studies and gender, to create an analytical framework that allows me to examine the findings. These elements are presented in the conceptual background, which shows the relationship between each of the areas of inquiry. The analytical framework, the Politics of Home-Making, is then presented.

**Chapter 3** constitutes the research design and process. It is divided into three main sections. The first section positions the research within a feminist epistemology, and discusses issues of reflexivity and positionality during the research. The second section explains the research design, including the phases and the methods used. It analyses the set of methods as a whole, and puts forward their potential for transformation. The last section returns to the analytical framework put forward in Chapter 2, and discusses in more detail the way in which the framework will used for data analysis.

**Chapter 4** is the contextual chapter and is formed of two parts. The first positions the research within Chile’s housing and gender policies, as a way to understand the structural landscape in which the practices of Viña del Mar’s dwellers take place. The second part introduces the specific case studies. It presents the region of Valparaíso, the city of Viña del Mar and looks specifically at historical access to housing of the urban poor. The case study has not been widely documented, so new data from key stakeholders and secondary data is included to contribute to the existing literature on the city. The two settlements are presented through their specific characteristics and claims.

**Chapters 5, 6 and 7** discuss the empirical data collected in the field. Each chapter analyses a set of home-making practices: Chapter 5 looks at the maintenance of the home, Chapter 6 at the construction of the home, and Chapter 7 at the planning of the home. Each chapter follows a similar structure, firstly presenting two practices, then analysing the practices and their limitations, and finally, examining the two research sub-questions in the discussion.
Chapter 8 discusses the similarities and differences between the two informal settlements in relation to how home-making practices can open space for the redistribution of resources, the recognition of women’s skills, and the participation of women in the access to housing. A table with the summary of the findings is provided.

Finally, Chapter 9 discusses the findings of the thesis. It starts by summarising the research findings, answering the two research sub-questions in turn. It examines the specific theoretical and practical contributions of the thesis, and points out the key implications of the thesis. It ends by opening avenues for further research.

Figure 2 | Structure of the thesis
1.6 Research reach

This research has benefited from feedback at international conferences and seminars\textsuperscript{6}, and has been exposed to both academic and non-academic audiences. The first article based on this research was published in August 2018 in English and Spanish by the journal Instituto de la Vivienda Chile (INVI), \textit{Lo Político de Hacer-Hogar: Una mirada de género a la vivienda autoconstruido}/The Politics of Home-Making: A gender-based approach to self-help housing (Ossul-Vermehren, 2018b). It discusses the contribution of the notion of home in housing literature, illustrated by the cases of informal dwellers and the pictures taken in photography workshops. An earlier publication, to which I was a contributor, discussed the role of place-making and place attachment in low-income housing in socio-natural disaster in Chile (Berroeta, Carvalho, Di Masso & Ossul Vermehren, 2017). I have also contributed to a book which compiled informal practices around the world, and in which I wrote about the Chilean housing practice of \textit{allegados} (Ossul Vermehren, 2018a).

While conducting the fieldwork in Chile, I co-organised a seminar with academics and dwellers to discuss informal settlements in the region of Valparaíso, which was called \textit{100 años de tomas en Valparaíso} [100 years of informal settlement in Valparaíso] and was hosted by Universidad de Valparaíso, Chile. I am a Research Associate at the research centre, \textit{Centro de Investigación de Vulnerabilidades e Informalidades Territoriales} [Research Centre of Territorial Vulnerability and Informality] organised by Universidad de Valparaíso, which looks at the role of informality in Chilean cities. I am also a registered researcher at the Centre of Studies of Home in the UK, organised by Queen Mary University and the Geffrey Museum, which has allowed me to exchange ideas with academics, including the director of the centre Allison Blunt, whose notion of home I examine in this research.

The methodology developed for this research has been shared in methodological sessions for MSc. students at the Development Planning Unit, UCL and I have supported students in implementing participatory photography on fieldworks in the

UK, Kenya and Brazil (Frediani, Monson & Ossul Vermehren, 2016; Frediani, Monson & Ossul Vermehren, 2017; Fernandes, Frediani, Ossul Vermehren, Morgado Mendoza & Risi, 2018).

Two short films have been made and are available on YouTube (Ossul Vermehren, 2013; 2016). The first was made after a pre-fieldwork visit, and introduces the informal dwellers’ wish to stay put, and the second was made after the fieldwork and explains the research methods, particularly participatory photography. The former won the People's Award of the short film competition at the BHP Billiton Sustainable Communities/UCL Grand Challenges "Sustainable Resources for Sustainable Cities" Symposium 2013. I have also written blog posts and opinions in the press to raise awareness of particular circumstances affecting informal settlements in Valparaíso – such as the fire of 2014 and direct action taken by informal dwellers in 2017 (Ossul Vermehren, 2014; 2017).
The research explores how the theoretical concept of home can complement the hegemonic understanding of low-income housing as a material need. Specifically, it looks at the role of home-making practices and how gender inequalities are manifested and contested through housing struggles. The main argument that this research proposes is that home-making practices not only have a practical role, but can also have a political function by embodying housing and gender claims. To build an argument capable of exploring these issues, this chapter presents a series of theoretical considerations and discussions, and concludes by proposing a framework that will be used to analyse the case study.
The challenge of this chapter is to bring together bodies of literature from different disciplines. The key themes that the research explores - home, low-income housing, gender relations, everyday practices and resistance - draw on a range of literature including feminist geography, housing studies, gender and development studies, sociology of resistance, and urban planning. Few of these disciplines have explored the relationship between all these concepts together. However, while feminist urbanists, especially in international development, have played a key role in establishing a relationship between low-income housing and gender inequalities, the notion of home has not been used extensively.

An evident challenge about researching home is that the concept is widely used colloquially in diverse groups of literature (i.e. home as family, home as household or ‘safe haven’), and do not necessarily engage with the concept in a critical way. Here, I refer to home studies as the group of literature that emerges from feminist geographers and feminist theorists (see Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Young, 2000). Home and housing studies have not had an explicit dialogue (Dowling & Mee, 2007), and as such there is little research that applies the theoretical notion of home to low-income housing, and even less that politicises home through practices of resistance. The study of everyday practices has received greater attention from sociology, geography and urban planning (see Bourdieu, 1972; de Certeau, 1988; Giddens, 1979; Lefèbvre, 1991). However, home-making practices specifically, have not received wide attention in housing studies nor in home studies (Sandu, 2013).

As such, there is a gap in the literature regarding (i) how the notion of home can be used in housing studies, particularly as a way to examine subjective and political aspects of creating a (low-income) home from a gender perspective; and (ii) how home-making practices can be researched as political practices.

Structure of the chapter

In order to address the gap in the literature, the chapter examines three areas of enquiry, each in one section of the chapter; (i) Low-income housing and gender relations as sites of inequality, (ii) Everyday Politics, and (iii) Trajectories of Change. The first section, examines literature on low-income housing, gender and
development, and critical geography of home. This section sets the base for understanding the gap in the literature between housing and home, and discusses how low-income housing mediates gender relations. The second section defines home-making practices and discusses the literature on everyday politics, specifically the literature on resistance and insurgency. This section argues for the understanding of home-making practices from a political approach, and distinguishes home-making practices as practices of maintenance, construction and planning of the home. The third section, examines social change in relation to feminist and Marxist theories, and discusses the idea of trajectories of change, as a way to think about the agency of female informal dwellers in the context of housing. The fourth and final section, brings these three areas of enquiry together in a conceptual background, which positions the research in the specific literature examined. The conceptual background illustrates the relationship between the three areas of enquiry, informing the analytical framework. The section then goes on to present the analytical framework, The Politics of Home-Making, which is used to analyse the data of the research. The framework emerged from the literature discussed, as well as from the fieldwork. This is an innovative way in which to define and categorise the role of women's practices in struggles for housing. A further explanation of how the analytical framework is used to analyse the empirical chapters is discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.2 Framework analysis and organisation of empirical chapters).

**Normative position**

In order to unpack issues of politics in the home space and how these are affected by wider structures of city production and gender relations, the research makes assumptions regarding who the agents of change are, what counts as social change and how it can be achieved. These normative positions are based on political subjectivities that establish a particular relationship between the structural elements of housing and the degree of agency that informal dwellers – and particularly women - have in pursuing a housing solution that they value.

The research assumes that; (i) informal dwellers are important actors in the production of the city, but have usually been disregarded as agents of change; (ii) the study of home-making practices can be an entry point to understanding wider power relations; (iii) changes that seem imperceptible are important, even if they
are not openly transformative. Therefore, the research is interested in exploring covert, small, and incremental change - for example, individual and group conscientisation and micro-organisation - as a powerful first step towards more overt and organised mobilisation. The strategy that the research uses is to explore informal dwellers’ home-making practices and subjectivities, instead of using other possible entry points like housing policy, social programmes, or the agency of other actors in the city, such as policymakers or housing officers.

2.1 Housing and Gender as Sites of Inequality

In urban contexts, different groups have different access to housing, and experience housing in different ways. This is not only mediated by their socio-economic position, but also by other aspects of their social identity, which determine the freedom people have in choosing housing conditions that they value. I am particularly interested in understanding the intersection between class and gender. *How do low-income women experience housing? What are their choices and opportunities? How can they exert agency in constrained contexts?*

2.1.1 Housing for the urban poor

The access to housing and land for the urban poor is an increasing site of struggle in cities of the global South (Davis, 2006). Informal settlements struggle to remain in desirable locations, and increasingly face the threat of eviction and relocation (Cabannes, Guimaraes Yafai, & Johnson, 2010). Simultaneously, social housing is systematically privatised and built on low-cost land at the periphery of cities, accentuating urban segregation (Gilbert, 2004).

*How can we explain housing inequality?* As Marxist scholars propose, the production of housing is largely shaped by issues of class and the accumulation of capital. In recent decades, housing delivery and housing struggles by the urban poor have developed in a neoliberal context where financial dynamics closely relate to the process of urbanisation. As David Harvey (2008) argues, the accumulation of wealth and surplus absorption “(…) nearly always has a class dimension, since it is the poor, the underprivileged and those marginalised from political power that suffer first and foremost from this process” (p. 33). Thus, in contexts where just a few actors have
control over the means of production, those actors have a greater capacity to use their agency to shape processes of urbanisation.

Neoliberalism, as value and practice, has permeated into multiple aspects of human life. The notion of market-based choice, property rights and free trade has redefined the relationship between the state, private sector and civil society. In this context, the private sector has dominated the delivery of services, prioritising productivity and competitiveness over citizens’ rights and equality (Zetter & Hamza, 2004).

A fundamental problem is that neoliberalism has focused on a specific type of ‘freedom’\(^8\), in which choice is understood as individual responsibility, disregarding the social and political context in which these decisions take place (Sen, 2001; Stringer, 2014). According to Frediani (2009), neoliberalism in urbanisation processes has led to “the prioritization of individual freedom (that) activates the privatization of the housing question, expanding market mechanisms, allowing land speculation to take place freely, and expelling the poorest to even more remote locations” (p. 12). This suggests that freedom of choice in a neoliberal context does not enhance the agency of the urban poor, but can further constrain their options.

On the other hand, inequalities in access to housing do not only refer to material aspects, such as affordability and availability, based on economic marginalisation or deprivation of poorer groups as discussed. They also refer to symbolic aspects, such as discrimination or non-recognition of social relations, which can influence or justify decisions and implementations of housing policies. Dwellers of social housing have been generally stigmatised, and areas with a high concentration of social housing are portrayed as violent, dirty or decaying (Harrison & Davis, 2001). These assumptions become discourses of power which create or maintain social norms, roles, and statuses and legitimise certain interventions. These beliefs, in addition to the already competitive use of land, can justify decisions in the allocation of housing policy, decisions of demolition, and/or the evictions of dwellers. In turn, these decisions do not often relate to the specific material characteristics of the situation, but are driven by stigmatization and prejudice. Even worse, in many cases, low-

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\(^8\) Amartya Sen (2001) has challenged the neoliberal notion of freedom by defining freedom, as the expansion of real choices. Moving away from development as solely economic growth or the accomplishment of basic needs, to an understanding of development in which freedom is the possibility of pursuing what each person values.
income dwellers introject these discourses themselves and assimilate decisions that affect them negatively (Manzo, 2014).

Due to the lack of housing for the urban poor and the conditions in which housing takes place, housing studies literature has focused on how to facilitate economic, political and urban processes in order to improve housing provision, while governments and international organisations have focused specifically on the affordability and accessibility of low-income housing.

State provision for the mass construction of housing during the 1960s and 1970s has evolved, with the private sector given a more prominent role in the provision of a whole-housing system. The current trends in low-income housing for informal settlements have been marked by the political and economic changes of the late 1990s and early 2000s, which moved from focusing on basic shelter to a more comprehensive understanding of housing that includes notions of sustainability, good governance and security of tenure (Jenkings, Smith & Wang, 2006).

In 2015, the United Nations Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030 to follow the Millennium Development Goals of 2000-2015. What is notable in the new goals is the incorporation for the first time of an ‘urban goal’. Goal 11 establishes the aim to "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Target 11.1 asserts access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all, basic services and upgraded slums by 2030, identifying women and girls, as some of the identities of urban residents (UNDP, 2017). The new urban goal is undoubtedly a positive sign, as for the first time, it gives urban planning a more prominent role in development, with an approach to human rights and with measurable indicators. However, it remains a one-size-fits-all approach. Some academics have raised concerns, as standardization at the city level with little attention given to the role of urban citizens, can decontextualize and devalue local and social urban realities by trying to apply a standard plan for all cities in the global South (Caprotti et al., 2017).

As such, the provision of housing for low-income residents has been mainly conceived in physical terms, highlighting shelter and efficiency of provision as its main aim. And while access to housing is still a major problem, overstating housing as a material need can be problematic. Scholars have argued that conceiving housing
as shelter undermines not only the full potential of housing (King, 1996; 2003), but the multiple needs and aspirations of its residents (Walker et al., 2013).

As examined, Marxist theories understand housing inequalities through class relations, but have less capacity to explain housing through the experience of its residents. On the other hand, by focusing on the provision of housing through economic, political and urban processes, low-income housing studies tend to undermine how housing is experienced, and what the agency of dwellers in this context is.

Along these line, Clapham (2005; 2010) argues that there is a need to develop new frameworks to approach low-income housing that understand the impact of housing on a range of aspects of livelihood, and address post material and procedural aspirations. As the author affirms, "Policy mechanisms that are designed around the concept of houses as meaningless physical structures are bound to falter when confronted with the rich and complex webs of meaning around homes" (Clapham, 2005, p.153).

In order to examine other ways of approaching this, I turn to the literature of feminist urban planning and development studies. They approach inequalities in housing (and the built environment) not only from a class perspective, but look at how different social relations are affected by urban inequalities. The following section introduces housing in the gender and development field, and then goes on to analyse how housing mediates gender relations. At the end of this section, I put forward the notion of home as a possible way to address the subjective and political aspects of low-income housing with a gender perspective.

### 2.1.2 Gender relations and housing

*Class is an important determinant of housing, but how does this intersect with gender?*

To analyse housing from a gender perspective means first to question the role that social relations play in inequality. Feminists interrogate the core nature of oppression and subordination by drawing attention not only to class issues but to gender and its intersection with other social relations. They put forward a more nuanced analysis of inequality by stating that different people are affected differently by systems of power. This means that urban processes are shaped by,
and affect, women and men, the young and the elderly, able people and people with disabilities, in different ways.

Gender refers to the set of expectations that underpin being considered female and male - a girl or a boy - and the relation between them (UNDP, 2010). This understanding recognises that gender is relational, context-specific and that it is embedded in power relations. Furthermore, the recognition of the intersectionality of identities reveals the complexity of gendered experiences in relation to race, ethnicity, class, age, or sexuality (Crenshaw, 1991). This definition of gender moves away from an essentialist view, which considers sex as the main feature, to a socially constructed understanding of gender. This has clear implications for change, as assumptions of gender can be questioned and modified.

Inequality for feminists is expressed mainly through patriarchy, a social system in which gender constitutes a differentiator in access to power, where men are predominately in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and in control of property. In the economic sphere, this is reflected in the division of labour within the family, in which domestic labour rests on the women of the household, while men pursue paid work outside of the house. Patriarchy as an ideology is influential as it restates gender norms, roles and values in society, which, in turn, define expectations around specific gender roles and relations, and influences women’s development. Patriarchy explains gender inequality, and helps us understand how it is experienced.

The two systems of power, patriarchy and contemporary neoliberalism, reinforce each other. The relationship is best understood in the subordination of women to men and the development of private property. In other words, the different modes of subordination are related to the different modes of production: reproductive and productive. Hence, subordination is not linked to biological differences between women and men, but stems from the acquisition of property, which makes the exploitation of those differences possible (Hamilton, 2013).

*Gender, Development and Housing*

The idea that cities in the global South are becoming more “feminised spaces” - with more women than men living in urban areas and the rise in female-headed
households (Chant & McIlwaine, 2016, p. 54) - makes the interface between gender and the built environment a crucial space for intervention and policy planning. Interest in this field has been addressed by researchers and practitioners in development, in particular through gender planning, a framework introduced in the 1980s “as a legitimate planning tradition in its own right” (Moser, 1993, p. 1). The reason for this was the need to think specifically about women’s needs and interests, when looking at low-income households in the global South (Moser, 2014). For a history of the development of gender planning see Levy (1996) and Moser (2014).

Specifically, in terms of housing in the gender and development field, the initial work of Caroline Moser (1987a; 1987b; 1993); Sylvia Chant (1984; 1996) and Linda Peake (1987; 1997) (see also Moser & Chant, 1985; Moser & Peake, 1987) was key to making gender inequality visible in informal settlements, and how to improve women’s living conditions and reduce those gaps. Specifically, Moser’s research in settlements in Ecuador was a break through as it offered a new way in which to think about women’s multiple roles and their fundamental function in struggles for housing.

Today we know that housing plays a central role for women, not only as an asset, but also in the possibilities that housing stability can bring to access other needs and interests of women, like the secure access to services and other urban assets (Rolnik, 2012), it has also been shown that housing can be an effective pathway out of poverty (Moser, 2009).

Contemporary work on gender and housing continues to highlight the importance of gender relations when planning cities. Chant & McIlwaine (2016) propose the “Gender-urban-slum interface” (p. 50) as a framework which identifies a series of territorial and thematic domains in which gender inequalities in cities can be addressed. The authors affirmed that change in policies has been slow: “(...) the fact is that it has taken a remarkably long time for ideas relating to ‘engendering’ the urban environment to alter through into dedicated and systematic urban policies and programmes that even address, let alone transform, gender” (Chant & McIlwaine, 2016, p. 51).

In this line, UN-Habitat plays a key role in taking the urban gender agenda forward. Recent initiatives include the Policy and Plan for Gender Equality and the
Empowerment of Women 2014–2019 (UN-Habitat, 2015). Currently, the new 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development states that goal 5 shall “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, with the aim to ensure gender equality by 2030 in areas such as domestic violence, unpaid domestic work and participation in decision-making at different political levels (United Nations, 2016). In addition to the urban goal, as introduced in the previous section. Also, efforts of pushing the urban gender agenda forward can be seen in Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing Raquel Rolnik’s report, which stresses the importance of women’s rights to housing as a way to secure other human rights (Rolnik, 2012).

In trying to understand the relationship between housing and gender, Moser’s framework (1993) offer a way in to think about how gender roles play out in struggles for housing. In particular, the framework identifies (i) the different needs and interests of men and women, (ii) their social roles, (ii) and access to resources.

Moser (1993) states that women's practical needs refer to any need or interest women have that does not challenge their accepted role in society. This is relevant when working with low-income women, as it usually refers to material needs such as access to services and infrastructure. Strategic needs, on the other hand, refer to needs that challenge women’s subordinated position to men in society, and thus aim to achieve greater equality. For example, the improvement of day care close to the father’s work place would not only facilitate the mother’s access to work, but also establish a new relationship in regard to care. This does not mean that these sets of needs are mutually exclusive. For example, it has been well-documented that women in struggles for housing in the global South tend to engage first in material struggles which can then trigger a process of conscientisation that leads to more strategic needs (Kirkwood, 2010; Moser; 1989; Patel & Mitlin, 2004).

Moser’s (1993) distinction of women’s social roles manifests itself in three different but intricately connected roles, with no clear boundaries between the domestic and public sphere. These are reproductive, productive, and community managing (and community politics). This means that low-income women usually engage in three sets of responsibilities, not limited only to reproductive practices, such as childcare and housework, but also to productive practices, usually informally, as well as community managing and participation, with the aim of acquiring infrastructure for their community.
While *community management* is “work undertaken at the community level, around allocation, provisioning and managing of items of collective consumption” (Moser, 1993, p. 34) and is usually considered as a ‘natural’ extension of women’s domestic work, *community politics* tends to refer to leadership positions that men enjoy in community boards. As Moser (1993) affirms: “In low-income communities throughout the world there is a consistent trend for political organizations to be run by men with mainly male members, and for collective consumption groups to be in the hands of women” (p. 35). Based on the community politics role, the role was then re-defined as *constituency-based politics* (Levy, 1996; Levy, Taher & Vouhè, 2000), to include the political influence that community leaders – both male and female - may develop on different territorial and political scales.

As Levy (1996) explains:

> Constituency-based politics role is defined as political activities undertaken at community, local, national and/or sometimes international levels on behalf of interest-based constituencies at the political level, within the framework of traditional/customary structures, party politics and/or lobbying/campaigning groups (…)

Thus, while this term includes Moser’s definition of ‘community politics’ (Moser, 1995), it encompasses political activities beyond the community level (p.17).

This new conceptualisation is a helpful way of examining how the struggles of low-income dwellers that start at the community level can move to other scales of influence. Thus, it can be used to examine the obstacles and facilitators that dwellers encounter in opening new spaces of recognition and representation for urban and gender struggles.

In Moser’s (1987; 1989) work, the findings show that the mobilisation of women is driven, and also accepted in the settlement, as an extension of their reproductive role. As such, identifying the nature of women’s engagement is key, as it allows us to determine women’s capacity to act independently. As Moser (1989) explains,

> If women’s mobilization is perceived of as an extension of their realm of interest and power in the domestic arena (…) it is most likely that it is in their gendered roles as wives and mothers, rather than as persons, that mobilisation is legitimized both by the women and by their men kin (p.168).
In summary, the distinction between the triple role of women in informal settlements, particularly the reproductive role and community managing, and the later theorisation of community politics into constituency-based politics, forms a conceptual underpinning of the research. This informs the categorisation of home-making practices used to analyse the case study (see Chapter 3.3), and a way in which to think about women’s involvement in reproductive work (see Chapter 5) and their role in accessing housing and infrastructure (see Chapter 7).

**Housing mediates gender relations**

As I have discussed, gender relations and urban processes interact in ways that can create different opportunities for women and men; either in providing new opportunities, or further segregating and perpetuating inequalities. There are multiple ways in which housing mediates gender relations. Research shows how both urban form (design) and urban relations (rights between women and men) are gendered (Walker et al., 2013). As Davis (2001) affirms, “Understanding women’s circumstances is essential if we are to get to grips with how housing systems operate, how inequalities are sustained and how areas of social tension are dealt with” (p.168).

Here I examine four key aspects of housing which affect low-income women.

1. Women have less access to property than men:

Women own considerably less property than men in the world and their property rights are less secure (World Bank, 2011). Some of the reasons for this are that in many countries women do not have the same ownership rights, there is unequal inheritance between sons and daughters and widow rights, and customs inhibit women’s access to land (OECD, 2014). This shows how the social and economic relationships that underpin entitlement to housing are strongly gendered.

A further problem behind access to property is that although women have played a key role in struggles for the acquisition of land, housing and infrastructure in the global South (Miraftab, 2006; Moser, 1987; Newton, 2012), and particularly in Latin America (Deere & León, 2014; Varley, 2017; Weiesenfeld 2001), their participation tends to be disregarded. Women from low-income areas have worked significantly in community managing roles to access infrastructure, improving not only their own
houses but also their neighbourhoods. According to Deere & León (2014) the problem in urban housing movements in Latin America is that although women participate highly in the process of acquiring land, this is not reflected in the titling of properties, which tends to go under their partner’s name, instead of theirs.

This double discrimination, in terms of the distribution of resources and the misrecognition of their participation, worsens economic and political inequality and reinforces women’s dependency on male relatives or partners.

2. Housing conditions determine the possibilities of care:

A consequence of their reproductive role is that women’s need for shelter is usually tied to their responsibilities to provide care. Caregiving refers to the instrumental tasks and affective relations of providing care for others (Abel & Nelson, 1990), which translates as the expansion of women’s childbearing capacity to the social realm (Charlebois, 2011).

Housing is crucial not only for women’s own well-being, but also represents the ability to care for their children, extended family or others in the community. Informal care work is a common and unrecognised task for low-income women. Thus, the material and psychological conditions of housing like space and adequate access to water, electricity and sewage are fundamental; as are the (symbolic or non-material) conditions such as safety, psychological well-being and security of tenure. For example, Meth’s (2013) study of informal settlements in South Africa illustrates how the physical construction of housing, such as its inflammable materials, directly affects women’s capacity to ensure their children’s safety.

3. Housing conditions affect housework and productive activities:

Due to the division of labour, low-income women spend more time in the home space and neighbourhood than men. Their routine, which includes housework and working informally from the home, are determined by the material and non-material conditions of the space (Tacoli & Satterthwaite, 2013). Thus, their daily activities are more dependent on, and affected by, the difficulties caused by the lack of services, the quality of housing and the topography or conditions of the land (i.e. housing on stilts or on a hill).
In terms of productive activities, women usually undertake activities in the home as a way to balance their multiple roles. In this case, housing design and infrastructure can represent a critical asset or constraint. For example, Moser’s (1987) study of an informal settlement in Ecuador illustrates how women’s laundry work as a source of income was frustrated by the difficulties in accessing water. This becomes particularly key for female-headed households, that are solely dependent on a woman’s income.

4. Gender violence and the home space:

Extensively explored in legal and psychological literature, women are more affected by domestic violence than men (Davis, 2001; Whitzman, 2007). One third of women in the world have been the victim of some kind of physical or psychological violence, in the private or public sphere (UN-Women, 2017).

The ‘private’ and covered characteristics of the home space make violence less visible and less accountable to others. Often considered as a private issue, this means that it is overlooked as a site of conflict by authorities and policy-makers. As scholars affirm, strategies to deal with gender violence need to go beyond the private and public divide, and there is a role for urban planners, designers and housing officers in improving safety for women and children (Sweet & Escalante, 2015; Sweet, 2016; Whitzman, 2007).

Domestic violence in informal settlements acquires a different reality, as it cannot be separated from the material conditions of housing (Meth, 2003). One example is the assumption that the home space is a private space; exclusive, separate, and both sound and vision proof. In the case of informal settlements, the fact that rooms may be divided by curtains or doors with no locks, that many rooms may be multi-purpose (i.e. dining room and bedroom), and houses may be overcrowded, are examples of how housing can affect the experience of violence.

If we are to think about women’s specific relationship with the material and non-material aspects of housing, as the ones just examined, then we need to address housing in a way that can reflect these aspects.
2.1.3 The notion of home as a way to address subjective and political aspects of housing

I introduce the notion of home as a way to complement the hegemonic notion of housing as a material need. As Blunt & Dowling (2006) argue, “Home is much more than a house or the physical structure in which we dwell” (p.254). From the post-modern approach of housing studies, there is a recognition that the notion of home can complement low-income housing: “An understanding of all the dimensions of home is essential for an understanding of housing and for the design of housing policy” (Clapham, 2005, p.153).

Home has been studied by different disciplines, such as architecture, history, philosophy and psychology (For a comprehensive literature review see Mallett 2004). However, here I focus on the critical geography of home and how the notion of home developed by feminist scholars could be used to address some of the gaps in housing literature, recognising the value of housing not only for its physical infrastructure, but also as the subjective and gendered experience of home.

Although feminist literature does not develop the concept specifically to analyse low-income housing, its notion of home is relevant because it addresses some key topics in regard to subjective experience. It has the potential to do this by unveiling the power dynamics of the home space, by establishing relations between residents and the built environment, by analysing the formation of identity through processes of housing and by conceiving it as place of permeable boundaries between private and public spheres.

This research engages with the notion of home developed in feminist literature (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Hayden, 1981; Martin, 1991; Young, 2000) that focuses on home as a contested space shaped by power relations that create meaning and identity. This literature puts home and gender subordination at the crux of its analysis.

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Blunt’s (2005) definition of the spatial politics of home illustrates the key elements:

This term refers to home as a contested site shaped by different axes of power and over a range of scales. Mobilizing identity beyond an individual sense of self, and geographies of home within, but also beyond, the household, I focus on their collective and political inscription over space and time and on their contested embodiment by women (p. 5)

I put forward four dimensions of home which systematise the literature when exploring home. The dimensions are as follows: home and the emotions that drive it; home through the intersection of identities; home on different territorial scales; and the political dimension of home (Ossul Vermehren, 2018b).

1. Home and the emotions that drive it:

The creation of a home is constituted by a series of multisensory experiences that allow a person to ‘feel at home’. Emotions and feelings are not only embodied by residents but are experienced in relation to places (Bondi, Davidson & Smith, 2007). Traditionally, home has been associated with positive emotions, such as safety and security. Since the 1980s, feminists have rejected the idea of home as a ‘Safe Haven’, affirming that this supports a false idea of stability, homogeneity and the personal realisation of women through permanence in the private sphere (Young, 2002). According to Honig (1994), this notion of home would not allow challenges to the subordination of women in the domestic space.

Positive and negative feelings in the home could be used by women to challenge gender roles and negotiate new ones. Besserer (2000) uses the concept of inappropriate feelings, to explain how women are able to open a space for resistance and political change by appropriating feelings that are usually considered ‘inadequate’ in that context. For example, feeling anger instead of embarrassment in relation to a specific situation in the home can open a new space for action.

Whilst emotions can act as drivers of change, they can also present obstacles for urban processes. For example, a community may have positive feelings towards their estate, but at the same time discrimination from other actors towards the area can cause contradictory feelings in its residents. The negative feelings can be introjected, and used to consolidate specific political agendas, such as eviction or demolition of housing (Manzo, 2014).
2. Home through the intersection of identities:

As Walker et al. (2013) affirm, “People have multiple, intersecting social identities that they mobilize strategically and according to specific contexts and situations” (p. 114). A comprehensive gender approach acknowledges that subordination processes take place because of the multiple identities of subjects (age, ethnic group, class ...) and, moreover, in the intersection of these multiple identities (Young, 2000). In the case of pobladora women, this means that their oppression might not only be related to class ('low-income dweller'), but also to the intersection with gender ('low-income female dweller') or other social relations ('low-income indigenous female dweller' or 'low-income disabled female dweller'). Thus, recognising the intersection of identities is important in understanding the diverse needs and aspirations of dwellers, while also understanding that people mobilise a specific social identity strategically, depending on the context. The implication for home is in the understanding that first; households are diverse (not necessarily nuclear and heterosexual) and as such it should be considered in housing policy and urban planning; and second, that women who engage in struggles of housing have multiples identities and display them strategically when they mobilised. In the case of Chile, pobladora women tend to engage in political participation through their roles as mothers.

3. Home on different territorial scales:

The historic division between the private and public sphere has been at the centre of the feminist discussion (Pateman, 1989). Many of the ideas of politics and the notion of home have been grounded in its spatial form, through the physical boundaries of the dwelling, and the private sphere (Brickell, 2012b). This has resulted in the analysis of the public and the private realm, and how this relationship supports or frustrates political participation. The private sphere, considered typically as the domestic space, has been traditionally defined as female and apolitical. In turn, the public sphere has been predominantly related to the male and as a space for political participation. This dichotomy between private and public is problematic, as it assigns a physical territory to each sphere, each with defined gender roles, and denies the possibility of participation in the public sphere to those in the domestic space. This has a negative impact on the possibility for women to participate outside of the private sphere.
Massey’s (1992) notion of scales of home has been influential in this analysis. The author states that “Home is not separated from public, political worlds but is constituted through them” (p. 27), and thus challenges the closed categories of private and public, opening home to multiple scales. Massey (1992) elaborates that the identity of the home derives “(…) precisely from the fact that it had always in one way or another been open; constructed out of movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it” (p.14) The author suggest that home is best understood as a site of intersecting spheres, in which home is created and reproduced in the domestic as much as in the extra domestic space, thus taking a multi-scalar form.

4. Political dimension of home

As it has been implied in the three points above, there is a fundamental political aspect to home. By challenging the traditional notion of home as solely a domestic space and one of positive emotions, home (particularly of low-incomes) becomes a site of struggle and of political possibility.

This dimension has been address by hooks (1990), who introduced a radical political dimension to the notion of home. The author reflects on the role that the home space had in the civil rights movement for African-Americans in the United States, as a space for organising and for political solidarity. hook sees the marginality of housing not as a site of privation, but as site of radical possibility, “a site of resistance” (p.206). As a result, home becomes a fundamental place to engage and challenge, dominant economic, political and social systems. The authors’ notion of home as a site of resistance informs the understanding of home in the research.

2.1.4 Research focus: Home as an entry point to housing

This first area of enquiry “Housing and Gender Relations as sites of inequality” has discussed how housing mediates gender relations. First, in discussing housing access and the experience of housing, it has stated that social relations - not just class - play an important role in access to housing. The section has established that low-income women are affected by, and experience, housing in specific ways, and tend to be in inferior positions to men of the same class. This was illustrated by how
housing affects women differently, through issues of domestic violence, housework and informal work opportunities, care responsibilities and property entitlements.

The thesis puts forward an understanding of home that can be used to examine low-income housing. I define home as a space of contestation, grounded in multiple-scales, time, and feeling, and embodied by its dwellers, as a site of vulnerability and conflict, but also of empowerment and agency. This definition of home differs from the traditional understanding of housing, as it takes into account non-material aspects, such as activities, relationships and emotions, as well as power relations in the creation of the home space. The implication for low-income housing is that it recognises the non-material needs and aspirations of informal dwellers. It is also a space to negotiate roles, and where new forms of agency can emerge.

I will now turn to the second area of enquiry, everyday politics, as a way to understand women's agency through everyday practices.

### 2.2 Everyday politics

*How can women contest gender and housing inequalities?* For feminist planners, social relations and urban processes are experienced in everyday life and are thus rich spaces in which everyday inequalities are manifested and contested (Beebeejaun, 2017; Hayden, 1981; Sweet, 2016).

The turn to practices in literature from the 1970s (Bourdieu, 1972; Giddens, 1979) has been tied to a later interest in the everyday, mostly from human geographers and feminists. The theorisation of the everyday has called for the need to use practices at the same level as other units of analysis: "(...) the everyday should not be viewed as a world apart from more rationally grounded realms of social action such as 'the state', 'the economic', 'the political', or whatever" (Latham, 2003, p.1998).

The ideas of *doing* and *being* are present in the notion of the everyday, and are fundamental for the research. Gender relations in the creation of home are grounded in everyday practices, and as such, “doing gender” and “doing home” are important elements in which practices are constituted by social and material forms of the built environment (Bowlby, Gregory & McKie, 1997, p.346).
2.2.1 Home-making practices

Although key to the understanding of the lived experience of home, home-making practices have not been extensively explored in home studies. Sandu (2013) suggests that more research needs to be done specifically on practices, in order to complement discourses and verbal analysis of the experience of home.

For Iris Young (2000), home-making is the intertwined process of generating meaning through the arrangement of space to facilitate daily activities. Thus, it is not only about activities and physical objects, but how these concrete actions may support or frustrate the meaning of home. The author discusses the concept of preservation, as a key aspect of home-making, to counteract the power that Martin Heidegger (1971) gives to construction in his analysis of dwelling.

Heidegger (1971) asserts that dwelling is a man’s mode of being in the world. The author states that dwelling and building stand in a circular relation: although ‘dwelling’ is produced through ‘building’, not all dwellings are ‘buildings’. By proposing this the author distinguishes ‘dwelling’ from the physical structure of the house. In Heidegger’s approach, ‘building’ has two dimensions: construction and cultivation. Cultivation is what Young calls preservation. Although Heidegger acknowledges the role of ‘cultivation’, defined as "(…) to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for (…)” (p. 147), it is overshadowed by the importance that he gives to ‘constructing’, referred to as the physical construction of infrastructure, such as “rising up edifices” (p.147).

Young (2000) argues that Heidegger’s approach to building has a double male bias. Firstly, even though women are generally excluded from the activity of constructing, that does not mean that they do not dwell: “If building establishes a world, then it is still very much a man’s world” (p. 53). Particularly, the author argues that women in the global South tend to be excluded from construction due to gender inequality in title deeds and financing, but that they usually find a way to participate through the design of the house and other activities10. The second bias relates to the explicit devaluation that Heidegger gives to ‘cultivation’ by focusing the main attention on ‘construction’.

10 Young’s (2000) argument is based on Moser’s (1987b) empirical findings researching women’s participation in informal settlements in Latin America.
Preservation refers to the domestic activities that support reproduction:

The work of preservation entails not only keeping the physical objects of particular people intact, but renewing their meaning in their lives (...) it involves teaching the children the meanings of things among which one dwells, teaching the children the stories, practices, and celebrations that keep the particular meanings alive (Young, 2000, pp. 64-65)

According to Young (2000), these repetitive and cyclical activities help to preserve the meaning of home. Although the author highlights the importance of women’s roles in preservation, in maintaining what has been constructed, the author asserts that reproductive work should not be romanticised. Beauvoir’s (1952) stark description of housework is a good reminder of this:

Few tasks are more like the torture of Sisyphus than housework, with its endless repetition. The clean become soiled, the soiled is made clean, over and over, day after day. The housewife herself out marking time: she makes nothing, simply perpetuates the present (p.470).

Both Heidegger and Young’s examinations of the creation of a home allow us to think about two important aspects of home-making: Construction and preservation. These two concepts inform my understanding of home-making. As everyday activities carried out by residents to create, construct, maintain and renew a material home while generating meaning and a symbolic sense of home in, and from, the settlement.

In this understanding, the most important aspects are the *maintenance of home and its members* (what Young calls ‘preservation’ and Heidegger ‘cultivation’), the material *construction of the home* and settlement (an aspect that Heidegger gives great importance), and individual and collective organisation at the different scales of home. This last aspect, the organisation and *planning of the settlement*, although not considered by the authors, is a fundamental aspect when thinking about informal settlements. Here, I turn to the community managing role defined by Moser (1987a), and more specifically to the constituency-based politics role (Levy, 1996; Levy, Taher & Vouhè, 2000), both discussed in section 2.1.2, as a way to think about the resources and the social relations that are mobilised to access housing in informal settlements, and thus the importance of including the planning of the informal settlement in the definition of home-making.
The understanding of home-making practices as practices of maintenance, construction and planning of the home constitutes the analytical framework put forward. This is further discussed in the last section of the chapter.

Everyday politics as an alternative to traditional politics

In Latin America, there is a long history of informal dwellers engaging in traditional politics, working together with political parties, organising into unions and participating in social movements (Castell, 1970). However, in the last decades, with the increasing withdrawal of the state and growing inequalities in cities, this type of participation in politics has decreased.

New processes of globalisation, liberalisation of markets, and changes in welfare state structures have changed the relationship between citizens and states, affecting how citizens engage with politics (Bayat, 2013; Holston, 2009; Watson, 2009). The implications are that low-income citizens are less protected by the state, and exist in a context in which their political participation tends to be limited or inadequate (Cornwall, 2002). This leaves low-income dwellers distanced from traditional spaces of participation and representation, making it more difficult to make claims, and with the need to find alternatives for the provision of minimum services and infrastructure.

This has been supported by a group of incipient literature on the “disappearance of the political” (Swyngedouw, 2014), stating that politics has been replaced by a technocratic and managerial approach, resulting in the “marketization of the public sector” (Marquand, 2004, p.172). It states that although there is public electoral debate, citizens play a passive role because politics is shaped behind closed doors by ‘experts’ and by the private sector, giving only an illusion of democracy.

The point here is not to disregard the fundamental role of traditional politics as a way to bring about change, but to expand its realm by considering other forms and sites where it manifests, in order to complement and shed light on non-traditional subjects of politics, such as more marginalised groups in the city.
Literature on everyday politics argues for redirecting the view to everyday practices or micro-politics, activities and power relations grounded in particular contexts and spaces:

Everyday politics involves people embracing, complying with, adjusting, and contesting norms and rules regarding authority over, production of, or allocation of resources and doing so in quiet, mundane, and subtle expressions and acts that are rarely organised or direct (Tria Kerkvliet, p.232, 2009).

Everyday politics is an entry point to undertake research about female informal dwellers, as they tend to be removed from traditional spaces of politics, but also because, as feminist planners argue, power relations in urban processes are experienced and negotiated not only in the sphere of policies but are embodied in everyday life. In order to examine the political characteristics that home-making practices can take and the agency of informal dwellers, I turn to the literature on resistance and insurgency, as a type of everyday political practice.

### 2.2.2 Practices of Resistance

The literature on resistance (and insurgency), makes the case that not everyone is in a position to exert overt power. According to Bayat, (2013), “The resistance paradigm helps to uncover the complexity of power relations in society in general, and the politics of the subaltern in particular” (p.42). Everyday resistance emerged in association with poststructuralism during the 1980s. Foucault’s (1980) idea that ‘wherever there is power there is resistance’ provided a base to think about micro-politics. Since then, it has had a revival in urban planning, in the form of the notion of ‘insurgency’ (see Holston, 2008; Meth, 2010; Sandercock, 1999) as a response to the current context of neoliberal cities, growing inequalities and lack of infrastructure for low-income groups. The literature on resistance and insurgency suggests another way of doing politics, giving value and meaning to the subversive strategies - the ways of ‘making do’ - which come from ordinary citizens (de Certeau, 1988).

The idea that the poor were able to resist ‘oppressors’ with everyday practices was firstly introduced by James Scott (1985;1986). The author looked at peasants and slaves in particular and the ways in which they contested oppression, mainly through non-cooperation and cultural resistance. By doing this, Scott gave value to covert and unorganised forms of resistance, contrary to the more common overt and
organised forms of mobilisation. Some of the critiques of Scott’s work have been in relation to the portrayal of covert resistance as the only viable way to contest subordination. The motivation behind the practices has also been questioned, stating that subjects in positions of subordination may not be able to recognise their position, and thus find it difficult to consciously resist power, making reference to Gramsci’s (1971) concept of the hegemony of power.

De Certau’s (1988) distinction of practices of resistance is particularly helpful as he distinguishes different types of agency in powerful and non-powerful actors, calling them strategies of the powerful and tactics of the weak. Whilst the former are practices that are linked to a place and institution, the latter are actions that seize an opportunity. Tactics are practices in isolation, without clear strategy and without sight of the adversary as a whole. They are seen as opportunities for those with less agency, who cannot use overt forms of power, but instead “make use of the cracks” (p.37). De Certau’s (1988) use of resistance has been criticised for its broad understanding of the concept, allowing ‘anything and everything’ to be deemed resistance.

So, what constitutes resistance and how can we identify it?

**Characteristics of resistance**

Defining resistance is not an easy task, as there are multiple (and often conflicting) understandings of resistance. Furthermore, resistance has been often romanticised (Abu-Lughod, 1990; Cresswell, 2000), or falls in the trap of defining any practice by marginal groups as an act of resistance (Bayat, 2013; Meth, 2010). The definition of resistance touches on complex issues such as the relationship between consciousness and action, which still remains a major sociological dilemma (Giddens, 2000). It sits on the fragile line between resistance and accommodation, which determines whether an action is supporting or challenging structures of dominance. As such, I discuss three contested characteristics of resistance present in the literature, these are intentionality, outcomes and collectiveness. In order to develop my own understanding of the concept. The notion will be used to think about the home-making practices of informal dwellers in the case study.
Resistance is an interactional process, more than a dichotomy between resisters and dominators. As Foucault (1980) holds, domination and resistance are in constant relation. Similarly, as a socially constructed process, what one observer may see as resistance, another may be interpreted by another as accommodation (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004). The cultural and contextual knowledge of the researcher is key to making sense of the situation, especially in cases where resistance is externally defined (Korokovin, 2000; Meth, 2010).

While resisting power, individuals or groups may simultaneously support the structures of dominance that necessitate resistance in the first place (Fraser, 1989). In other cases, a single activity may constitute both resistance and accommodation to different aspects of power or authority. Increasingly there has been a call for resistance to be understood as socially constructed and performed in context, specific to events, actors and practices (Prasad & Prasad, 1998; Thomas & Davies, 2005a). As defined by the feminist notion of situated knowledges (Haraway, 1988), my approach to defining resistance comes from establishing a dialogue between the researcher and the object of study. ‘Situated knowledges’ questions the objectivity and universality of scientific research, and positions knowledge as a complex, contradictory and multiple body that needs to be grounded to specific contexts. This approach gives greater responsibility to the researcher to understand the context and the prevailing systems of power, and to determine, in collaboration with subjects, what constitutes resistance and what does not.

The literature of resistance agrees that a practice of resistance is an action that is in opposition to something (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004). Thus, it is a particular way of exerting agency, which challenges, defies or offers an alternative to hegemonic ideologies, values, and discourses, as reflected in normative roles and relations, and in the institutions of society, policies, social programmes and legal frameworks.

The main difference in the literature in understanding resistance relates to whether practices must be intentional – if subjects must be conscious that they are resisting – and in the visibility of the outcomes – if the act of resisting and the desirable outcome are visible (i.e. for target, observant or researcher). Social mobilisation is a clear example of resistance, as it is an action of opposition, in which subjects join and organise with a clear intention and with an observable outcome for the “target” (i.e. government, private company etc.). However, assessing home-making practices
poses difficulties as they tend to be more covert, and have less obvious intention. An example would be the question of whether a housewife doing (or not doing) housework, or an individual building a house in a settlement, is a practice of resistance.

On intention

Must the subject be aware that she or he is resisting some exercise of power? There are three main approaches towards intention. For Scott (1985) and Leblanc (1999) awareness is key, since they argue that intent is a better indicator of resistance than outcome. Other authors argue that it is difficult or impossible to assess intention, referring particularly to methodological problems, considering that actors may be unable to fully articulate their motivations in terms that would be recognised as resistant by the interviewer. As such, they conclude that it is better to measure the act and infer the intention (Weitz, 2001). A third approach argues that intent is not altogether central to understanding resistance (Healey, 1999), since it can occur “at a level beneath consciousness” (Hebdige 1979, quoted in Leblanc 1999, p.15).

Similarly, for Bayat (2013) the distinction of intended and unintended practices is not useful, as resistance is explained by the consequences of acts in the political landscape in which they operate. For example, if poor families tap into electricity illegally from the municipality with no clear defiance of authorities, it is possible to externally identify that this has a long-term consequence for the relationship between poorer areas and the city.

I agree with Bayat in the sense that consequences of acts that seem initially to be survival practices can take on a particular meaning when analysed in a particular context. Thus, identifying intention is not necessary in assessing whether a practice is resistance, if the outcome is evident. However, I would also recognise those practices that are identified by agents as resistance even when the outcomes are not evident or visible - for example, when a woman puts in place a plan to leave an abusive relationship but has not been able to achieve it. This shows a process of conscientisation even when the outcome has not been successful.

Feminists refer in particular to empowerment as the first step for more overt transformation. Following a Foucauldian conception of power, empowerment is conceived of as a positive and enhancing power, in which subjects gain control over
their lives with a comprehension of their environment. If we think about empowerment in regard to urban struggles, these have frequently been a catalyst for women’s political engagement (Kirkwood, 2010; Moser, 1989; Patel & Mitlin, 2004). As women have found themselves in more empowered positions due to the need to acquire infrastructure and services for their families, they have been able to challenge power inequalities not only in terms of class, but also of gender relations (Wiesenfeld, 1998).

On visibility of acts and outcomes

The main issue with visibility is that, if unobservable acts qualify as resistance, whose assessment counts? (i.e. subject, target of the resistance act or researcher?). Rubin (1996) holds that resistance should be reserved for visible and collective acts that result in social change, and not “Everyday acts... that chip away at power in almost imperceptible ways” (p.241), thus critiquing a ‘minimalist’ approach to resistance. Alternatively, Scott (1985) posits that it should be observable but not necessary recognised as resistance by the powerful.

Visible outcomes may refer to claims which are defending already achieved gains, and thus defending entitlements. For example, making claims related to a social programme that has not been delivered or an existing law that has not been implemented. However, it could be that subjects are making new claims, thus expanding their space by winning new positions, for example, in the new allocation of funding for a certain project, or the introduction of a new law. Different strategies can lead to different political consequences. Furthermore, depending on the nature of the resistance and the sphere that is being claimed, it may be either more transformative-orientated, as it is the claim for a specific right, or have subtler long-term orientation, such as a change in attitudes or behaviour.

As mentioned in the previous point, I consider the consequences of an act as an indicator of resistance. Observable outcomes are easier to identify than intention but require a good understanding of the context and a reading of the prevailing systems of power.
On collectiveness

There is an agreement that overt resistance is always collective and organised (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004), and this is particularly evident in literature that makes reference to material gains such as struggles for infrastructure (Holston, 2009). However, in the literature which refers to symbolic gains such as identity and meanings, the focus tends to be on individual practices. It can be argued that one person’s resistance can (eventually) have collective implications and outcomes (Shaw, 2001).

Bayat’s (1997; 2013) concept of non-movements is useful in explaining the relationship between individual and collective practices of resistance. The concept refers to the acts of resistance of individuals in an uncoordinated way.

(...) are made up of practices that are merged into, indeed are part and parcel of, the ordinary practices of life. Thus, the poor people building homes, getting piped water or phone lines, or spreading their merchandise out in the sidewalks (...) (Bayat, 2013, p.21).

According to the author, subjects configure a passive network that remains invisible and with no evident meaning until the gains are threatened and the struggle is made conscious. This allows us to explain how individuals that are apparently independent of each other and without active networks, organise and engage in collective action when they feel threatened.

This approach explains practices not in a dichotomy between the individual and the collective, but as a continuum. It sheds light on the importance of identifying individual and atomised actions (performed by many) and seeing them as a passive network that can be activated under certain circumstances. Thus, the identification and analysis of these initial practices could be a different entry point to understanding politics and could shed light on the process of engaging in more collective and visible struggles.

A second point on collectiveness relates to what it says about the mobilisation of a certain social identity (e.g. women’s mobilisation from a position of motherhood) and what the implications are for collective action and solidarity. Recognising the aspect of identity that people deploy for mobilising helps in assessing the extent to which it challenges structural inequalities, and finds ‘room for manoeuvre’ in
different roles and power relations (i.e. understanding which roles are legitimate and recognised socially, or in that particular context and can be co-opted).

The content, as well as the outcome of the resistance, may be categorised considering the nature of the claims, and whether they refer to material or symbolic gains.

**Material Claims**

Material claims refers to subjects attempting to gain or improve the built environment and services. The claims are linked to the access and distribution of resources, such as housing, land, and water, as well as care and health services. Literature on *insurgent planning practices* (Holston, 2008; 2009; Meth, 2010; Miraftab, 2009; Sandercock, 1999) has addressed material aspects of resistance by discussing the role of informal dwellers in the production of the city.

The practices of opposition, reflected in the alternative housing and services solutions of the urban poor exist against a state that has failed to deliver, or to deliver effectively, on various fronts (i.e. housing, employment, security, day care). Insurgency is explained as the result of unequal processes of urban planning, and makes the call for a different planning process, and the use of a more radical planning\(^\text{11}\) approach (Sandercock, 1999; Miraftab, 2009; Meth 2010).

Insurgency is justified in a moral and practical sense, in which informal dwellers are filling the gaps left by the state and the market in the provision of housing and services as a means of survival. As Holston (2009) argues;

> My point is that it is not in the civic square (...). It is rather in the realm of everyday and domestic life (...) around the construction of residence. It is an insurgence that begins with the struggle for the right to have a daily life in the city worthy of a citizen’s dignity. (...) These are the citizens who, in the process of building and defending their residential spaces, not only construct a vast new city but, on that basis, also propose a city with a different order of citizenship (p.264).

\(^{11}\) The notion places emphasis on inclusion and participation. Radical planning practices respond to neoliberal specifics of dominance operating through inclusion (Miraftab, 2009).
Material resistance can be individual or collective. In more organised arrangements these can take the shape of overt planning practices that fill the gap of service delivery and challenge the authority of the state, such as in cases of eviction. The scale in which resistance takes place varies, but it tends to be at the neighbourhood or city level, with the final aim of renegotiating the relationship between dwellers and the state.

**Symbolic Claims**

Although most literature of resistance points to material claims, post-structural feminists argue that there is also the need to acknowledge claims that have symbolic gains - linked to the renegotiation of meanings and subjectivities (Thomas & Davies, 2005a). In the context of assessing housing with a gender perspective, hegemonic discourses on gender roles and identity becomes an important site of discussion. As such, by doing or saying something, dwellers can challenge power relations by destabilising 'truths', subjectivities and normalizing discourses.

For feminists, practices of resistance are a way of challenging and renegotiating gender relations. Poststructuralist feminists focus on women’s subordination in their multiple and intersecting identities. They recognise that gender roles are discursively constructed, because identity is created through and with others (Thomas & Davies, 2005b). In contrast to modern feminists who focused mostly on issues of redistribution - for example equal access to rights for men and women - poststructuralist feminists focus on issues of recognition, acknowledging the “difference within difference” (Harrison & Davis, 2001). Practices of resistance are based on the construction of discourses and narratives that challenge hegemonic notions of gender relations. For example, a woman inserted into a traditional society that decides not to marry, or a woman who suffers domestic violence realising she deserves a better life.
Here, resistance is defined as;

(...) a constant process of adaptation, subversion and reinscription of dominant discourses. This takes place as individuals confront, and reflect on, their own identity performance, recognizing contradictions and tensions (...) Resistance is, therefore, stimulated by the contradictions, weaknesses and gaps between alternative subject positions (...) To resist something also means to reify it, by privileging it as a meaningful area for political contest (Thomas & Davies, 2005a, p.687).

This way of defining resistance is based on changes in narratives and meanings, which result in subtle changes in discourse or in personal empowerment, as Faith (1994) affirms: “Resistance weakens processes of victimization, and generates personal and political empowerment through the act of naming violations and refusing to collaborate with oppressors” (p. 39).

As such these practices may be less visible and transformative-orientated than material resistances, but can re-write discourses within a particular context in the long-term, “(...) valuing the small pockets of resistance that sound a liberatory note and make a difference to how people live their lives and live with themselves.” (Thomas & Davies, 2005a, p.701). Resistance occurs mainly at a personal level, but can have a meaningful impact on the ideological and behavioural level, by questioning hegemonic gender norms and roles.

2.2.3 How to think about home-making practices as everyday politics

In summary, I understand a practice of resistance as an action that is in opposition, which can take the form of discourse or action, be individual or collective and overt or covert, in which there is a clear intention or an observable outcome. In the first case, although methodologically speaking it is more difficult to ascertain and there are issues of conscientisation (if the subjects themselves recognise it as resistance), the intention has a value even if the act does not have visible outcomes. In the second case, observable outcomes are easier to identify but require a good understanding of the context and a reading of the prevailing systems of power by the researcher. The practices of resistance can be around issues that represent material and/or symbolic gains, defending what has been promised or demanding new claims.
This understanding of home-making includes the practical elements of maintenance of the home, construction of the home, and planning of the home, but incorporates an overarching political dimension, which comes from the understanding of home examined before in Section 2.1.3. The political dimension manifests in the function that these practices may have in consciously or unconsciously resisting, challenging and assimilating relations and ways of living in the house, settlement and city.

In the literature review, I address both material and symbolic resistance, which are not usually considered together. The material aspects of resistance relate mostly to housing literature, while the symbolic aspects of resistance, relate to poststructuralist feminist literature. Being able to use both types, allows me to interrogate different levels and types of home-making practices, and not only focus on material gains, but also on discourses and narratives around gender relations.

The third (and last) area of enquiry looks at trajectories of social change as a way to think about the agency of female informal dwellers in contexts of housing struggle.

### 2.3 Trajectories of Social Change

*How can home-making practices bring about change? What type of change is possible through everyday practices?* For feminists, social change is expressed in the change of power relations and change of power in structural arrangements (Gottfried, 1996). Although feminists identify the general oppression of women by structures in society, they consider women not as passive recipients of the consequences of social change, but as active agents (Levy, 1996; Moghadam, 2003). If gender is considered a social construct, then what is considered male and female in society is not a given, and there is space to manoeuvre and renegotiate roles and expectations (Larsson, 2001). Thus, social change in feminism is a process of changing beliefs, behaviours and institutional arrangements, and “is not simply the claim for specific rights” (Lavrin, 1998, p.5).

Frameworks of social change for gender equality (see Hirdman 1991; Levy 1996) identify that change occurs on at least at three different levels; ideologies and culture, institutions and policies, and in everyday interactions. I understand these three levels as entry points for change, recognising that changes in these spaces can
challenge ways of thinking, doing and experiencing gender relations. Although the levels interact with and support each other, this does not mean that change on one level will necessarily lead to change at the other levels. For example, policy changes or the introduction of a new law do not necessarily imply that behaviour will change immediately. However, one level can influence the other, pushing forward processes of social change towards gender equality.

Authors from different disciplines affirm that self-awareness (i.e. conscientisation, consciousness-raising, individual empowerment) is the first step for processes of social change\(^{12}\) (Freire, 1996; Levy, 1996; Turró & Krause, 2009). This is a process in which subjects come to a more in-depth realisation of their social and political context, acknowledging the existence of power relations and their position in that context. Self-awareness could lead to solidarity, in helping to identify others who may be in a similar position.

As a result, feminists focus on a transformative or empowerment-based conception of power, conceived of as positive and enhancing power (*power from within*), which is presented as an alternative to the more masculine notion of *power over*. This focus thinks about change in different terms to Marxism, as it recognises individual change as the first step towards more overt transformation. Feminists have critiqued Marxism for solely focusing on structure over agency, as by focusing on capitalist relations of production and consumption, the class system is portrayed as an inevitability, with less space for change and less recognition of other types of struggle (besides the class system). Poststructuralist feminists see agency not as an inherent, internal force located within the individual that pushes back against social structures, but instead see agency and structure in a relational process.

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\(^{12}\) Freire (1996) in his book “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” coined the term *conscientisation* referring to the use of education as a means of becoming more aware of one’s own reality. As well as being aware of social and political contradictions, it also refers to taking action informed by this understanding. Levy (1996) in the “Web of Institutionalisation” defines *consciousness-raising* of women and men as the starting point in the process of mainstreaming gender. Turró & Krause (2009) define *individual empowerment* of community leaders in low-income neighbourhoods as the first step for more engaged participation in the community, and towards collective mobilisation.
This notion aligns with Clapham’s (2005) post-modern critique of current housing approaches, by highlighting the interactional dimension of change:

Where individuals and households are considered, they are often assumed to have a simple, universal and rationalistic aim. Some approaches focus on the choices that households make; others concentrate on the factors that constrain choice. There is little analysis of the interaction between choice and constraint, that is, between action and structure (Clapham, 2005, p.1)

2.3.1 Redistribution, Recognition and Representation

Fraser’s (1995; 2000; 2006) three-dimensional model, is a pertinent way to understand issues of gender and housing claims, and the process of claim-making. The author’s model, widely used to examine social movements, is particularly useful for addressing processes of social change for housing with a gender perspective.

The model accommodates claims of recognition, and claims of redistribution, which relate to the symbolic and material dimensions identified previously in the discussion (section 2.2.2), and how these claims can be framed in processes of governance and decision-making, through representation. The author explains social injustice as the combination of economic maldistribution and cultural misrecognition. These two types of injustice are identified as follows: “The first is socioeconomic injustice, which is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. (...) The second kind of injustice is cultural or symbolic. It is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication” (Fraser, 1995, p.70-71). The first is addressed through the redistribution of resources, and the second by gaining recognition. The distinction is mainly analytical, as “redistributive remedies generally presuppose an underlying conception of recognition” (1995, p.73). Hence, both systems of injustice are interrelated, and processes of oppression can result in a “vicious circle of subordination” (Fraser, 2000, p. 118). For example, getting paid less for being a woman impacts the number of resources women manage (i.e. distribution), which can impact the possibility of them participating as equals with their partners and in society in general (i.e. recognition and representation).

The notion of representation, included later in Fraser’s model (2006), constitutes a third political dimension of social justice. It is linked to redistribution and
recognition, and it refers to how and where political claims are being framed in the political system. The author states that this has become particularly important in recent decades, as globalisation has changed the relationship between nations and citizens. The incorporation of representation allows us to examine both the spaces for decision-making, and whether there are governance structures in place to achieve those claims.

Fraser focuses on representation with the end goal of changing social institutions. The author locates the injustice in institutionalized hierarchies of cultural value that prevent some members of society from participating as peers in social interaction. I use the notion of representation, not as a way to directly engage with social institutions, but as the formal and informal political space – between recognition and redistribution – in which claims can be negotiated by female informal dwellers.

2.3.2 Relationship between agency, structural landscape and trajectories of change

In the first section of the chapter, I have implicitly stated the importance of the structural landscape in determining access to housing for female informal dwellers. We have seen that Marxist theory focuses on the importance of structure over agency, by stating that class systems determine change. While feminists agree on the importance of class division, they also explain constraints on choices and opportunities through the intersection of multiple and diverse identities. Some of the structural elements in housing may relate to the way capital is distributed, inter and intra-class divisions, patriarchy, urban laws and precedents of social movements. The key point here is that different groups in society are affected differently by structural factors, and that they can only be analysed if they are narrowed down to a specific structural landscape. Oppression needs to be seen as “temporary and contextualised” (Renegar & Sowards, 2009, p.9), as there are multiple sources that may be in intersecting with each other.

The structural landscape or ‘rules of the game’, may be defined by particular rules of patriarchy and/or rules of housing, which define, limit or encourage women’s options. As Harrison & Davis (2001) affirm, structural factors “confirm[s], embody, manifest and operationalise the interest of the powerful” (p.7), stating that changing
the status quo is a difficult process, especially for those individuals and groups that hold less power.

The influence of the identification of the structural landscape is twofold. First, the uneven power relations generate inequalities in terms of choices and opportunities for different groups, and second, the structural landscape determines a specific space for political action. Thus, the context in which political action takes place, as well as how and what kind of inequalities it generates are fundamental for the analysis of social change.

I have stated the importance of understanding practices of resistance in dominant systems of power, as part of the dialectic relationship between agency and structure. Literature usually points out that the aim of exerting subversive agency is to challenge the current structures of power and create new and transformative relations. In contrast, if practices operate in the same (oppressive) structure, then these practices are likely to perpetuate those uneven power relations, more than resist them (Shaw, 2001).

However, a small amount of literature states that in some cases change can, to a certain extent, also be achieved from within the structure. Kandiyoti (1988; 2005) argues that challenging patriarchy is a slow and contradictory process, especially for women in more traditional settings. Although in the case study presumed presented, Chile is economically progressive country and there have been important advances in women’s rights, gender change operates in a “highly constrained setting” (Staab, 2017, p. 47), due to institutional structure and cultural opposition to feminist policymaking (Haas, 2006).

Kandiyoti (1988) argues that knowing how to navigate the structure in an astute way can also be considered to be positive change. Through the concept of bargaining with patriarchy, the author states that, “Women’s strategies are always played out in the context of identifiable patriarchal bargains that act as implicit scripts that define, limit, and inflect their market and domestic options” (p.285). But that women ‘bargain’ and strategise within this concrete set of constraints.

In the first instance, everyday practices may not be transformative in themselves, as some of their more non-collective or unintentional characteristics may not be able to
bring about visible and transformative change. However, they can represent the first step to raising awareness and solidarity and maybe initiate a process of collective action. As Kandiyoti (1988) explains "(…) new strategies and forms of consciousness do no simply emerge (...), but are created through personal and political struggles, which are often complex and contradictory" (p.286). The mapping of these practices may provide a good diagnosis of sites of power and inequality, as “wherever there is power there is resistance” (Abu-Loghod, 1990), and represent a useful entry point to analyse wider political issues.

Change towards gender equality can be a ‘slippery’ concept in policy and other spheres, as it might be difficult to measure, quantify and identify change in one specific moment in time (Lewis, 2006, p. 423). Thus, more than look at social change as a final outcome, I aim to map certain trajectories of social change. As such, I highlight the process of change more than its outcome. I refer to the identification of certain factors and consequent paths that change might take, making connection between specific home-making practices, how they reflect inequalities and how they could be challenged.

2.4 Analytical Framework: The Politics of Home-Making

*Conceptual Background*

Through a series of theoretical discussions, this chapter has presented three areas of enquiry: (i) Housing and Gender relations as sites of inequality, (ii) Everyday Politics, and (iii) Trajectories of Social Change. Each section included a literature review, identification of a literature gap and discussed the relevant theoretical concepts for the research. These three areas of inquiry constitute the conceptual background of the research, which helps to position the research in a specific literature and establishes the relationship between these bodies of literature. The conceptual background is illustrated in Figure 3 and is formed by:

- **Sites of Inequality** *(left)*: Refers to housing and gender relations and how material and symbolic inequalities play out in these sites.

- **Everyday Politics** *(right)*: Refers to informal dwellers’ home-making practices and the claims that stem from them in regard to housing and gender relations.
• **Trajectories of social change** *(centre)*: Refers to how and where everyday politics can open space for social change. More specifically, how inequalities are being challenged through everyday practices.

**Figure 3| Conceptual Background**

**i) Sites of Inequality:**

Informal dwellers’ claims are in direct relation to gender and housing as sites of inequality. Dwellers experience housing differently (i.e. entitlements, affordability, social relations, well-being, responsibilities in the home) depending on social relations. These conditions refer to structural elements which produce or reproduce inequalities in access to housing for low-income dwellers in the city, as well as gender relations between men and women. Under “home” in the conceptual background, this component identifies low-income housing and gender relations as a site of inequality, understanding that inequalities are expressed through symbolic and material needs.

• **Material inequalities**: Maldistribution in the access to housing and other resources due to class, and/or gender exploitation (E.g. unequal access to housing).
• Symbolic inequalities: Misrecognition in the experience of housing and gender relations due to class, and/or gender discrimination (E.g. women’s ‘natural’ responsibilities of care work and housework).

ii) Everyday Politics:

Under “Home-making Practices” in the conceptual background, this component distinguishes symbolic claims, which refer to discourses and meanings, from material claims which refer to infrastructure and planning practices. As I have pointed out in the second area of enquiry in the chapter, the two main goals of practices of resistance are the expansion of material and symbolic gains. The first refers to access to increased and better resources which can improve the quality of life of women (and men) living in informal housing. The second refers to meanings and subjectivities, as a way of renegotiating gender roles and social identity.

• Material gains: access or negotiation of outcomes around resources.

• Symbolic gains: access or renegotiation of outcomes around narratives, identities and meanings.

iii) Trajectories of social change:

Fraser’s three-dimensional model has been included in the centre of the conceptual background. Recognition and redistribution are key issues for low-income women in struggles for housing. Initially, the most evident aspect is the redistribution of resources. Urban struggles tend to focus on the acquisition of infrastructure, such as housing, services, and mobility in the city, with organisation and mobilisation occurring around a class identity. However, the oppression of low-income women does not only relate to issues of distribution but also of recognition. Their position of subordination is through their identity as low-income dwellers, but also of their gender, ethnic group, age and others social relations. Issues of misrecognition are determined by cultural context, influenced by legal frameworks, expectations of gender roles and norms, and reflected in everyday machista behaviour. These can devalue women’s skills and contributions, and impact women’s development.

The research focuses on the practices and their political implications as a first step for political engagement, but does not focus specifically on the formal spaces of
participation and representation of pobladora women in Chile at a city and national level (For the latter see Baldez, 2002; Dandavati, 2005; Haas, 2010; Richards, 2004). Thus, the analysis of the dimension of representation refers to the extent to which home-making practices are creating solidarity and dialogue around these claims, which can possibly open more engaged formal spaces of participation and representation.

The conceptual background makes the explicit connection between symbolic inequalities and symbolic gains through the connection of recognition, and material inequalities to material gains through the connection of redistribution. Representation has been situated in the middle, making connections to redistribution and recognition, as a way of negotiating claims. It also includes the "structural landscape", that makes reference to the setting in which social change occurs, as examined in the previous section (Section 2.3.2).

- Redistribution: Material inequalities $\leftrightarrow$ material gains
- Recognition: Symbolic inequalities $\leftrightarrow$ symbolic gains

Analytical Framework

Building on the conceptual background, an analytical framework is put forward to analyse the data of the research. The construction of the analytical framework is informed by the literature, but also by the fieldwork conducted. Although the framework considers the complexity of the notion of home provided - where home is approached in its multiple scales, set of relations, activities and emotions - it represents these complexities concisely by taking into consideration three main aspects of women’s role in struggles for housing. These are organised in a three-dimensional approach to home-making: maintenance of the home, construction of the home and planning of the home. The analytical framework is shown in Table 2.

The analytical framework builds on the theory presented in section 2.1.2 (in Gender, Development and Housing), and then in the discussion of how to define home-making practices in 2.2.1 (Home-making practices). I discussed the notion of home-making by examining Heidegger’s concept of ‘construction’ (1971) and Young's concept of ‘preservation’ (2000). Both the construction of the home, through practices of self-help, and the maintenance of the home, through reproductive practices (what Young
calls preservation and Heidegger calls cultivation), are important for low-income housing.

The two aspects of home-making, construction and maintenance, do not acknowledge the collective nature of creating and accessing housing in informal settlements. As such, I introduced a third element, planning of the home, in the definition of home-making provided in section 2.2.1. This is based on the community managing role of Moser’s framework (1993), more specifically to the constituency-based politics role (Levy, 1996; Levy, Taher & Vouhé, 2000). In planning of the home, I refer to the type of resources produced, such as communal infrastructure, to future outcomes, such as collective claims for housing, and to the social relations around the mobilisation of the resources, expressed mostly through collective initiatives.
DIMENSIONS OF HOME-MAKING

MAINTENANCE OF THE HOME
Refers to the preservation aspect of housing, specifically to reproductive practices in the context of the built environment. The maintenance of the home is any practice that aims to reproduce, care and preserve human life, and maintain the material home. This dimension looks at how practices of care manifest in a context of lack of infrastructure, socio-spatial segregation and, in some cases, of violence.

It focuses specifically on practices that take place mostly, or emerge, from inside the home space, such as childcare and housework.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOME
Refers to the infrastructure of the house. The construction of the home is any practice in which material resources are put together as a way to organise space and provide shelter. This dimension looks at how practices of construction play out in the negotiation of gender relations, and the value that construction has for women.

It focuses specifically on housing practices that take place in the home space and settlement.

PLANNING OF THE HOME
Refers to the practices of organisation, planning and acquisition of collective outcomes towards housing. The planning of the home is any practice that is organised in a collective manner and has tangible outcomes, such as the acquisition of infrastructure, or intangible and future outcomes in the form of specific housing claims, which include the political influence that community leaders may develop in multiple spheres.

It focuses on practices that take place in the informal settlement, city and on a national scale, through practices of planning and leadership.

Source: Author

Scope of the analytical framework

By focusing on the political role of micro practices, the research deals with specific types of practices and agency, disregarding other practices such as compliance and support, as well as agency expressed in social movements and political representation, which are powerful ways to exert influence and move forward specific agendas (Harrison & Davis, 2001). In addition, the research focuses specifically on the agency of informal dwellers, thus giving less attention to the agency of other actors such as the private sector, state and NGOs. The agency of
these actors is important as it can determine the space in which informal dwellers can take action.

By focusing mostly on what the practices are contesting, less attention is paid in the analysis to what is being replicated and assimilated from systems of power. However, the analysis takes into consideration the tensions and contradiction that can emerge from processes of contestation. Understanding practices not only as resistance but in a conflictual relationship between structure and agency, as subjects are inserted into multiple systems of power relations.

By focusing on agency, structural elements are brought in to the analysis to illustrate certain points on a one-off basis. This could simplify the role and complexity of institutional arrangements, social policies, legal frameworks, and how they operate. In this line, the framework intends to identify specific practices and examine their relationship with structural elements. However, it is difficult to trace the exact relationship between a practice and a wider set of relations, as a practice may be affected in a complex way by multiple factors. Thus, by establishing a “target” or a “cause” of a practice, the relationship between factors may be simplified.

**Final remarks: Home as entry point to everyday politics**

The chapter has discussed three areas of enquiry, and by doing so it has intended to address the two research gaps identified at the beginning of the chapter: how the notion of home can be used in housing studies, particularly as a way to examine subjective and political aspects of creating a (low-income) home with a gender perspective; and as how home-making practices can be researched as political practices.

It has argued that the home literature presents an entry point to understanding subjective and political aspects of housing. However, home studies literature has not been applied to a context of poverty and low-income housing, and there is few research that shows how it can be done. On the other hand, literature on resistance and insurgency has been applied in contexts of poverty, but has not specifically assessed home-making practices as such. The analytical framework, The Politics of Home-Making, is proposed as a way of bringing together these sets of literature.
The chapter has identified housing and gender relations as sites of inequality and proposes the theoretical notion of home and home-making practices as a lens through which to interrogate gender relations in low-income housing. The framework takes a particular approach to agency, by looking at how home-making practices can be political practices, which manifest in the everyday life of dwellers. The inherent relationship between structure and agency in the framework, shows a specific type of agency which engages with feminists’ notion of social change and power.

By framing home-making practices as political practices, I re-politicise home as a site of conflict, but also as a site of agency. This is done by opening the definition of home to different territorial scales and by making connections between these scales. Home-making practices are an important entry point as women tend to not be at the forefront of collective action. However, that does not mean that they are not engaged in politics or will be more engaged in positions of power in the future.

Home has been discussed as a space of contestation, grounded in multiple-scales, time, and feeling, and embodied by its dwellers. Home-making practices, on the other hand, have been defined as the everyday activities carried out by residents to create, construct, maintain and renew a material home while generating meaning and a symbolic sense of home in, and from, the settlement. The framework identifies three key groups of home-making practices; maintenance, constructing and planning of the home.

In the following two chapters, I address the methodology used for the research, and the context and case study. Chapter 3 (methodology) picks up part of this discussion by presenting the methodological approach taken in this research and expanding on how the framework is specifically used in the empirical chapters. In Chapter 4 (context), I present the case study and its context. By doing this, part of the structural landscape of where home-making practices emerge is discussed.
CHAPTER 3

Methodology

As I have argued in Chapter 2, home-making practices of informal dwellers can provide an insight into the complexities of creating a home. The meanings and values of housing - represented not only through verbal accounts - but also through embodied practices, are the central object of analysis in the thesis. The research uses qualitative methods, based on feminist methodological principles, such as participatory photography and life stories to examine home-making practices of informal dwellers.

Throughout the research process, the methodology became an important part, not only as the medium, but as an outcome in itself. The use of different participatory methods, the relational aspect of doing research, and the ethics of working with low-
income women, made the methodological discussions a fundamental part of the project. I argue in this chapter that the set of methods used is not only an adequate way of addressing material and symbolic aspects of home, but also that they have a potential for transformation for participants.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section positions the research epistemologically and defines the principles that guided the fieldwork, discussing issues of reflexivity and positionality; the second section explains the research design, methods and the potential for transformation; and the third section explains how the data was analysed and how the framework provided in Chapter 2 is used in the empirical chapters.

3.1 Positioning the research and the researcher’s role

Epistemology

Different epistemologies define what constitutes legitimate knowledge, thus philosophically what kind of claims can be made from the connections between knowledge, experience and reality (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2007). This research in particular, highlights the value of experience as a way to learn about the world and a key means to understanding reality. It focuses on how people live and make sense of their own social world, and particularly on how they give meaning to their home-making practices, taking into account that meaning is not only created, but also negotiated and modified in everyday life.

The research is framed in a postmodern epistemology, specifically social constructionism. For constructionists, knowledge is created not discovered. Reality does not exist per se as it does for positivists, but is created through social interaction. According to Andrews (2012), “Reality refers to the subjective experience of everyday life, how the world is understood rather than to the objective reality of the natural world” (p. 40).

More specifically, social constructionists argue that knowledge is created as people interact with the social world. This happens when repeated actions form patterns, and then these routines or expected actions between people and their social world
are perceived as objective knowledge for future generations (Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

In Chapter 2 the main theories of the research were discussed. This framed the research not only in a specific set of literatures, but it also positioned the research in a specific political and philosophical point. The chapter stated the entry point from which housing issues are analysed: From the subjective experience of informal dwellers, specially of women. And thus, the research aims to situate the stories of dwellers purposely at the centre of the analysis.

The research supports the idea that informal settlements are a crucial site of knowledge and a rich space for learning. McFarlane (2011) uses the concept of ‘critical urban learning’ to interrogate existing processes of urban knowledge and how to collectively propose new alternatives for the city. In doing so, the author vindicates the political aspect of everyday life as a key site for knowledge production. The author posits, “I am to recuperate learning as a political and practical domain through which the city is assembled, lived and contested, and which offers a critical opportunity to develop a progressive urbanism” (p. 360).

Doing feminist research

The approach of this research draws on the importance of understanding home-making meanings and values, and the context in which meaning is gendered. The use of feminist theories in the theoretical framework, as well as in the methodology, creates a consistency in content and form. Underlying this is the idea that a particular theory, a way of creating knowledge, is directly linked to a particular way of conducting research.

According to feminist academics there is not one way of doing feminist research. As such, the use of feminist methodologies (in plural) is a way of acknowledging diversity within feminist research in terms of epistemologies (e.g. empiricism, realism, constructionism) and use of different methodologies and methods (e.g. qualitative or quantitate techniques) to approach the research (Harding, 1987; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2007).

Although feminist research tends to use qualitative methodology, in small scale or case studies (McDowell, 1992), what is relevant is not the specific list of methods,
but the conditions under which research takes place. This is what feminists refer to as a feminist way of doing research (Limb & Dwyer, 2001). This entails looking particularly into the relationship between politics and epistemology, and being aware that the production of knowledge always takes place in a context of unequal power relations. The central aspect is how methodologies question existing ‘truths’ and unpack the relationships between knowledge and power (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2007). A way to do so is through methods that are thought to be collaborative and non-exploitive, in order to address the unequal power relations between researcher and participants (Limb & Dwyer, 2001).

Feminist methodological contribution is rich, but it has not been fully recognised in mainstream qualitative research (Roberts, 1997). It has been argued that it can have less scientific rigour and objectivity than other types of qualitative approached. The notion of situated knowledges has addressed some of those critiques by explaining the multiplicity of knowledges, and how they are grounded in context (Haraway, 1988).

3.1.1 Feminist Principles

The research was informed by three principles of feminist research; the political dimension of the research, recognition of non-dominant subjects, and reflexivity and positionality of the researcher.

Political dimension

For feminists, the production of knowledge is intrinsically political, as it always entails some theory of power (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2007). This view is not particular to feminist research, but it is shared amongst social science disciplines. Choosing to do qualitative research is a “self-conscious political act: a statement about how you believe the world is and should be” (Smith, 2001, p. 23).

As such, the production of knowledge is never neutral. Feminists emphasise the ethical and political commitment of the researcher and their implication in the production of knowledge (Pedone, 2000). For example, calling something ‘abuse’ instead of ‘unconsented sex’ is a political and ethical decision.
In the research, the political dimension played out specifically by; choosing the research topic and research questions (in which the word political was strategically included in the title and in the research questions); navigating different power dynamics while on the field collecting data; analysing data, deciding what to include and what to leave out; acknowledging positionality; and in the future, disseminating the research and working towards a specific research agenda which can be ethically responsible.

**Reflexivity and positionality**

Knowledge is not produced as an independent object of the researcher, and personal accounts influence the way the research is conducted. As such, reflecting critically on the researcher’s positionality is central in feminist research. In other words, acknowledging the role social relations such as the gender, class and age of the researcher plays in the collection and analysis of data, and the way in which a reflexive process can address some of those issues (Sultana, 2007).

There tends to be limited reflection on the process of undertaking a research, the ‘messiness’ that it entails, and how that affects the outcome (Parr, 1998). As such, personal accounts can be important and should be integrated into the discussion.

During the fieldwork, a research diary and field notes were kept to record the experiences of doing research. The former aimed to record the research process in general, while the latter were notes taken during the collection of the data (Gibbs, 2007). For analytical purposes, I will refer to all these notes as research diary. This included reflections on the methodology, planning of the research, and the process as a whole. It also included initial positions to certain places, people and situations, and how they changed; participants’ reactions to the researcher (considering my age, gender, nationality and experience); testing the research on the ground; and how to navigate the political scenario between working with informal dwellers and high-end politicians.

**Recognition of non-dominant voices**

The research focused on informal dwellers, and particularly on women. As such, it focuses on understanding the everyday practices of ‘non-dominant’ subjects, placing their knowledge at the centre of the analysis and toward a specific research agenda,
“committed to making visible the claims of the less powerful” (McDowell, 1992, p. 412).

In Wiesenfeld’s (2001) research on self-help housing in Venezuela, the author affirms that the recognition of non-dominant voices through participatory methods can have a potential for transformation. She suggests that it can vindicate the voices of the oppressed through a dialogue with the researcher that could promote transformation and meaningful construction of these voices.

In the case of informal settlements in Viña del Mar, these remained ‘invisible’ to authorities, especially before the cadastre of 2011. It was not a subject that was of interest to authorities, as since the 1990s the attention had been focused on the development of Viña as a touristic city, and the main cultural and sporting events that support that image. As such, driving the attention to a topic that is understudied in the region, can shed some light onto the housing claims of informal dwellers as a relevant issue in the city, and thus support their claims and specific needs.

3.1.2 Reflexivity, positionality and ethics in the field

The principles discussed informed my role as a researcher. Having worked previously with informal settlements in the region as an activist and community organiser, I find it particularly important to reflect on my insider-outsider position, as a way of unpacking the limitations and benefits of working in a familiar place.

Scholars acknowledge that while doing ethnography, researchers can explicitly draw upon their own biographies in the research process, which can be used to understand social action in a specific context (May, 2011). This is part of a wider process of reflexivity, in which the researcher recognises that they are not independent from society, and for that reason, their values and interests on the location can shape the orientation of the research. Although it can be helpful to understand the context and to enter the community, and thus be in a better position, specifically to understand processes of resistance (Hoffman, 1999; Korokovin, 2000), previous knowledge of the site can also generate expectations related to the previous role (not as a researcher) and lead to particular answers or the “impermeability of power relations” by the researcher (Miraftab, 2004, p. 596).
Returning to Chile to conduct research posed some challenges, the most evident being that concepts of *home* and *field* were not in clear distinction. Viña del Mar is not my native city, but I lived and worked there for a year before starting the PhD, giving me an understanding of the local context, such as politics and contacts with NGOs, the Municipality and dwellers of informal settlements. Being Chilean on the other hand, gave me many commonalities with the participants – such as nationality, language, and the possibility to engage in ordinary conversations - which enabled me to bridge gaps and have access more easily.

As much as many people were familiar with me, I still had to present myself in a new role, as a researcher. This was as difficult for other people, as it was for me. Dwellers did not understand what it meant that I was a doctoral student, and would identify me with my former role as an NGO worker. It was also difficult for me to come to terms with my new role once back in a familiar context. In my previous position, I had an active role as community organiser and advocating for housing for informal settlements, and doing research meant taking a step back, especially when facilitating group discussions and participating in community meetings.

There were different aspects of my identity that would play out, and were highlighted depending on the group, to gain access to information. On the one hand, residents, specifically community leaders, would introduce me to others using my former position in the NGO, ‘*La directora regional*’ [The female regional director], making reference to a position of power, but also of appreciation. Comments such as “It is good that you are doing a research because they are going to hear you” or jokes such as “It is good that you haven’t forgotten the poor!” were common while I was in Manuel Bustos. So even when my new role was not completely understood it build from the previous relationship. As the months progress, the participants and I, were able to situate better in our roles but also renegotiate new ones. In the case of Felipe Camiroaga settlement, although I did not have any previous contact, I was introduced through the NGO that I used to work for, which made it easier to find a way in.

On the other hand, municipality officers and politicians would also acknowledge my former position, but would mainly highlight the fact that I was studying in the UK, which would immediately put me in a position of privilege, and thus it made it more likely that they would meet with me. However, at the same time men, mostly from
educated and policy circles, seemed sceptical of a woman doing research on urban issues without a ‘technical’ degree, which in Chile traditionally include careers like engineering, architecture or economics. In addition, a bachelor’s degree in the country tends to define who you are professionally (independent of postgraduate studies), and as such being female and having study psychology affected the type and amount of information I would get. In cases in which it was possible, I would avoid saying what I had studied. Almost after every interview I was asked by (male) politician and civil servants about my personal life. As it seemed a surprise that I was single, living abroad and doing a PhD. The implication is that if I lived abroad, I should be married.

Although some of these ideas about me were problematic, they also allowed people to relate with me. They allowed me to take part in many activities in the settlement and in the city that would have been more difficult if I was a total outsider. I was invited to family celebrations, to research clusters and to policy document discussions alike.

Gender solidarity with female dwellers was one evident element that helped me to have more access to places and information. I had privileged access to home spaces - I was constantly invited for lunch, to meet children and see houses. Also, I was able to conduct interviews and workshops were women opened up on extremely sensitive issues, such as domestic violence. The solidarity was evident, and at times it transcended the class difference. As much as they could relate to me as a woman, they would also question my life styles choices. Many of them found it difficult to understand why, at the age of 30, I was not married and I did not have children. It became common to have to answer questions about myself and the decisions I had made. As feminist scholars argue, research is not a one-way research process and participants take an active role in the process (Oakley, 1981). In one of the first sessions of a workshop, a woman interrupted:

Carla: Are you married, single, with or without children?
Me: Single and without kids
Carla: But why?

(Participatory workshop, Manuel Bustos, April 2015)
Despite their evident scepticism about my marital status and not having children, women would use me as an example for their daughters, encouraging them to continue studying or have a paid job. In the settlements, studying beyond high school is the exception and the difficulties of imagining a future different from staying at home – as mothers and housewives - is thus evident. Their contradictory positions about me as a woman revealed an evident tension in their own lives; as the difficulties of owning their traditional gender roles relates mostly to the limited options of the environment in which they operate.

On the other hand, relationships with men in the settlement varied, depending on whether I knew them previously or if I knew their partners. Some men were cordial and respectful, while others were flirtatious. In order to avoid any misunderstanding with other women in the settlement, as this tended to be common, and for my own security, I avoided being alone in a house with a man, even when conducting life stories. If I did not know him personally I would do the interview inside the house if his partner was present. Men tended to be less present during the weekday, so my contact was less, and usually in activities of the settlement in the weekend, with community leaders and workshops.

The most evident aspect of my positionality was the class difference. In Chile inequality is a central issue and class fragmentation is profound. I was aware of my class and educational privilege, which were deepened by living abroad and studying in a different language. Having worked in the settlements before helped me bridge some of the differences, but a class distance was evident, especially with residents not directly involved in the research. One day, as I was walking up the hill and one woman asked:

**Woman:** “You don’t look from here, are you gringa?”
**Me:** “I’m not gringa, do you think I sound gringa?”
**Woman:** “No, you speak Spanish ... but you certainly don’t look from here”

(Manuel Bustos, March 2015)

Gringa in Chile, is the slang word used to refer to someone from the United States but colloquially has expanded to anyone who looks western (different to looking South American). This emphasised my outsider condition (not just from the settlement, but from the country) and placed me in an irreconcilable position of
difference. Feelings of being an ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ in the settlement fluctuated every week, day or hour, depending on the context, activity or situation.

These feelings were even more intense when I lived in the settlement. I stayed with a former community leader who I knew very well, and was cautious to cause as little impact as possible with other community leaders, and within the household (in terms of overcrowding, use of water, and other resources).

In contrast to what I had expected, the tensions I felt were not with the community, but with myself, living the ‘everyday’ that I was researching in an extremely vivid and material way. Basics things like hygiene, food and keeping warm would take up most of my day. And even when I was having meetings in ‘the plan’ (downtown), my life in the settlement remained very present throughout the day. I was aware that I had to come back before it was dark, as well as of security while in the settlement, the type of transportation I used, among others.

Although working in informal settlements has been something that I have been doing since I was young, the fact that I was constantly reflecting on my positionality and the way in which power imbalances play out, made this experience an extremely productive learning process and made me think about my own position in relations of power. Mostly in the cross-section between an evident privileged class position but at the same time of gender inequality. This translated in the cases I felt unsafe in the streets because I was a woman, and especially while interacting with male policy makers and officials (This is something I had also experienced when I worked in the city in 2010-11).

Doing fieldwork also confirmed me the power of women in informal settlements. Women are not passive recipients of research (Miraftab, 2004), but have an active role in shaping the insider-outsider relationship, as well as the research in itself. Specially in the case of older women, or those that knew me from before, I was constantly being given instructions of how to do the research, what to do and when (“Come back in March, we are on holidays now”). The negotiations about the research and interest in the outcome, made clear that they also wanted to get something specific out of the process. Unbalancing the tendency of unequal gains between researcher and of researched from a research process (Gottfried, 1996).
3.2 Research Design

The design of the research served the general objective of the study. The data collection was conducted over a period of 8 months, from October 2014 to May 2015 in the city of Viña del Mar, in the region of Valparaíso, Chile. During this time, I lived in the downtown area (which is the local commercial area and different to the touristic area of the city), and for a couple of weeks in April 2015, I lived in Manuel Bustos in the house of a former community leader. The fieldwork also included a pre-fieldwork trip in Manuel Bustos, conducted in May 2012, in which the research questions and methods were tested. The research process was recorded in a research diary, and all the interviews, group discussions and workshops were audio recorded, and transcribed.

Research Team

During the fieldwork, I received support from four sociology students on their last year at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, which I selected based on their research experience and their availability to transcribe. We held meetings once month to discuss their thoughts on the material that they had transcribed. Their comments provided valuable input in triangulating and reflecting on the participant's answers. I also met regularly with the Director of MSc Community Psychology in Universidad de Valparaíso, and other academics working in informal settlements in the region, to discuss the research process and findings. Sharing the process was rewarding and allowed me to create a sense of collectiveness with other academics around this issue. One of the outcomes of this collaboration was a seminar that we organised at the end of the fieldwork, and later on to participate on a new research centre in the region which looks at urban informality.

Research Ethics

The research ethics was approved by the Ethical Committee of UCL, this included applying for ethical approval prior to the fieldtrip and report after the fieldwork. The research ethics was also supported by the Centro de Políticas Públicas of Universidad Católica de Chile [Public Policy Research Centre], as a way to make sure the ethical criteria was aligned with Chilean universities. However, the challenges and responsibilities of implementing a project in settings as the one researched, go
beyond the formalities of institutions. As Sultana (2007) argues, even in the cases where the researcher might have fewer barriers such as language or being a national, “class and educational differences (...) remain trenchant markers of differences, and often a precondition for exploitation in the research process” (p. 375). As such, the need to be aware of perpetuating unequal power relations, and the need to see the negotiating of ethics in the field as on-going process was fundamental.

**Consent:** Participants were explained about the research and were also given the possibility to quit the research at any time (Everyone invited to participate accepted and did not withdraw from the research). I read out loud the consent form and the information of the research in every interview and session, in case there were literacy obstacles. It was also important for me to discuss it with participants in plain Spanish (see Appendix 1: Information sheet and consent form, English and Spanish versions).

Giving consent was something that dwellers were not used to do and it created an interesting space to discuss the ethics of research. During the participatory photography workshops, I dedicated a section at the beginning to discuss copyright and ethical implications of taking photographs, the use of images and models in the pictures. Participants ('photographers') had an active role in asking for consent from their photography subjects ('models'). This created an awareness of the value of their input and the use of images, not only in this research but in any type of project. Participants themselves discussed how in the past, political campaigns and municipal projects, have used the pictures of their children without consent. Discussing the importance of consent, gave a sense of control and respect about their privacy and their children's which was transmitted in the work they produce for this research. All participants gave consent for the use of their data and photographs (see Appendix 2: Consent form photographers and models in participatory photography workshop, Spanish version).

**Anonymity:** As a way to protect dweller's identity and privacy I have used a pseudonym in the thesis for all participants and I do not give identifiable characteristics. However, the real name of informal settlements is used, as it is difficult to anonymise due to their participation in specific housing projects and the particular characteristics of the settlements. Information that could harm the
settlement has been avoided. Dwellers are identified with a pseudonym and the name of the settlement, as differences between settlements play a role in the findings. Pictures used in the thesis have been anonymise and children’s faces have been covered to protect their identity. During the fieldwork, dwellers expressed the wish to have their real name in the research, this was related to the need for recognition and representation, as many dwellers affirmed “I want my story to be heard, that people in other countries know our struggles”. However, I made a decision of not using their real names in the thesis (specially because of cases of gender violence) but suggested to participants local spaces in which they could use the research with their real names.

Names of officials and community leaders are not used, but instead the department or organisation is identified. This is to make reference to the source of the information, but without revealing a specific person. This avoids the personification of policies and actions, but as a group of practices and discourses of an institution. I have, although, specified the different opinions and nuances in a department or institutions.

**Participation and gatekeepers:** The strategies planned to approach participants worked well in the field (i.e. NGO contacts, community leaders, snowball sampling). The major difficulty was to get the number of male participants needed for the life stories. The rhetoric amongst community leaders was that it was more difficult to find men willing to engage (“Men don’t like to talk”, “They are working”). In order to find more participants, I used other strategies, such as knocking directly on people’s door or approaching people in public spaces. Although community leaders did not act as evident gatekeepers, approaching participants directly proved to be effective and it allowed to interview residents that had different views to the community leaders.

**Data collection:** The data was collected in accordance to the Chilean Data Protection Law and the UK Data Protection. The files (recording, field notes and any other material) were kept in a secure computer drive and are password protected. No real names were used while analysing the data to protect the participants.

**Protection of participants from physical and mental harm:** There were a few occasions where the content of the interviews unintentionally raised sensitive topics
and caused participants to feel emotional. When this happened, the interview was stopped until the participant felt better and could decide whether they wanted to continue the interview or not. Closure to the interview was important so the participant would feel calm. This was particularly relevant when discussing incidents of domestic violence or creating a new home under stressful circumstances. My training as a psychologist was useful for these situations.

### 3.2.1 Research Questions

The research questions have been introduced in Chapter 1. In order to answer the main research question, two sub-questions are used to unpack the political role of home-making practices.

Following the framework put forward in Chapter 2, there are two aspects to consider in answering the research sub-questions. The first relates to the *conditions* and *sites of inequality* in which practices emerge, and the second to how the practices *open space for social change*, through the lens of recognition, redistribution and representation. Each sub-question addresses one of these issues.

**Table 3| Research Questions: Methodology chapter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION</th>
<th>What is the political role of home-making practices in women’s struggles for housing in informal settlements of Viña del Mar, Chile?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Sub-Question 1:</td>
<td>How do the home-making practices of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar reflect current gender and housing inequalities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Sub-Question 2:</td>
<td>In what ways do the home-making practices of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar open space for the advancement of social justice for women in struggles for housing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Author

### 3.2.2 Research Phases

The collection of data was planned in four phases; Foundation (*phase 1*), Individual home-making practices (*phase 2*), collective home-making claims (*phase 3*), and feedback (*phase 4*). The plan was to work simultaneously in the two settlements, however due to the availability of dwellers and community leaders, the work was
not completely simultaneous. I started first in one settlement, and there were overlaps between phase 2 and phase 3, dependant on participants’ availability. However, this did not affect the main aim of the data collection.

**Phase 1: Foundation**

This phase introduced the research to community leaders, established initial contacts with stakeholders, did participatory observation and tested two methods; participatory photography (1 workshop) and life stories (3 interviews). The main aim was to observe a range of practices, and find entry points to specific participants and settlement in general. As such, in the first month I took any excuse that would allow me to be in the settlement, and talk informally with different people.

The main outputs of this phase where notes in my research diary (including informal conversations and events), photographs from the first workshops with a large amount of photo diaries, and the transcriptions of the 3 first life stories.

**Phase 2: Individual home-making practices**

The main collection of data was divided into two aspects; individual home-making practices (phase 2) and collective home-making claims (phase 3). The aim of phase 2, was to map and categorise individual practices. As such, the main task of this phase was to do the life stories and participatory photography workshops.

The main material outputs of this phase were the transcriptions of the life stories, individual timelines and the individual photographs. This allowed me to have a good understanding of everyday practices of informal dwellers, the most common and how they differ between settlements.

**Phase 3: Collective home-making claims**

This phase focused on the discussion of housing and gender claims, and thus included collective activities, in which dwellers could discuss and negotiate collectively, such as in the participatory photography workshops, group discussion, and collective timelines. It also included semi-structured interviews with the spokesperson of each of the settlements to understand their view on the housing claims at the settlement level.
In parallel to phase 2 and 3, I conducted semi-structured interviews with housing officials, politicians and academics in the region of Valparaíso. The information gathered with community leaders was tested with key stakeholders, and vice versa, as a way to test certain ideas and understand the tensions involved.

**Phase 4: Feedback**

A year later, in December 2015, I organised a group discussion with community leaders from both settlements to discuss the findings. The findings were not only presented through the main practices I had identified, but also how they were explained by the housing and gender context. This allowed me to validate the findings and discuss wider connections between home-making claims and the city. Receiving community leaders' feedback was a rich and useful process.

The fieldwork finished in May 2015 and the feedback with community leaders was conducted in a workshop for a day in December 2015. The information in the thesis represents data collected during the fieldwork, as well as secondary data that emerged during the writing of the thesis, until March 2017.

Since conducting the fieldwork I have been back to the settlements every year, as I have an interest in the upgrading pilot project, and I have a close relationship with many of the dwellers. Although this research has defined phases and the fieldwork ended in May 2015 my interest for the case goes beyond the scope of the thesis.

**3.2.3 Selection of Participants**

The overall research involved the participation of 94 people; 75 residents of informal settlements of Viña del Mar and 19 key regional stakeholders, such as academics, housing officers and politicians. The information was collected using a diverse set of qualitative methods. Several of the dwellers involved participated more than once, creating momentum and energy in the research process.

The criteria used to choose research sites and participants was based on the possibility of observing a range of home-making practices, as well as different conditions in which housing was produced. The research did not intend to be representative of the reality of informal dwellers in city, but to provide an insight
into the two largest informal settlements, based on the experience of a selection of participants.

**City Selection**

An entry point of the research was to understand the wish of staying put of dwellers in the region of Valparaíso, manifested largely in the cities of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar. Prior to going to the fieldwork I had not decided whether I would be working in both cities or only in one. Upon arrival, I discussed it with key stakeholders and did preliminary interviews in two informal settlements in the city of Valparaíso, in addition to the information I had collected previously from the pilot research in Viña del Mar in May 2012.

I decided to focus solely on Viña del Mar and to work on two sites. There were two reasons for this decision. The first was because in April 2014 (a couple of months before starting the fieldwork) Valparaíso city suffered one of the worst fires in its history, affecting informal settlements located in the hills. A specific team was appointed from the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism at the national level to deal with the emergency, meaning that settlements affected by the fire were assigned direct housing subsidies, and as such, it was an extraordinary (and chaotic) situation.

The second reason relates to the characteristics of informal settlements in Viña del Mar, which make it a particularly interesting area to focus on. There is larger socio-economic contrast in Viña del Mar than in Valparaíso. Viña del Mar is a successful and touristic city while at the same time, it has the largest number of people living in informal settlements in the country. The city also contains a pilot project for the first in-situ upgrading. And lastly, Viña del Mar as a city has been understudied (Castagneto, 2010), differently, Valparaíso city draws considerable national and international attention because of its UNESCO Heritage Site status.

**Informal settlements selection**

In order to have a more varied and representative group of housing committees, the informal settlements were selected from the largest settlements in the city, which are also the largest in the country. These two informal settlements were selected as
a way to have access to more housing committees and to examine whether the age of a settlement affects the way in which dwellers create home.

Two main criteria were established to select the research sites:

1. Community Organisation: This refers to the level of organisation of the settlement. The elements considered were; age of the settlement, time working together as community, formal organisations in the settlement (i.e. existence of housing committees), and collaboration with NGOs, Municipality or Ministry of Housing. The underlying assumption was that better organisation can lead to greater awareness of their current political position, in contrast to settlements that are less organised, have voiced their claims less and are not currently working with other institutions.

2. Housing solution: This refers to the existence of a housing solution in place from the government (or another organisation), in order to contextualise their current home-making practices, and whether these vary depending on the certainty of having a formal housing solution in the future.

Following the criteria described above, two settlements in the city of Viña del Mar were invited to participate: Manuel Bustos (Site 1: More organised and has a housing solution) and Felipe Camiroaga (Site 2: Less organised and with no housing solution). See Figure 4.

Figure 4| Criteria to select informal settlements
Informal dwellers selection

The selection of informal dwellers participating was done through a non-probabilistic sampling method. The total universe of dwellers between the two settlements was approximately of 7,296 dwellers, of which 4,815 were over 15 years old\(^\text{13}\). The research engaged with 75 dwellers and hence is not statistically representative of the total universe. However, the research aim was not to give an account of the universal trends of the settlements, but to explore the gradual and covert nature of some of dwellers’ home-making practices. This related mostly to the identification of micro spaces and mapping trajectories of change. The qualitative nature of the research allowed for the exploration of these issues. For example, the visual and participatory nature of the methods utilised allowed for the identification of everyday practices and the collective negotiation of priorities, which could have been missed by a language-based standardised method, such as an individual household survey.

The sample of participants was specifically purposive and used snowball samples to reach more participants (Berg, 2009), with the aim of accessing different social identities and experiences in line with the qualitative nature of the research. The participants of the research were residents between the ages of 16 and 70 living in each of the settlements.

Although the number of participants was not representative of the total universe, precautions were taken on how to access a variety of dwellers, and the validity of the methods. For the latter, triangulation and repetition techniques were used to revise the findings from one method in a different context. This is explained further in section 3.2.4 (Strategies to address issues of participation, validation and representation when using participatory methods). For example, participatory photography engaged with 31 participants, however the topic explored in the workshops was also examined in life stories and in group discussions with community leaders, and thus there was more than one source for the issues examined.

\(^{13}\) This number was calculated with the official figures of national latest cadastre (MINVU, 2013), and in the case of Felipe Camiroaga that did not existed by the time of the cadastre, with the information provided by the Municipality. Manuel Bustos has 924 households and Felipe Camiroaga 900. The average members per household is 4 and 33% of the population is under 15 years old.
A key objective in the selection of participants was to have access to different social identities and housing experiences, which I assumed would manifest in different home-making practices and in different views about what constitutes a home. The categories identified before the fieldwork were based on my previous experience working with informal settlements, with the aim of representing a wide population in the settlement. Categories, or purposive samples, are used in qualitative research to ensure that certain types of individuals displaying certain attributes are included in the study (Berg, 2009). The criteria used in the research design identified different life stages, gender and levels of community participation. Other categories were included once in the field due to their relevance. These were migrants, LGBTQ households, and “opposite cases” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) (see Table 4). The latter were cases of people who did not want to stay in the settlement, and this was important as the main claim examined was the wish to stay put. The location of households in the settlements was also taken in consideration, and as far as possible, the dwellers interviewed were from different housing committees. Housing committees are relevant in the settlement as they vary in terms of internal organisation, access to specific resources, terrain and ability to access services. The criteria were followed for life stories, and used as guidance for photography workshops and group discussions.

Another consideration taken was to access spaces that were representative in the settlement. I observed housing committee meetings and meetings of the board of the settlement, in both sites. Furthermore, the representatives of each informal settlements were interviewed through a semi-structured interviewed, and group discussions with the community leaders board of the two settlements were held. Group discussions with community leaders were important, as this was the space in which the general claims of the settlements were discussed, as well as preliminary findings of the research, giving space to different community leaders to give their opinion or negotiate collectively on certain issues.
Initially, I selected participants according to their age, assuming that age was a good predictor of life stage. However, after a couple of interviews it was evident that the age of their children, rather than the age of the participant, was more appropriate. This is because dwellers that are the same age, but children of different ages, do not have the same life styles. For example, young people can start a family before turning 18, assuming responsibilities which are the same as other households with young children. Three life stages were identified; Young children/starting a family, children school age, and older children/Living alone.

The same amount of men and women were interviewed for life stories. Although the research aimed to understand women’s practices, it was equally important to interview men, taking into account the relational aspects of gender and how they performed in home-making practices.

The assumption was that residents with different levels of participation in the housing committee would have a different level of knowledge about housing issues and political awareness. Three types of participation were identified: Current community leader, Former community leader, Resident.

I purposely interviewed people who represented diversity in terms of their social identity, such as migrants and LGBTQ+ households, and “opposite cases” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), this was dwellers who did not want to stay in the settlement, in order to access various view points and housing aspirations.

There was no fixed number of participants decided before the fieldwork. I started with 3 participants in each settlement (men and women), and used the interviews to test the questions and the categories that I had chosen. Initially I was open to talk to anyone, as the research developed the selection became more focused to target the categories identified. I revaluate the number of participants using the saturation theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This means that I stopped looking for new participants when the information I was receiving had no significant new elements.

In terms of gender relations, the research focused on women’s struggles for housing. Nonetheless, as far as possible, both men and women were equally represented, as
men’s accounts are central in understanding relational aspects of gender (see Cornwall, 2000). Men’s accounts were used in the research, first to understand gender power relations. Men’s perceptions of their own roles and responsibilities in relation to maintaining, building and planning the home, helped to situate women’s practices and the negotiation of power. Secondly, men’s accounts usually included stories of women - either their wives or children – and also provided insight about other women and their relation to them. And thirdly, men’s accounts were important as informal dwellers of a specific class status, and thus their experiences of housing and housing claims were used to better understand dwellers’ general claims.

Table 5 | Summary of participants per method and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Life Stories</th>
<th>Photography Workshops</th>
<th>Group Discussions (C. Leaders)</th>
<th>Interview Representatives (C. Leader)</th>
<th>Total Dwellers</th>
<th>Key Stakeholders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuel Bustos</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felipe Camiroaga</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB-TOTAL</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| GENDER         |              |                       |                                 |                                        |                |                 |
|----------------|              |                       |                                 |                                        |                |                 |
| Men %          | 48%          | 16%                   | 33%                             | 50%                                    | 37%            | 95%             |
| Women %        | 52%          | 84%                   | 67%                             | 50%                                    | 63%            | 5%              |
| TOTAL          |              |                       |                                 |                                        | 94             |                 |

Source: Author

3.2.4 Methods

The research strategy and the type of data likely to be produced influenced the choice of research methods. I was interested in the combination of verbal and visual techniques as a way to capture the intangible and performed narratives of home-making, as well as to grasp the subjective understanding of home for informal dwellers. The methods used were; participatory photography workshops, life stories, timelines (individual and collective), group discussions, semi-structured interviews and participatory observation.

The individual methods are presented as a set of methods, which I have named Critical Visual Participatory Wheel, see Figure 5 which shows the wheel and all the
methods used. The methods can be organised from the individual to more collective methods (*bottom to top*) and from less participatory to more participatory (*left to right*). In the middle of the wheel are the central methods that guided the research; participatory photography and life stories, and in the periphery, are the methods that complemented the data collection; participant observation, semi-structured interviews, group discussions and timelines.

The wheel is flexible and open, and methods can be changed, as long as they follow the feminist participatory principles (*on the left*) of being non-exploitative and collaborative, provide a safe environment, participant’s understand their involvement and feel in control of their information and how is going to be used (Limb & Dwyer, 2001; Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2007), and methods follow strategies to address issues of representation, participation and validation (*on the right*). This section argues that the Critical Visual Participatory Wheel can have the potential of transformation for its participants.

**Figure 5| Critical Visual Participatory Wheel. Source: Author**
Participatory Photography

Life stories and participatory photography workshops constituted an important part of the research methods. In total, 52 dwellers participated (see Table 5).

The use of visual methodologies has been introduced, especially in the last 20 years, to help expand the efforts of data generation beyond more established avenues such as language-based interviews. Photo-elicitation, specifically participant-driven photography, can capture life experiences, spaces and emotions that may be difficult to grasp through other methods (Guillemin & Drew, 2010). As participants take the pictures themselves and make various decisions about what is photographs and the location, this method can bridge age and language barriers, as well as address some of the unequal power relations between the researcher and participants.

For the research, I was particularly interested in the method as a new way of interrogating the built environment. The research of home-making has used visual ethnography, such as participatory photography, participatory video, drama and body mapping (Brickell, 2012a; Pink, 2007) to engage with domestic practices beyond verbal interviews. Visual methods do not only allow for the discovery of new practices, but also help in the understanding of different types of material and symbolic narratives, that intersect through relationships, practices and experiences (Sandu, 2013).

I conducted four participatory photography workshops; two with adult men and women, one with adult women and one with young people. The workshops were purposively conducted with different group demographics, as a way of targeting different groups. The workshops consisted of six sessions, one session per week for a month and a half. The workshops were structured around two photographic tasks; What does home mean to you? And What do you like about your home and what would you change? One of the workshops only focused on practices, named photo diary, and the photographic task was: Photograph the activities you do in a day.
Figure 6| Participatory photography workshop

Participant taking a picture in Manuel Bustos. Source: Author
The first three sessions explored the meaning of home, while the other three identified housing claims and imaginaries of the city. The pictures were taken in between sessions and allowed participants the freedom to choose the place and time. A total of 280 pictures were produced.

Other methods were used during the sessions, as a way to complement the information given and make the most of the sessions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to discuss their individual photographs, group discussions were held to reflect on the pictures collectively and a collective card game was played to identify home trajectories and discuss individual and collective home aspirations (see Table 6).

Table 6 | Objective and methods used in participatory photography workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 1</td>
<td>Learn basic principles of photography and the use of a digital camera, as a way to exercise visual skills. Introduce research objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Photography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Group discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 2</td>
<td>Task 1: What does home mean to you? Collect pictures Collect personal information from each participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Structured interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 3</td>
<td>Identify categories of ‘home’ and related home-making practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Photography &amp; semi-structured interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Group discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 4</td>
<td>Task 2: What do you like about your home and what would you change? Identify home aspirations (through photographic task) Identify home trajectories (card game)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Card Game</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 5</td>
<td>Collect pictures Personal biography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Biography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION 6</td>
<td>Identify home aspirations and possible actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Photography &amp; semi-structured interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Group discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

Participatory photography served two methodological purposes. The first was to gain access to the everyday practices difficult to reach for a researcher. This was evident in photo diaries, in which participants recorded their daily activities (which served particularly for practices of the maintenance of the home). Secondly, the use of photography as a different medium allowed for other types of answers to emerge.
Home was portrayed more specifically as the built environment in different territorial scales. And thirdly, the workshops allowed the participation of dwellers who did not feel comfortable with interviews but could express themselves through photography (see Table 7).

It is important to state that although doing workshops for 6 weeks allowed me to work on issues in greater depth with participants, it also had a bias in terms of who could participate. The invitation to participate was made in the community meetings, through posters in the settlement and snow ball sampling. Those that were able to participate from start to finish were those that had more time available. However, some measures were taken to allow more residents to participate. In each workshop, dwellers collectively decided the time and place of the workshop - one took place in the morning, another one in the evening and another at the weekend. As was expected, some people could not come to all the sessions. With them, I arranged individual meetings to collect pictures and conduct the individual interviews, so their information would not be lost. As the workshop was structured in two photographic tasks, the minimum required was that participants completed one of the tasks, giving more flexibility to participants.

Table 7 | Benefits of photography in discussing home and home-making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographic task</th>
<th>Photography Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Photo Diary:</strong> <em>What are your daily activities?</em></td>
<td>1. Participants decide what practices are relevant. 2. Help make routines conscious, more difficult with language-based methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What does home mean to you?</strong></td>
<td>3. Wider range in understandings of home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What do you like about your home and what would you change?</strong></td>
<td>4. Visualised aspirations 5. Collective negotiation of housing claims</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
Life Stories and Individual Timelines

In a one-off session (1 hour to 1.5 hours) dwellers were asked to answer the opening question, “Tell me the story of how you got to this house?” (see Table 8). Life stories are used in community psychology as a biographical account of a phenomenon, which opens the possibility for dwellers to place themselves as the main character of the story (Cornejo, Mendoza & Rojas, 2008). In this sense, life stories are a political and ethical option for the participant, as the participant chooses to engage (or not) with a particular position, owning their words and situating themselves in the centre of the story. The production of a life story has the power to assign new meaning and make sense of experience (Berg, 2009).

Figure 7| Life stories and timeline

(Left image) Participant of life stories telling the story of how she got to the settlement. (Right image) timeline done by a participant, on the top she puts the main events in her life and on the bottom, she illustrates the construction process of her house. Each rectangle represents 6x3 m. 
Source: Author

The unstructured interview allowed participants to explore the issues freely, guided subtly to issues of past housing experiences, construction processes in the settlement, meaning and value of the current home, and everyday activities. The types of answers were richer and more nuanced than those of shorter interviews or collective settings.

Following the life story, individual participants were asked to make a timeline including two tasks; to identify main personal events and record changes in their house since arriving at the settlement. For the latter, participants were asked to use post–it notes to show the changes to the house over time (see Figure 7).
Participant’s life stories and timelines were recorded and transcribed (see Appendix 3: Life Stories: Information sheet and transcription per participant).

**Table 8| Life story questions, aim and output**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal details</strong></td>
<td>Age, children, number of people living in the house, civil status and participation in housing community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Trajectory</strong></td>
<td>Identify housing trajectories, the value of housing, decision-making processes and household strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me the story of how you got to this house?</td>
<td>Main personal events, triggering moments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>House Construction</strong></td>
<td>Identify the strategies developed by the household or participant to build their house, decision-making process and materials used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has your house changed since you got here?</td>
<td>Individual timeline with personal events and construction of the house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source: Author**

Life stories and timelines served two methodological purposes in the research. On one hand, they were used to collect personal accounts of the process of home-making and construction. Individual experiences came out mainly through this method. On the other hand, they were used to gather information from a wide range of participants, as it allowed the engagement with a wider set of people (range of ages, participation in the housing committees etc.) because it adapted to participants' times and did not demand as long an engagement as other methods used.

*Group Discussions and Collective Timelines*

Group discussions were held with community leaders in both settlements. I called them groups discussion and not focus groups, as they did not follow the same structure every time. Although some sessions were replicated in both settlements, following the same questions. Other sessions used participatory methods to discuss specific issues of the settlement. The objective of the sessions was to discuss with the community leader board the story of the settlement, their main achievements, the collective housing claims and their strategies in moving them forward. While
discussing this, mapping was used to clarify certain issues in the territory (i.e. access to services, housing committee’s boundaries), in addition to the collective timelines.

**Figure 8 | Group discussions and timelines with community leaders**

*Left* settlement. *Right* Collective timeline highlighting main events of each housing committee. *Source: Author*

Timelines were used with housing committees as a way of visualising and recording the organisation’s important events towards acquiring housing and services. Community leaders wrote or drew the main events on post-its. This was done in one of the sessions of group discussions with community leaders, in which they discussed their collective story as a housing committee or settlement.

Group discussions and group timelines served two methodological purposes. Timelines allowed the incorporation of visual and participatory aspects into the group discussions and allowed community leaders to work collectively towards one story, negotiating their views as they went and, as such, clarifying housing claims. Second, timelines allowed me to standardise the multiple and diverse stories, in one instrument, for analytic purposes.

**Participatory Observation**

Although participatory observation was done continuously during the fieldwork, it was particularly important in the first month. According to May (2011) it allows the researcher to better place, understand, and interpret events, relations and places. Notes from the observations were recorded in the Research Diary and pictures were also taken to illustrate some of the elements that were observed.
Particular attention was directed to observe the following:

- **Routines:** What were the main activities, at what time and by whom.
- **Housing:** Housing materials, type of construction, times of building, home spaces and decoration, use of spaces and connection to services.
- **Settlement:** How it was distributed, common spaces, green spaces, relationships between housing committees.
- **Organisation:** Community meetings and community leaders’ meetings.

The main challenge in observation was accessing different situations without disturbing or interrupting with my presence. As I was interested in observing everyday practices, and specifically home-making practices, spending time inside houses was key. Initially I managed to gain access by being invited for lunch or by visiting people that I already knew, but it became challenging to enter new peoples’ houses without disrupting activities. In order to do this, I joined a group of women who did tapestry weaving and received lessons from them for a couple of weeks, allowing me to spend time inside their houses, and have informal conversations about their everyday life. As I wrote in my research diary:

> Yesterday I went to the community meeting in Manantial, and I stayed around afterwards chatting to people. Today I went to Rosana’s house for lunch and to a weaving lesson. Afterwards I joined a group of women that were talking in the little shop outside of her house. I realised that just the fact of being there allows me to see and hear interesting things that I would not have access to if I was only going to the settlements for a specific interview (Research diary, December 2nd, 2014).

**Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders**

The interviews aimed to provide contextual information about the conditions and tensions in which informal settlements emerge and are maintained. Interviews began with a set of questions, but as May (2011) states, these were flexible and allowed the interviewee to talk freely within the scope of the research, with clarifications and elaborations asked for when needed.

In Table 9 is the full list of interviewees, in total 19. Civil servants and third sector professional interviewed were involved or had been involved in the ‘Slum-Upgrading Agreement’ of 2013 and in its implementation. The interviews allowed
me to understand (i) the perception of different stakeholders about informality and how to address informal dwellers specific housing claims, (ii) to what extend upgrading could become an alternative to social housing subsidies, and (iii) the politics involved in moving projects of this magnitude forward.

I also interviewed academics who have done research on informal settlements in Viña del Mar and Valparaíso. Similar to civil servant and third sector, the interviews with academics allowed me to understand, (i) their perception about informality and how to address informal settlements, differently academics had a deeper (ii) understanding of the history and causes of informality in the city, but less information about how the housing policy works and how to address informal settlements more practically. Similarly, as the previous group, (iii) they had a good understanding of the complexities of politics in the region.

I was also interested in interviewing people from the private sector in order to understand how housing and land processes occur in the city. I contacted land owners and the ‘Chilean Chamber of Construction’. However, I did not have an answer.

Table 9| List of interviewees: Key stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Civil servant</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Third sector</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Third Sector</td>
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<td>Third Sector</td>
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<td>Academic</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
Secondary data

Secondary data was not easy to access and was mostly obtained in Viña del Mar. Zoning Plans, maps of neighbourhood associations and informal settlements were provided by the Municipality of Viña del Mar. In the Municipal Library of Viña del Mar I was able to find two oral history books and how low-income neighbourhood were formed, and I had access to policy documents from politicians. General information about the allocation of housing subsidy was accessed online via the MINVU website.

Research Diary

The last source of data was the research diary that I kept during the fieldwork. It was a useful source as it allowed me to keep a record of things as I encountered them, and to reflect on the context, the topic and the research process (Wiesenfeld, 2001).

Strategies to address issues of participation, validation and representation when using participatory methods

Inspired by Participatory Research Appraisal by Robert Chambers (1997), participatory methods are situated as a distinct paradigm in social research, the aim is to facilitate peoples’ abilities to create awareness and undertake sustainable action. They allow researchers to assess the causes and consequences of an issue and can facilitate the identification of intervention from the perspective of the poor rather than policy makers or scholars (Moser & McIlwaine, 1999).

Some of the critiques of participatory methods have been around how to allow participants to engage fully with the methods, as well as how to judge the validity of the results (Campbell, 2002). Four main strategies were considered to address issues of representation, participation and validation:

**Triangulation**: Usually considered the most important way to validate results in Participatory Research Appraisal (Moser & McIlwaine, 1999). The aim is to crosscheck a technique or the data that has been generated by a technique. Thus, the limitation of one technique can supplement and cross validate findings from a second technique. In the research, the crosscheck was done through the different methods. For example, the same question was asked in two methods: *What does
home mean to you? Was asked in life stories and in participatory photography. A relevant affirmation from one participant would be repeated to other participants anonymously, to get their opinions and examine how widespread a statement was (e.g. I have been told that “Women fight for one house, but men can have many different houses”, what is your opinion?). Lastly, statements made by authorities would be repeated to community leaders, and vice versa, as a way to check their positions and create an imaginary dialogue between the two parties (e.g. Community leaders think that upgrading is a better option for them, and would not like to be moved to social housing, what is MINVU’s position?)

**Development of skills:** Visual techniques such as mapping and photography can present challenges for participants who are not used to these methods, and have not developed visual literacy. In the research, the first participatory photography session was dedicated to training participants in using the camera, alongside several activities aimed at improving the skill of visual literacy in general.

**Repetition:** As an issue does not manifest itself in the same way in different groups of people or communities, repetition refers to repeat methods with different groups. In the research, participatory photography workshops were done with different groups, repeating the workshop four times; timelines were done with 21 participants; and group discussions with community leaders were also repeated in different community centres and on different days, in order to allow various issues to emerge (or consolidate existing themes). This also helped with issues of representation, as it allowed to capture a diverse range of views by repeating the same methods to different participants.

**Validation with community leaders:** The findings were presented to community leaders 9 months after the fieldwork had finished. It allowed to discuss collectively some of the findings, prioritising the aspects that were most important for community leaders and discuss the relationship of the practices with wider city trends.

*What is the potential for transformation for the Critical Visual Participatory Wheel?*

I argue in the thesis that the set of methods used can have a potential for transformation. This is important, because is not only the findings but the methods
which can have an impact. As Miraftab (2004) argues, “The feminist concern with field methods arises (...) from its commitment to social change, transformative action and emancipatory research praxis” (p. 596). The following section examines the methods, highlighting participatory photography, as a way to examine the potential for personal and collective transformation. Some of these reflections came from conversations with participants during and after their participation, and in the case of participatory photography, from the oral evaluation at the end of the workshop.

1. Visual representation of reality

Pictures, as external objects, allowed participants to interrogate intimate, contested and sometimes difficult situations from a new perspective. When looking at all the group’s pictures displayed on the table, one of participants affirmed, “Everything is in those pictures, all our sacrifices …. those pictures are our life” (Vanessa, 46 years-old, MB).

This was particularly true in the workshop where women discussed domestic violence. As pictures allow participants to talk about difficult issues. The photographs allowed them to create distance between themselves and the problem as something that happened to them, and see it as an object that was easier to discuss. As Bradley (1995) argues, “Pictures can be a means of focusing on problems and memories that are too painful or too complicated to be expressed in words” (p.3).

It also allowed them to make routines and daily practices conscious. As Estela (33, FC) affirmed, “By looking at our pictures, we learnt that we do infinite things during a day!”. The use of photography also increased their awareness of place. Manzo (2003) argues that people usually experience place in an unconscious way, especially when is related to their everyday lives. However, there are occasions in which the relationship with place can become more conscious and exercising people’s relationship with their place can increase the awareness. The photography workshops allowed to do this, as one of the participants revealed: “Through the pictures I learned things with respect to me, my community and my family. Maybe it was things that I liked, but I had not given a meaning, or why I liked them. Before I simply liked them” (Tomás, 25 years-old, FC).
2. Space to reflect about the self and place

The methods provided a space for dwellers to tell their stories, to be listened to and to listen to each other. The individual and collective spaces created safe environments in which to reflect on the stories of how dwellers got here (life stories), how they organised together (group discussions with community leaders), and what home meant to them (photography workshops).

As Cornejo et al. (2008) suggest, in those spaces, participant can create a story about themselves and become the main character. This was particularly evident in the group discussion with community leaders in Felipe Camiroaga. This was one of the first activities they did as a housing committee board, and discussing how they arrived to the settlement, they were collectively creating a narrative as group. “I don’t think we had told this together before ... I feel proud of what we have accomplished” (Rosa, 30, community leader, FC).

In the case of workshops, the continued engagement for 6 weeks allowed to create an intimate and comfortable space, which differ from specific housing activities (Typically led by NGOs or housing officers). For dwellers in MB, who have participated in countless activities, they affirmed that this space had been different:

We are either in lots of community meetings about the upgrading project, which can be stressful, or in crafts workshops, but this feels different, because we have been talking about ourselves. I’ve known these women for years and I didn’t know many of the things that they have said here (Linda, 40, community leader, MB).

As this quotation suggests, the space created in the workshop in MB allowed women to connect with each other and to the topic of housing, not from a technical or logistical point of view, but in terms of meanings and values of home. This could suggest that dwellers, specifically community leaders, tend to operate on a high-efficiency level, but have less space to reflect issues they care about in a less competitive environment.

3. Co-production of knowledge

Participants were able to engage in the process of the production of knowledge in a way that was accessible. This was particularly the case in the collective activities such as photography, mapping, timelines and card games, which allowed me to work
with men and women of a wide range of age, skills and interests and producing visible outcomes. The photography in particular, allowed participants to give a physical input to the research, as they would bring their pictures to the workshop, and create a collective output.

The feedback session, conducted 9 months after the fieldwork, allowed community leaders to validate or change some of the findings, and have an important role in the outcome produced. The existing processes of knowledge and a space to think about alternatives for the city in collaborative ways between researchers and informal dwellers are critical for urban learning (McFarlane, 2011).

The type of knowledge produced through the photography workshops was different to that which was obtained through other methods. This was particularly evident when talking about home. Both life stories and photography addressed the question ‘What does home mean to you?’ In the life stories, it was very common to receive answers relating to people, particularly family. However, in the photography, the concept of home portrayed was wide and diverse, and did not only refer to the home space but also to multiple places, people and feelings, and at different scales.

4. Empowerment

The workshops had the capacity to engage with a priority issue for dwellers such as housing, without being directed to a specific action, giving them the freedom to engage with the topic in different forms. Some dwellers, they used the space to voice political concerns, others were creative, while for others it was more of a personal space.

In terms of personal development, the workshop was particularly relevant for the group of women who discussed domestic abuse. One of the participants, while she was in front of all her printed photographs, reflected: “I had not realised all that I had gone through, how much I have survived. This has made me think of doing a biography of my life” (Bernarda, 52, MB).

On a collective level, it was interesting to see how they discussed the meaning of home as a group. The wish to stay put is something that is widely talked about, but there is less reflection about why and what does that mean for collective action.
Finally, the set of methods created a space for dwellers to reflect on their own stories - their strengths and their difficulties – and about the place where they live. I argue that under adequate conditions, there is the potential to create awareness, and even empower individuals and communities. It is difficult to identify the exact impact that the research had on dwellers, but some personal accounts, as well as actions taken by informal settlements after the research, suggests that their reflections during the 8-months, fed and boosted an on-going process of collective awareness and empowerment. The set of methods and its potential for transformation has been illustrated in Figure 5.

3.3 Data Analysis and Framework

3.3.1 Data Analysis

To analyse the data I used qualitative analysis from community psychology (Cornejo et al., 2008; Wiesenfeld, 2011), elements of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and feminist research principles. I did not subscribe to one theory in particular but adopted elements from these theories in a way that made sense to the information gathered, particularly due to the different nature of the information collected (images and transcriptions). The data was analysed using an inductive process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), this means that the main themes emerged from the findings and were not pre-existing to the fieldwork.
Stage 1: General Themes

Following Wiesenfeld's (2001) directions of interview analysis, I prepared the transcripts of life stories, semi-structured interviews, workshops, group discussion, field notes and images with captions, in a bound notebook per settlement (as shown in Figure 9). The transcripts were not translated from Spanish to English, in order to avoid loss of context and meaning. Yet the analysis was done in English, and direct quotes were translated to be inserted in the final text.

Life stories and other interviews: I used the software NVivo with the transcriptions to organise the data and do an initial coding. The main material was the life stories, the aim was to identify all the home-making practices that had emerged from the fieldwork, creating broad categories, which I would then use to group home-making practices.

Photography: In parallel, I analysed the pictures using the Interpretative Engagement Framework (Drew & Guillemin, 2014), which recommends three steps for the analysis of pictures in participatory photography. First, the analysis of the individual interviews of each participant and the images; second, the images and context of production; third, the researcher analysis of the images and themes identified, re-contextualised within the theoretical framework.
**Research Diary:** I loosely followed Glaser & Strauss (1967) to code the information recorded in the research diary: Observation notes, methodological notes, theoretical notes and personal notes. The main aim use of the research diary notes was as evidence of certain issues and as a way to reflect on my positionality during the research.

Once I had the initial analysis from each method, I read all the material again and identified themes across methods. As a first output, I wrote a document which identified the general themes emerging and tensions, I did this without attributing priority to any of the themes, and I included specific quotes which were representative of the themes (NVivo was helpful for doing this).

**Stage 2: Specific categories**

In the second stage, I identified the specific set of practices that were going to be used in the research. This meant prioritising the main themes which had emerged in the first stage, and leaving aside data that was collected.

Once the practices were identified, and the three areas of analysis for the findings chapters were selected, I returned to read the transcripts in focus and select quotations and main examples. These were organised in an excel spread sheet and used as a basis for the writing.

Although it is possible to identify two stages of analysis, this was a reiterative process. I returned to the transcriptions and photographs as many times as needed to make sense of issues in different moments during the analytical and writing process.

### 3.3.2 Framework analysis and organisation of empirical chapters

**Organisation and rationale of empirical chapters**

The thesis has three empirical chapters in which the data produced is presented and analysed. Each chapter addresses a set of home-making practices; Chapter 5 the *Maintenance of the Home*, Chapter 6 the *Construction of the Home*, and Chapter 7 the *Planning of the Home*, and Chapter 8 presents a comparative analysis of both informal settlements using the data of chapter 5, 6 & 7. Each chapter answers to the two research sub-questions. In Chapter 9, the last chapter of the thesis, the answers
of the three empirical chapters are brought together in the form of a conclusion. Figure 10 illustrates the organisation of the empirical chapters and the comparative analysis of the settlements.

Figure 10| Organisation of empirical chapters

The way the data collection fed into each chapter is represented in the following figure (Figure 11). As this figure shows, there is no clear delimitation between the data sources and their use in different chapters. Rather, different parts of the analysis are used in different chapters. All empirical chapters answer both research sub-questions. I have also included Chapter 4 (contextual chapter) in the figure because the chapter contains a large amount of primary data, as the city has not been widely researched, and because the information provides an overview of the 'structural landscape’ (explained in Chapter 2, section 2.3) in which the practices occur, thus referring directly to sub-question 1.
Use of Conceptual Background and Analytical Framework to answer research questions

The analytical framework The Politics of Home-Making provides a structure by which to analyse the home-making practices identified, with the aim of discussing the political function of these practices in women’s struggles for housing. In Chapter 2, I introduced the conceptual background grounded in the literature review, as well as the analytical framework.

The data of the research, provided in the empirical chapters, was analysed in two ways. First, by identifying a set of practices was identified from the data collected. During the fieldwork, specific practices were chosen taking into consideration two practical criteria: (i) widespread practices in the two research sites, and (ii) that women themselves identified it as a fundamental practice in creating a home. The practices were identified using principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), as I had not pre-defined the specific practices that I was going to be observing, but was open in the scope of the definition of home-making practices that I had established, following the idea of maintenance, construction and planning of the home.
As mentioned before, identifying the dimensions of the framework was twofold. It did not only build on the theory presented in Chapter 2, but also from the practices identified during the fieldwork. From this process, six practices in total were identified, two per home-making category. Each empirical chapter discusses the role of one of the dimensions of home-making, illustrated through two practices. As it was shown in Figure 10.

Second, in order to analyse each set of practices and answer the research sub-questions, I followed the analytical structure of the conceptual background provided in Chapter 2. Each chapter: (i) explained and characterised a set of practices, (ii) analysed the practices and (iii) discussed the set of practices.

Each practice was explained and characterised by answering the following questions. What is the aim of the practice? What are the main characteristics of the practices? How does the practice manifest itself for different social identities and in the different settlements? These questions aim to characterise the home-making practices and its specific manifestation in this context.

Each practice was analysed by answering the following questions. What is the aim of the practice? What distinguishes the practice from other similar practices? How do practices work together? What social identity is the practice configured around and what identities are dwellers using to mobilise? Are practices individual or collective? Does the practice move in territorial scales? What are the limitations of the practice in accomplishing its aim? These questions make reference to the discussion in Chapter 2 (in section 2.2.2 in Practices of Resistance). The aim is to establish the nature of the practices and identify the material and symbolic gains for dwellers.

Each practice was discussed by answering the two research sub-questions. What are the current gender and housing inequalities from which the practices emerge? And, how can the home-making practices identified make claims and what spaces are they opening for the advancement of social justice? In order to do so, this section builds on the previous analysis and makes specific reference to Chapter 4, by drawing on the ‘structural landscape’ in which practices emerge, and to Chapter 2 in section 2.3 in Trajectories of Social Change, and the use of Fraser’s three-dimensional model.
In Figure 12 the two sub-questions are localised in the theory. Sub-question 1 focuses on how “Sites of Inequality” are reflected in “Everyday Politics” through home-making practices, while sub-question 2 focuses on how home-making practices can make claims, and open space for social justice through claims of recognition, redistribution and representation. In other words, sub QUESTION 1 addresses how inequalities are reflected in practices, while questions 2 addresses how practices can contest those inequalities.

Research Sub-question 1

In order to answer research sub-question 1, attention was drawn to “Sites of Inequality” in the conceptual background, examining the conditions under which home-making practices emerge. This question looks at the context and structural landscape: social policies that affect women and gender relations; housing and urban policies, and how they affect access and affordability of housing, and urban segregation; legal frameworks which facilitate or limit the space in which to make claims; implementations of policies and social programmes through societal institutions; and hegemonic norms and values of gender roles and available opportunities for the urban poor. The initial mapping of the structural landscape

Source: Author
was done in Chapter 4, and then, for each empirical chapter, I draw on particular elements.

Specifically, the inequalities are categorised into symbolic and material inequalities, by defining whether these are inequalities which mostly relate to cultural misrecognition (symbolic inequalities) or maldistribution of resources (material inequalities). The product that emerges from this analysis is the direct link between types of inequalities and specific home-making claims made by dwellers. For example, women staying at home taking care of children can reflect and respond to: traditional gender norms (symbolic inequality), fewer work opportunities (material and symbolic inequalities), and the availability of childcare programmes in the area (material inequality).

Research Sub-question 2

On the other hand, in order to answer research sub-question 2, I focused on how the home-making practices identified can make claims, and what types of claims are they making. First, I identified in what ways the home-making practices challenge the inequalities identified in research sub-question 1, alongside their limitations. Second, I identified what claims these practices are making, and whether they are material or symbolic claims. Are the claims defending entitlements or making new claims? Are dwellers organised around that claim or not? This allowed me to understand how the practices address issues of recognition, redistribution and of representation. Thirdly, by identifying the space in which these practices operate, it was possible to ascertain specific areas for change.

Outcomes

The analysis allowed me to identify six main practices of female informal dwellers of two informal settlements in the city of Viña del Mar. The three categories of home-making allowed me to have an open approach to housing, not bounding the analysis to one dimension, but allowing for the observation of different practices and at different scales. Each empirical chapter, tells us about the role of one of the dimensions of home-making. Chapter 5 tells us about the role of housework and childcare in maintaining a house in the settlement; Chapter 6 tells us about the role that construction of housing has in women’s notion of home; and Chapter 7 tells us
about the role that planning and being a female leader has in women's possibilities of participation and representation. Regarding the case studies, it allowed me to examine how home-making develops in informal settlements that have had different trajectories. Chapter 8 shows the differences and similarities of the settlements in relation to their gains in the redistribution of resources, recognition of women's skills and representation at the city scale.

The analysis allowed me to examine the practices in a specific structural landscape. The examination of how social policies, social programmes, legal frameworks and cultural norms have created and maintained inequalities for female dwellers in informal settlements. It also allowed me to understand the agency of women in this context, what women are doing and what the specific claims around practices are. It allowed me to identify the "cracks" and small pockets of agency in which there is space for change, and the ones in which women are more constrained.

The main argument that is made in the empirical chapters is that everyday home-making practices can have a political dimension when looked in a specific context. The findings show that home-making practices can make claims by doing gender and by doing home in a certain way, destabilising the normal order of things and drawing new trajectories of change.

**Conclusion**

The chapter has discussed the three main areas about the methodological process: the role of the researcher, methods used and the potential of transformation, and how the framework is going to be used. What this chapter has shown is the richness of the research process, not only as a medium to collect and organise the data, but as an outcome in itself.

The following chapter, introduces the case study of the research. The first part of the chapter looks at the 'structural landscape' of Chile's housing and gender policies. While the second part, presents the case study, the informal settlements of Viña del Mar, and the two research sites. This chapter sets the base to understanding the housing and gender inequalities in which informal dwellers’ practices emerge.
CHAPTER 4

Positioning housing and gender claims in contemporary Chile

Drawing on the insights of the analytical framework laid out in the previous chapter, this chapter examines the main features that shape the urban and gender landscape in Chile, and how they specifically affect low-income women. The chapter is divided into two main parts: housing and gender policies (part 1), and the urban poor in Viña del Mar (part 2).

As discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.3), social change occurs in a specific ‘structural landscape’ - a set of boundaries which determine the type of change and relationship between agency and structure. Defining this allows us to understand the context in which informal dwellers’ practices operate, as well as the specific space for political action. As such, the first part of the chapter addresses national housing and gender
policies, legal frameworks and the prevalent values and norms. It also looks at historical social movements in housing and in gender struggles for low-income women, as a way to understand the precedents that these movements have set for new trajectories of change. This first part of the chapter finishes with a general map of the structural landscape, and outlines the implications for redistribution, recognition and representation of informal dwellers in the struggle for housing.

The second part of the chapter introduces the case study of the informal settlements of Viña del Mar and examines the two research sites. Here the analysis follows the idea that urban and social outcomes are not only a reflection of national socioeconomic context (i.e. neoliberalism), but that they are mediated by concrete policies and programmes which are enacted by different interested parties in a determined territory. How does the structural landscape affect a specific city? How are urban and gender policies implemented? What role do different actors play? What space is there for change? In Chile, the central state has a major role in formulating and implementing policies, meaning that regional governments and municipalities struggle to affect specific spatial and social outcomes in their territories beyond national guidelines (Eaton, 2004). As such, the case is presented in the light of what it means for a city different to Santiago, the capital, and looks at opportunities for change from the bottom-up. It discusses the role of the regional government of Valparaíso in making changes in what appears to be a strict policy landscape, as well as identifying spaces where dwellers take action in this context. As such, the second part of the chapter raises the question of how social change can occur in a specific city which is determined by national policies.

The chapter concludes with the importance of the case study for the research. I argue that the case of informal settlements in Viña del Mar and the Upgrading Scheme formulated in the region to upgrade 45 informal settlements is an excellent case to discuss trajectories of change, specifically the value of home and the agency of dwellers in pursuing their own housing claims. I argue that it is also a relevant case to discuss gender, as most of the community leaders involved in the agreement are women who have led their informal settlements for many years and have managed to find ways to engage in politics not only at neighbourhood level, but at a
regional and national level. As such, this case reveals insights in the role that housing can have in mediating the gender inequalities that affect low-income women.

**Part 1 - Housing and gender policy**

### 4.1 Chilean Housing Policy

Chile’s housing policy is known within Latin America as an established and effective policy. For the last 40 years, it has consisted mainly of a large-scale direct subsidy programme, which has been implemented predominantly by the private sector and financed by the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism (*from here after MINVU*). The housing policy was first introduced in 1979 and has been widely replicated by other countries in Latin America and across the world\(^{14}\) (Gilbert, 2000; 2004).

The Chilean housing policy differentiated itself from trends in international housing early on, as part of the “Chilean neoliberal project”\(^{15}\), which did not only aim to improve the economy, but saw an ambitious social and political restructuring of the country defined by market-led policies (Staab 2017; Zunino & Hidalgo, 2009). In the case of housing, MINVU was set up to build a whole-housing system, at a time when the rest of the world was influenced by site-and-services and self-help. Along with Norway and Singapore, Chile was the first country to adopt a whole-housing policy in the world (Pugh, 2001).

\(^{14}\) It has been replicated in Costa Rica (1987), Colombia (1991), Paraguay (1992), Uruguay (1993), Brazil (2010), and South Africa’s (1994) housing subsidy scheme was also partially based on the Chilean model.  

\(^{15}\) The dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet did not only have a profound effect on the opposition of the regime, as human rights were violated, but also on public policies, and many of the changes in urban and gender policies have their root in this period. These were built on an abrupt market-led approach, the centralisation of power to the state and legally securing the changes through the introduction of a new constitution (which is still in existence today) (Staab, 2017).
**Chile's neoliberal housing agenda**

Housing in Chile went from being a *right* in Salvador Allende’s administration (1970-1973) to a *commodity* in the military regime of General Augusto Pinochet (Palmer & Haramoto, 1988). The responsibility for delivering housing was left to the private sector, turning it into a commodity accessed via the market (Jirón, 2010). Since then, housing policy for the lowest socioeconomic quintile has remained very similar in structure, despite changes in the nature of the regimes, from militarist to democratic (Márquez, 2006).

Chile was the first country of the global South to reject a loan for self-help housing from the World Bank in order to set its own housing policy agenda (Gilbert, 2002). Although this meant an initial distance from the development agencies during which structural adjustment policies were implemented, the market incorporation became key for sustaining the housing finance system in the 1990s, and the Chilean model was recognised internationally as good practice by the Inter American Bank, USAID and UN-Habitat (2003). The fact that the housing policy was initially rejected and then widely embraced showed the power of economic and developmental approaches in setting international agendas. As Gilbert (2002) affirms:

> The sad thing about all this is that Chile could get away with what it did only because it was not offending the key principles of neoliberal orthodoxy. Chile’s autonomy in the housing arena was only permitted because it was merely doing what the senior managements of developmental Washington wanted. Why should the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank get upset about minor deviations in housing when Chile is showing the rest of the world how to export, how to privatise pension funds and how to control inflation? (p.321)

Chile’s neoliberal agenda was strongly influenced by the United States, as a way to change the legacy of Salvador Allende’s socialist government and transform Chile into the first truly neoliberal country. This was implemented through the training of young Chilean economists at the Chicago School of Economics, who became colloquially known as the “Chicago Boys” (Valdés, 1995). The government had a close relationship with the construction industry, and from then onwards delivered

---

16 In 1973 a military coup, led by General Augusto Pinochet, overtook power and socialist elected president Salvador Allende (1970-1973). The military regime lasted for 14 years, until 1989 when a national referendum voted Pinochet out of power.
housing through the private sector. As such, the urban decisions made at the time led to the *liberalisation* and *privatisation* of urban planning.

*The role of the Chilean housing policy in tackling urban inequality*

During the 1980s, housing policy was used to eradicate informal settlements from well-located land in the city. Since then, in democratic governments, housing policy has been used as a poverty alleviation tool and with specific initiatives to address informal settlements.

The housing policy has significantly reduced the housing deficit in the country, and has contributed to Chile having a lower proportion of informal settlements in comparison to other countries in Latin America (UN-Habitat, 2011). Absolute poverty has consistently decreased in the country (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2015), as did informal settlements during the 1990s. However, in the last decade, the number of informal settlements has increased consistently (MINVU, 2013; TECHO, 2016), and inequality remains a fundamental issue\(^{17}\), indicating that housing and social policies have not been sufficient to tackle urban inequality in Chile.

Historically, MINVU has conducted three official cadastres of informal settlements; in 1996 (MINVI-INVI, 1997), 2007 and 2011 (MINVU, 2013). Since 2007, settlements have increased in number, but mostly in size. The number of dwellers living in settlements has increased officially by 25%, however the cadastres done more recently by NGO TECHO reveals an even higher number – an increase of 48%, showing a total of 38,770 households living in 660 settlements (TECHO, 2016).

Some explanations for urban inequality in the country, can be found in the historical conditions in which the housing policy has taken place. Since 1990, it has moved towards more comprehensive programmes that tackle not only housing, but also poverty. However, social housing has not necessarily improved the quality of life of its residents, due to the lack of participation (Castillo, 2010; Márquez 2004; 2008) and the low quality of construction (Ducci, 1997). As Jirón (2010) states; "(...) even the more democratic interventions have led to unsatisfactory ways of inhabiting the

\(^{17}\) Inequality, measured with GINI Index, has decreased from 57.30 in 1990 to 47.70 in 2015 (World Bank, 2018), however the country is one of the most unequal countries in the OECD and in Latin America. A fifth of the wealth of the country (19.5\%) is concentrated in the hand of a few (0.1\%) (OECD, 2018).
city, because top-down ‘formalisations’ of informal settlements erase the richness of everyday urban living” (p. 72).

Other explanations for urban and social inequality have referred to the way that poverty has been addressed. Market-led policies introduced in the 1980s have had a strong impact on social protection, universalism and the conceptualisation of human rights. According to Staab (2017), the policies have placed “emphasis on individual responsibility, risk, management and the targeting of public support to the poor” (p. 63). Because these types of free-market policies have been successful in reducing income-based poverty, they have been replicated and reinforced by democratic administrations (Zunino & Hidalgo, 2009). However, the lack of social protection and the conditional targeted programmes have had a deep effect on citizenship. According to Han (2012), it has ultimately redefined the relationship between state and the urban poor.

The states’ social debt to the poor had morphed into the poor’s debt to the state. That is, in receiving aid, the poor owe it to the state to become “autonomous” from any state intervention, to absorb and manage difficult economic and social realities themselves (p.68).

Social inequality is entrenched in structural aspects, such as poor public education and classism, and is manifested in spatial segregation, discrimination, and uneven political influence in decision-making processes (UNDP, 2017).

4.1.1 Chile’s Housing Policy in three phases

The Chilean housing policy can be explained through three distinct phases, with a clear shift in 1979 with the introduction to the whole-housing system policy. The first phase is self-help and site-and-services (1950s -1970s); the second phase is massive evictions and the creation of the whole-housing system (1973-1989); and the third phase is housing subsidies and poverty programmes (1990-2017). See Table 11 for a summary of three phases, including the different housing initiatives and programmes in each stage.

*Phase 1: Self-help and site-and-services*

In the 1950s the rural-urban migration and the subsequent growth of cities increased the national housing deficit. As a result, *poblaciones callampas* [Mushroom
settlements emerged, they were not conceived as permanent solutions by dwellers, but as emergency self-help shelter on any available land, such as riverbanks and landfill sites (Castells, 1983). These were followed by more organised and political tomas de terrenos [land invasions], that had a clearer aim of staying on the land, as a way to access housing.

During the 1950s and 1960s several self-help initiatives were implemented, and an official site-and-services programme called Operacion Sitio [Operation Site] was introduce, however it would become known colloquially as Operacion Tiza [Chalk Operation] as a way to demean the function of the programme. The programme consisted of loans to buy plots of lands, which were urbanised, where dwellers could build their own houses. However, the quality of the plots was inconsistent, with some marked only with white chalk, with no services and located at the periphery of the city (Quintana, 2014).

To a certain extent, Operation Site controlled the illegal occupation of land, as informal dwellers were able to obtain formal land tenure. In 1970, Salvador Allende’s socialist administration stopped the self-help programme, as it was considered “demeaning for the poor” (Greene, 2004, p.9), and initiated the Emergency Plan which built finished housing units. However, it did not deliver with the efficiency that was needed considering the raise in the housing deficit.

**Phase 2: Massive evictions and the creation of the whole-housing system**

The housing policy, as we know it today, was created in this period. In 1979, a new urban law was issued declaring land was no longer scarce. The intention was that by opening land to the market, it would be regulated and prices would decrease, however this did not happen. As a consequence, the location of social housing was decided by the construction companies and guided by the cheapest land, which was in the outskirts of the city.

The construction of new housing occurred in parallel to the violent mass evictions of informal settlements, especially those on well-located land in the city centre (Trivelli, 1986). Is estimated that at least 28,500 dwellers were evicted in Santiago alone (Jirón, 2010), an indication of the severity of the military regime. The lack of housing support and the growth of the population, led families to find affordable
accommodation in any form they could, not in informal settlements but as *allegados* - living in overcrowded environments or building on the same plot of land with extended family.

Informal dwellers relocated from eradicated settlements were placed in new housing units on the periphery of cities. For example, La Pintana Municipality, in the south of Santiago, increased its population by 90% in only two years (Kusnetzoff, 1987). Today it is one of the poorest boroughs in Santiago, as a large proportion of the area is comprised of social housing complexes. Figure 13 illustrates the removal of informal settlements during 1980s from well-located land in the city (*in white*) where the informal settlements were originally located, to social housing on the periphery of Santiago (*in red*) where they were relocated.

Due to these drastic measures, the housing deficit diminished by 43% between 1980 and 2000 in the country (Rodríguez & Sugranyes, 2004). However, the social and urban consequences of such policy have been widely researched by national scholars. The most evident consequence was that the urban poor were able to access housing, but in highly stigmatised and excluded territories, contributing to a phenomenon of *ghettoisation* (Sabatini & Brain, 2008). It is what the Chilean literature has named *the problem of those with a roof* (Rodríguez & Sugranyes, 2004), arguing that the housing problem was transferred *from* informal settlement *to* social housing. Much of this is still current today, as millions of families continue to live in these areas in precarious conditions.
This is a well-known diagram amongst Chilean academics that was made in the 1980s which documented the number of informal dwellers that were evicted and relocated to the outskirts of Santiago. Original title: "Erradicación de Pobладores de campamentos del área metropolitana. Por comuna y destino. 1979-1985" [Informal dwellers' evicted from the metropolitan area. By municipality and destination. 1979-1985]. Source: Gurovic, 1989, modified by author.

Phase 3: Housing subsidies with a poverty alleviation approach

In 1990, with the return to democracy, the structure of the policy was maintained (a whole-housing system built by the private sector), however with a more explicit aim to address poverty. Programmes such as Chile Barrio [Chile Neighbourhood], later Quiero Mi Barrio [I Love My Neighbourhood] were introduced as a way to improve the infrastructure of housing built during the 1980s and 1990s, and develop social programmes targeted to the territories that had high concentration of social housing.
In 2007, under President Bachelet’s administration, the most significant housing policy reform took place since it was created. The changes introduced aimed to address some of the shortcomings of the policy. A new subsidy for the lowest quintile was created, *Fondo Solidario de Vivienda* [Housing Solidary Fund], known as FSV, in which groups of families organise in collaboration with a Social-Estate Management Body (known as EGIS), consisting of mostly private companies which coordinates the housing project. The subsidy eliminated mortgages, benefactors complement the subsidy with a small initial saving, and the application to the subsidy could be done collectively. This was an important change for informal settlements, as they could apply collectively to the housing subsidy.

Additionally, the subsidies system introduced variables that were not considered previously, such as the “Location Subsidy” (specific funding for well-located land for social housing) and a social development programme, which aimed to increase residents’ participation in the design and process of the housing subsidy.

The two main housing subsidies available for informal dwellers (targeted to the lowest socioeconomic quintile), is the collective application of FSV and the individual application to the subsidy known as Subsidy of Used House, in which benefactors receive a voucher to buy a house on the market, with similar values to FSV (see Table 10).

**Table 10** | Housing subsidies available for the lowest socioeconomic quintile population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Housing Subsidy</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Application process</th>
<th>Savings</th>
<th>Value of the property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DS.49: Housing Solidary Fund 1 (Construction in New Land)</td>
<td>Collective application to the construction of a new social housing estate, on a new plot of land. Built and managed by an EGIS.</td>
<td>Collective: as a housing committee (Min 30 – max 150 households)</td>
<td>10 UF ($247,000 CLP)</td>
<td>Max. 913 UF ($22,628,000 CLP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS.49: Subsidy of Used House</td>
<td>Individual voucher to buy a house on the market.</td>
<td>Individual: as a household.</td>
<td>10 UF ($247,000 CLP)</td>
<td>Max. 794 UF ($19,545,000 CLP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author with information from MINVU website: [http://beneficios.minvu.gob.cl](http://beneficios.minvu.gob.cl)
Previously, the housing policy did not have any gender approach, as its main aim was to deliver housing units and not address any specific needs of dwellers (Ducci, 1994). However, the new housing policy introduced gender-sensitive elements, by identifying the special needs of single women (also of older people, indigenous dwellers and disabled dwellers). This was mainly reflected in the priority of the application process and in the design of the house, to cater to specific material needs. Research shows that in Chile, single mothers have a higher proportion of homeownership of social housing than women in general in the country (Gandelman, 2009). It is also higher than the average female homeownership of social housing in the world (Chant & McIlwaine, 2016). This, as the Chilean housing policy and the expansion of social protection targeting the most vulnerable has focused on female headed households, in favour of men. Research shows, that being a single woman and mother in the country can even be used strategically by low-income women to access housing (Ramm, 2014).

This phase has also been characterised by the introduction of special programmes to address not only housing deficit but informal settlements in particular. In 2007, *Linea de Atención a Campamentos* [Attention line to informal settlements] was created. The unit aimed to provide housing solutions to informal settlements by facilitating the application to existing housing subsidies for informal dwellers. However, informal settlements were not “absorbed naturally” by the available housing subsidies (MINVU, 2013, p.15, author’s translation).

In 2011, under the government of President Sebastian Piñera, the first *Secretaría Ejecutiva de Campamentos* [Executive Secretary of Informal Settlements] was created (2011-2013), which was an exclusive department dedicated to finding a housing solution with more faculties than the previous *Linea de Atención de Campamentos*. It was created as a way to deal with the significant increase in informal settlements, revealed by the 2011 cadastre, but also as a way to address the emergency settlements which emerged after the earthquake of 2010. The programme had two main aims: “determine the universe of households which will apply to the FSV subsidy” and “determine the households that will go through the “urbanisation” project” (MINVU, 2011, n.n). Although it had more faculties, the approach remained similar, using housing subsidies as a tool to eradicate informal
settlements. However, for the first time, the option of in-situ upgrading was discussed, in the form of what it has called *urbanizaciones* [urbanizations].

After the 2011 cadastre, it become evident that the largest informal settlements, most of them located in Viña del Mar, would be very difficult to relocate, and it would be almost impossible to find available land in the same city. As a result, the strategy of upgrading become an option. However, since then it has not become a national housing policy, it does not have a clear funding line, and it has been defined only in terms of improvement of infrastructure, but not as a comprehensive plan. More on the specifics of the upgrading scheme will be discussed in the second part of the chapter.
Table 11 | Phases of the Chilean housing policy, indicating type of housing solutions and informal settlements programmes (1950-2018). Source: Author

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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eduardo Frei Montalva (1964-1970)</td>
<td>Urbanised plots</td>
<td>Operation Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Salvador Allende (1970-1973)</td>
<td>Build finished housing units</td>
<td>Emergency Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allegados housing</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006)</td>
<td>Whole-housing policy Infrastructure improvements and poverty alleviation Urbanised plots</td>
<td>Housing Policy ‘Chile Barrio’ Programme Neighbourhood Improvement Programme (IDB) Progressive Housing Programme (IDB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Michelle Bachelet (2006-2010)</td>
<td>Whole-housing policy</td>
<td>New Housing Policy ‘Quiero Mi Barrio’ Programme (former Chile Barrio)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sebastian Piñera (2010-2014)</td>
<td>Whole-housing policy Upgrading</td>
<td>New Housing Policy Executive Secretary of Informal Settlements Upgrading Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Michelle Bachelet (2014 - 2018)</td>
<td>Whole-housing policy Upgrading</td>
<td>New Housing Policy Executive Secretary of Neighbourhoods ‘Quiero Mi Barrio’ Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.2 Urban social movements

In the 1960s and 1970s, urban social movements emerged as a key actor in the city. Usually linked to political parties, dwellers made highly organised land invasions across Chile (but mainly in Santiago) as a way to access housing. The land invasion was a direct, collective and organised action that legitimised the need for, and the right to, housing (Salazar, 2006). Informal dwellers had not been important political actors in Chile, as left-wing parties had focussed instead on working-class issues and labour unions. As such, it introduced a new sphere of conflict in Chilean society. For Castells (1977), what characterised the urban social movements was their articulation, connected to class struggles but with the aim of urban vindication and a political strategy link to the local government, that allowed new forms of political organisations. The strength of the movement was reflected in the interest and urgency that governments showed in solving the housing deficit, as well as the interest of academics on researching the urban movement.

Since 2000 however, urban social movements have lost their relevance. The housing problem has been deemed solved by authorities and these movements have been less active on the streets, giving the impression that housing issues are less urgent. Sabatini & Wormald (2004) argue that the urban movements in Chile have lost the transformative narrative that they had historically. In other words, the land invasions seem to have a practical function, but lack a sense of transformation. This has been explained by the process of commodification of housing over housing rights, as well as stability brought by post-dictatorship periods which have discouraged informal dwellers from having overt struggles (Vildósola, 2011). Nevertheless, the number of informal settlements continues to rise and informality of housing is displayed in many forms. Urban-social inequalities are evident and housing for the urban poor in the country remains a central issue, even when it does not manifest overtly in the streets.
4.2 Gender and *Pobladoras*

### 4.2.1 The historical participation of *pobladora* women

*Pobladoras* (women of low-income neighbourhoods) have had a crucial role in housing struggles, however this has tended to be unrecognised in Chilean history. Women in informal settlements, affected by food scarcity, mass evictions and the violence of the regime, developed coping strategies which took them outside of the domestic space in which new forms of participation emerge. Three important historical spaces in which women have participated are: Housing Committees or neighbourhood associations, *ollas comunes* [Communal Kitchens] and *Centros de Madres* [Women's Centres].

**Housing Committees**

In contemporary Chile, 80% of community leaders in informal settlements are women (Pizarro et al., 2008), this is explained in part, by women's historical participation in community-based organisations. During the social urban movements period (1970-1980), women played a role in the land invasions and further organisation of informal settlements (Valdés & Weinsten, 1993). The introduction of “Housing Committees” by the state in 1968 (Law N° 16.880, 1968) was a key step in the representation of the urban poor's housing claims, as this was the first time a legal structure existed to organise and channel housing needs. Following their previous experiences in community-based organisations, women started participating formally as community leaders of Housing Committees. A well-known example of *pobladora* women leading their communities towards better infrastructure was *Población La Victoria* – an iconic land invasion in Santiago in 1957 – which today is an established neighbourhood and in which women continue to be strong figures in the communal organisation (Turró & Krause, 2009).

**Ollas comunes**

Due to the high levels of unemployment, inflation and poverty during the dictatorship, women were forced to create “economic survival groups” (Richards, 2004, p.39). Women in informal settlements mobilised to start communal kitchens, collective work groups and neighbourhood day-care centres. The communal pots
were spaces which women organised to provide not only for their families but for their communities. Figure 14 shows Hardy's (1986) research on communal kitchens, a research which analysed in detail the material, symbolic and territorial importance of this practice.

**Figure 14 | Communal kitchen in an informal settlement in Santiago during the 1980s**


**Centros de Madres**

*Centros de Madres* were established in 1968 by the government of Eduardo Frei Montalva. The centres were a community-based organisation for women, which sought to “provide opportunities for women to participate in national life, decision-making and self-administration” (Dandavati, 2005, p. 18). Although it had a clear political agenda, as its intention was to share the political ideas of the party, it also became an important space where women could socialise amongst themselves and break from their roles as housewives. The centres continued during Salvador Allende’s socialist government (1970-1973), and served the political function of the administration, mainly helping in the distribution of goods and services. After the coup in 1973, the military took control of the *Centros de Madres* and neighbourhood associations, and reinstated through CEMA-Chile, a private, non-profit organisation which had paid monitors that facilitated the weekly meetings in each centre. In 1988, there the centres were at its peak with 9,837 *Centros de Madres* with a membership of 202,835 (Dandavati, 2005). Although defined as apolitical, this space was used to pass on the values of the dictatorship (Han, 2010; Richards 2004). It was also used to reinforce the traditional role of women who should not participate in politics, and reinforce their central role in the home, in order to defend family values from “foreign” influences directly linked with communism. As such, *Centros*
de Madres have been historically linked to the political agendas of different administrations. However, many of the pobladora women participated, independent of the political agenda, as they could access resources and benefits (i.e. health, housing, food), and find a space to socialise and develop skills. This space continues to be key in informal settlements, as women use it for leisure and to break from their daily responsibilities.

Figure 15 | Centro de Madres in Viña del Mar

This is the Centro de Madres in the area of Achupallas in Viña del Mar, close to Manuel Bustos informal settlement. The Centro de Madres was established in May 1963 and is still active today. Source: Author

The participation of pobladora women in ollas comunes, centros de madres and housing committees has been analysed by scholars as key spaces for women's development in Chile. Their participation changed the way they understood themselves, gave them social vocation and allowed them to believe they could make a difference in the lives of others (Han, 2010; Hardy, 1989; Dandavati, 2005; Richards, 2004). As Dandavati’s findings show: "The grass-roots organizations were a place to exercise democracy and self-government for women: rotating responsibilities, making collective decisions, taking direct control of the larger group over the leadership, etc." (CESIP, 1985, p.6 in Dandavati, 2005, p. 72)
However, women's needs developed in a precarious context, highly constrained by their economic and social realities:

Poor Chilean women’s lives were full of uncertainty and involved a veritable struggle of survival (…) Furthermore, the survival and maintenance of the family, domestic abuse, violence and sexual issues were all interrelated in a very intricate and subtle manner (Dandavati, 2005, p.74,).

4.2.2 Marianismo and the identity of Latin American women

The identity of Chilean women has been influenced by a conservative Catholic Church and State, and liberal economic policies, which have led to a specific identity and type of motherhood, related mostly to high self-sacrifice for their children and the care of others (Araujo & Martuccelli, 2012; Willmott, 1999; 2002).

The idea of being a ‘good mother’, a ‘good wife’, and a ‘good housewife’ has been prominent in Chilean (and Latin American) culture, but were reinforced even more during the dictatorship, which restrained the role of women to activities in the domestic realm, with few opportunities to challenge a repressive state and overall patriarchy.

In the dominant ideology of the military government, traditional gender roles were exacerbated, and specific expectations and values were attached to being a woman or a man, as Dandavati (2005) explains:

Men are regarded as strong, independent and dominant; they are responsible for providing for the family, functioning in the public sphere and thus, participating actively in the political life of the country. Women, on the other hand, are considered weak, dependant, subordinate, and responsible for raising children and fulfilling all households and religious duties. The conventional view was that since women function chiefly in the private sphere, they should be uninterested in politics (p 26).

This account shows the spaces and responsibilities of men and women. Women were bound to the private sphere, with three main responsibilities: childcare, housework and religious duties. Meanwhile, men were encouraged to participate in the public sphere through paid work and politics. This had specific implications for men during the military government, as many right-wing adherents were expected to work in the government and in the persecution of the opposition, while men in the
opposition organised in clandestine military groups and protests. The account also refers to **expectations of** gender roles and their personalities. Women ought to be “weak, dependant, subordinate, uninterested in politics” while men ought to be “strong, independent, dominant”, showing a distinct binary between gender roles, and specific notions of what it is to be male and female. The rigid division between the public and private sphere, and the definitions of gender roles are part of the cause and effect of the historical subordination of women in Chilean society.

The feminine and masculine ideals, are closely linked to the emphasis on **marianismo** in Latin American culture, in opposition to machismo. **Marianismo** as a notion, was first introduced by Stevens (1973) and it refers to women resembling the Virgin Mary – submissive, passive, obedient and abnegated. This is reflected in women’s role in nurturing the family and others. Contemporary **marianismo** expresses itself in Latin American women as not only caring for others, but having a successful career, being active in the community, involved with a religious institution, and/or trying to further their education.

**Machismo** refers to a strong sense of masculine pride. It is associated with "a man's responsibility to provide for, protect, and defend his family" (Morales, 1996, p. 274). It is a particular Latin American form of patriarchy, and has been used by feminist activists to describe male aggression and violence. As with any form of patriarchy, machismo is not only expressed in the everyday interactions but it is strongly engrained in legislation and policy. **Machismo** and **marianismo** ultimately result in immense gender inequality and the increased subordination of women to men.

### 4.2.3 Women and politics in Chile

In contrast to other women’s social movements around the world, in which equality has been claimed initially through the recognition of women as equal to men, and **challenging** women’s traditional gender roles, in Chile (and Latin America), women’s movements have used their **traditional gender roles** as mothers and wives to make their claims. As such, in Chile gender equality has been pursued through the intertwined process of both challenging and also using traditional gender roles (Baldez, 2002).
As I have argued in Chapter 2 (in section 2.3.2 Relationship between agency, structural landscape and trajectories of change) with the notion of patriarchal bargains, challenging patriarchy can be a slow and contradictory process. Baldez (2002) explains that women's political participation in Chile cannot necessarily be explained simply in terms of women's adherence to, or defence of, traditional gender roles, as motherhood has been a key driver for political participation, and a central part in the explanation of gradual social change in Chile.

*Supermadre* (Chaney, 1979) and *Militant Mothers* (Álvarez, 1990) have been key terms coined to explain how women throughout Latin America’s Southern Cone have drawn on their caring roles to create spaces for themselves in public life. Militant motherhood, defined as women’s use of maternal responsibilities to justify engagement beyond the domestic sphere, has transformed the characteristics of political discourse and the gendered underpinnings of political participation in Chile. The case of the *Cacelorazos* [The March of the Empty Pots] is a well-documented case of women taking over the streets by using their traditional gender roles. Tired of the scarcity of resources during Salvador Allende’s administration (1970-1973), women from different political backgrounds marched through the streets banging pots and pans. Women, in their roles as housewives, used elements of the kitchen to demand social change. This continues to be a common practice in times of political dissatisfaction.

The famous slogan used by Chilean feminist movements against Pinochet’s dictatorship, “*Democracia en el país y en la casa*” [Democracy in the country and in the home] was a way of making explicit not only the violations of human rights and economic injustices, but how these affected women’s equality. Women’s resistance played a vital role protesting on the streets, but also in having an active role in the preparation for the plebiscite of 1988. According to Pieper Mooney (2007), the actions of Chilean women before and during the dictatorship helped construct a “revolutionized motherhood” (p.987), by redefining the gendered terms of political participation.

Women’s participation was justified during difficult and violent times, but once democracy returned, women were expected to retreat to the private domain (Richards, 2004). However, a new space for political engagement had been opened, and women had introduced new issues and a new way of doing politics. In
contemporary Chile, motherhood continues to play a central role in shaping women’s political participation (Richards, 2004). Female politicians in Latin America often frame their political ambitions and policy preferences in culturally acceptable terms, and aligned to the gender norms of the cultural narrative, centred around maternal ideas (Franceschet, Piscopo, & Thomas, 2015). In this line, Chile is an interesting case in raising questions of how can change occur in highly constrained settings: Can motherhood be a political tool for participation? Can mobilisation from traditional gender roles open space for the advancement of social justice?

Figure 16 | Feminist banner used in marches during the 1980s

Figure 16 | Feminist banner used in marches during the 1980s

Democracia en el país y en la casa, 1983 – 1988 [Democracy in the Country and in the Home].
Source: www.bcn.cl

4.2.4 Social policies and legislation in Chile and the current state of feminist demands

In term of women’s rights, Chile is one of the most conservative countries in Latin America (Willmott, 2002; Staab, 2017). However, feminist movements and new institutional changes show progress in terms of gender equality.

Rather than focussing on the traditional gender roles of mothers and wives, new feminist social movements in Latin America have been mobilising around being women (and human beings). The campaign “Ni Una Menos” [Not One More] which started in 2016 after the death of young women in Argentina and Peru triggered massive protests all over the continent (BBC, 2016), making a more explicit demand for women’s rights, explained as the unequal relationship between men and women in Latin-American machista culture.

The main institution to have championed women’s interests in Chile was SERNAM – Servicio Nacional de la Mujer [National Service of Women], which was part of the
Ministry of Social Development. SERNAM was created in 1972 and reinstated in 1990 (after the dictatorship), and was the first department of its kind in Latin America. SERNAM has recently become the Ministerio de la Mujer y Equidad de Género [Ministry of Women and Gender Equality]18. In June of 2016, under the administration of President Michelle Bachelet, the ministry was created with the aim of eradicating the inequalities between men and women in the country. The fact that it is now a ministry opens new opportunities to lobby at a higher level, with more resources and the possibility to mainstream gender, through collaboration with other ministries.

There are (at least) four areas of social policy and legislation which outline the current political and social landscape for women in Chile.

1. (Child) care:

Policies of care in Chile are usually based on the idea that women are the primary caregiver. Childcare can be difficult, even for middle-income women, as long working hours and multiple caring responsibilities mean that nurseries are not necessarily the best option. Thus, women rely heavily on extended family members, and for those who can afford it, on domestic workers (Franceschet et al., 2015).

In 2006, under Michelle Bachelet’s government, the programme Chile Crece Contigo [Chile Grows with You] 19 was introduced as the first programme in the country to coordinate multiple governmental bodies to approach early childhood. It is a cross-sectorial initiative between Ministries that is implemented through municipalities and health centres. For the first time, it allowed free access to childcare for the low-income population, and multiple types of support for the child and mother from the moment of birth until the recently extended age of nine.

While there has been important state investment in pre-school education in the last 20 years, the national coverage is still not more than 40%, despite the fact that the presidential goal was to increase coverage to 60% in 2018. Promoted as Michelle Bachelet’s priority during her two administrations, the focus on early childhood might change under a new administration.

18 Website http://www.minmujeryeg.cl/
19 Website http://www.crececontigo.gob.cl
Targeted at the lowest income population with the aim of poverty alleviation, it does not challenge the traditional gender roles between men and women, as it assumes that women are the primary caregiver.

2. Violence:

Domestic violence law (Law N° 19.325, 1994) was one of the first gains of feminists after the dictatorship. However, it did not fulfil their expectations as it was passed using a conservative approach to gender violence (Haas, 2010). The law establishes that it is the family unit (and secondarily women), that is at risk, which is justified by the importance of the family as the central unit of Chilean society (Araujo, Mauro & Guzmán, 2000; Haas, 2010). This is reflected in the language used in naming the law, which refers to 'intrafamily' violence, instead of 'gender' or 'domestic' violence.

Some changes have been introduced recently, notably the incorporation of femicide to the law (Law N° 20.480, 2010), which sanctions a woman's death by her partner as homicide and makes the penalties of the intrafamily law more severe. It is a significant first step in safeguarding women. Furthermore, a new bill was presented in November 2016 called “The right of women to a life free of violence” (Bill, 2017a) with the aim of changing the current intrafamily law, by introducing a new project that would act as an umbrella for all types of such violence, broadening the scope and understanding of violence, and framing it as gender violence in the private as well as in the public sphere. It is still a project, but if approved, it would radically change the conception of gender violence and further the protection of women.

The death of Antonia Garrido in 2017 by her boyfriend influenced the creation of the “Antonia’s Law”, currently still being discussed in parliament (Bill, 2017b), was pushed by civil society and emerged in parallel to the new domestic violence project. The bill aims to protect young people in violent relationships who are not protected by the current "Intrafamily Law" – as they are not married or do not have children together. Some advocates say that "Antonia’s Law" should be promoted separately from the gender violence bill (which includes several bills and may take longer to approve), as many changes need to be made in order to incorporate any type of violence against women. These new mobilisations have slowly created more public awareness and shifted the concept from intrafamily violence to gender violence, at least from a citizens' perspective.
3. Marriage:

In 2004, the divorce legislation (Law N° 19.947, 2004) was the greatest victory for feminists since democracy\(^\text{20}\). According to Haas (2010), this win showed that feminist movements can achieve fundamental policy reform in the country. Previously, the only system in place was annulment, for which people had to commit perjury before the civil registrar and thus void the contract. Pursuing a civil annulment was expensive, and therefore had a class bias. This idea continues to be present in the low-income population. Marriage is seen as expensive and thus an elite institution, as Dandavati's (2005) fieldwork shows.

Furthermore, children born outside of marriage did not have to be recognised by the father, meaning that child-support was extremely difficult to get. In addition, parents that had already been married could not remarry and recognise the child. As a result, the lack of civil divorce was in clear detriment to women and children. This changed in 1998, with the introduction of the paternity law (Law N° 19.585, 1998).

The way the marriage law is conceived still contains limitations for women's property rights. By default, the husband manages the assets of the marriage, unless otherwise stated when getting married. This has clear implications for women's lower homeownership, as there is an implicit understanding that men control, and thus "own", the assets (Deere, Alvarado & Twyman, 2010).

4. Abortion:

Until 2017, any type of abortion was illegal in Chile, including the morning-after pill and even in cases where the mother's life was at risk. Abortion was criminalised during the dictatorship, but was not decriminalised with the transition to democracy. Several intents have been made with different bills since 1991, but until 2000 none had made much progress. As Haas (2010) affirms, "Abortion is arguably the most difficult issue to debate publicly in Chile today" (p. 121). The lobby of the Catholic church, debates around where life starts, and the fundamental role that motherhood plays in the Chilean context, have made this an extremely delicate and moral issue. However, abortion still continued to take place in illegal and risky

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\(^{20}\) The divorce law was introduced as a bill in 1995 and passed in 2004.
conditions. It has also affected women differently, as those who could afford it would pay to have better access to abortion, usually overseas, while lower-income women faced more difficulties.

Recently, abortion under three causes was approved (Law N° 21.030, 2017)\textsuperscript{21}. Although it has been a successful first step for feminist activists, the issue remains contested and women in pro-life social movements continue to advocate against any type of abortion.

### 4.3 Structural landscape in which pobladoras’ claims develop

The first part of the chapter discussed Chile's housing policy, and the historical context in which pobladoras claims have developed, their political participation and the current state of laws and policies in terms of gender issues.

Following the query introduced in chapter 2 (in section 2.3), on how class and gender relations are framed by policy, legal frameworks, and ideologies, the chapter has provided insights which help map an initial structural landscape, or ‘rules of the game’, in which low-income women’s claims develop.

The analysis of Chilean housing policy has shown that despite having been successful in reducing housing deficit, it has moved the housing problem \textit{from} informal settlements \textit{to} social housing, creating highly stigmatised and excluded territories, with social and economic consequences for dwellers and for the country.

The housing policy has been sustained by neoliberal values, in which housing is conceived as a commodity. Although the policy has moved towards the alleviation of poverty, it continues to be targeted at the poor, without a conceptualisation of rights or a more comprehensive approach to housing beyond its material function. The current challenge is that informal dwellers claims have at least been taken up discursively by the state. This is seen through housing policies that \textit{have} targeted informal settlements, and that issues of inequality, poverty and participation have been widely mentioned in policy papers and social programmes since the 1990s. The problem is that they do not necessarily address informal dwellers needs and

\textsuperscript{21} See http://3causales.gob.cl
aspirations. This has implications for the realisation of housing claims, which can translate into significant improvements for dwellers. As Richards (2004) explains for the case of Chile, "The focus on citizen responsibilities under neoliberalism (...) invalidates such claims, particularly because the type of integration the pobladoras are asking for implies a degree of socialism that is simply not an option in the neoliberal-democratic world order" (p. 197).

The fact that housing subsidies have not eliminated informal settlements, as the policy set to do, opens a door to rethink the way that informality has been addressed in the country. The housing policy has stated a particular vision of living that explicitly negates informality, that has been conceived as ‘negative dots’ in the city, and as deregulation, while social housing has been imbued with anticipated positive characteristics by authorities and private companies. However, the anticipation of a ‘better life’ has not been matched with the social housing reality. Social housing has been pushed by Chile’s focus on property rights and homeownership, in addition to its extreme focus on legality, and thus rejects what is conceived as ‘illegal’ or ‘informal’ (Siclari, 2012).

In terms of gender, the legislation framework, policies and cultural values of Chilean society create a constrained setting for positive gender change. However, it has also shown progress, albeit slow and contested, towards gender equality. Feminist activists advocating for new legislation, the historical participation of women in communities and streets, and the new national and Latin American social movements around gender violence, show women’s (and men’s) awareness about gender inequality and the need to continue advocating for greater equality.

As urban social movements have lost importance in Chile in the last decades, so have pobladora women. Most of the research and interest documents women’s role in informal settlements and low-income neighbourhoods during the 1980s and 1990s, and there has been less focus on more recent decades. However, pobladora struggles persist in a different political and social environment to that of 30 years ago. A larger number of women are making homes in informal settlements in the country than ever before. This is happening in a less formal political environment than previously, as dwellers are not supported by political parties or are part of a union, but exist in a market-led context, with a narrative which discursively supports housing claims despite the difficulties of realising those claims. Claims are not taken to the streets,
but are absorbed by housing policy applications and formal channels. As such, housing contestation has lost much of its energy. In this context, the analysis of everyday practices in informal settlements can shed light on micro contestations and can be an entry point to understanding the broader struggles of housing and gender for low-income women.

The chapter has also shown how claims around issues of redistribution, recognition and representation have been addressed by the policies.

**Redistribution:** The housing policy has facilitated access to homeownership through state subsidies, significantly reducing the housing deficit. As such more Chileans have had access to better material housing conditions, improving the general redistribution of housing. However, housing has been unequally redistributed in the territory (as informal settlements were sent to the periphery of the cities), and across the country (as most social housing has been built in Santiago), while poor construction standards and design has lowered the quality of the housing provided.

The distribution of all housing among men and women in the country has shown relatively steady increases in the share of female homeowners between the late 1990s and 2003–2005 (Deere et al., 2010), and priority of allocation of social housing to single women over men (Ramm, 2014). However, due to the Marriage Law (Law N° 19.947, 2004) all assets owned by women are managed by the husband, if not established differently. As such, the notion that men own the dwelling has been deeply internalised, even when the law now provides more options for women (Deere et al., 2010), and the housing subsidy supports female homeownership.

**Recognition:** The homogenous housing complexes built in the 1980s and 1990s had the effect of making the poor invisible. During that period, the housing policy did not have any gender approach, as its main aim was to deliver housing units and not address any specific needs of dwellers (Ducci, 1994). However, the new housing policy introduced in 2007 included a gender approach, and also identified the special needs of single women, older people, indigenous dwellers, and disabled dwellers. Despite being based in fixed identities and with no flexibility to address other needs or aspirations, this has been a good first step in acknowledging the
nuances of different needs. The recognition of informal dwellers’ needs continues to be only addressed through housing subsidies.

The changes in gender policies, such as the introduction of divorce, abortion, a more comprehensive understanding of gender violence and the strengthening of childcare programmes, represents a recognition of women’s practical and strategic needs, and a move towards greater gender equality. The newly created Ministry of Women and Gender Equality is a promise of more recognition, participation and representation.

**Representation:** The creation of Housing Committees in 1968 by the state, was an important step in improving the representation of informal dwellers. This continues to be the main way in which dwellers organise and present their claims to the state. However, the participation of dwellers in the improvement of the housing policy has been limited. Residents have had limited opportunities to participate in their housing projects, which has consequences on the understanding, appropriation and belonging of the housing projects (Castillo, 2010; Ducci, 1997; 2000). The discontent and vulnerability of residents does not only come from the physical aspects of the house, but also the conditions under which their integration into society have developed. “The lack of ceremony, gestures and symbols such as rites of passages to celebrate increased the perception of marginalisation” (Márquez, 2004, p.185, author’s translation). With the decrease in social urban movements, informal settlements have had less participation and representation in Chilean politics, as they are not considered to be the key social actors they previously were.

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22 An exception was the role that the informal settlement of Toma de Peñalolen played in the creation of the "Location Subsidy" introduced in 2007.
Part 2 - Viña del Mar and the urban poor

As introduced at the beginning of the chapter, this second part discusses the case of informal settlements in Viña del Mar and introduces the specific research sites. Some of the information provided here uses primary data collected during the fieldwork, as there is little academic research about informal settlements in Viña del Mar.

This section is divided into two main parts. Firstly, it places the housing claims of informal dwellers in context by looking at the regional and urban developments, specifically the formulation of the regional Upgrading Scheme. Here, I make links with the first section of the chapter in order to put Viña del Mar’s housing and gender struggles in perspective.

The second part of the section presents the two sites that will be used to look at home-making practices. The informal settlements introduced are the two largest informal settlements in the city. Here, I offer some initial general findings from the settlements. The chapter then concludes with a reflection on why the case of informal settlements in Viña del Mar is relevant for the analysis of home and home-making practices. It argues that the study of these settlements will reveal insights into the role of home-making practices for the specific claims of dwellers in the city of Viña del Mar.

4.4 Region of Valparaíso and the city of Viña del Mar

The region of Valparaíso is one of 15 administrative regions in Chile and is located in the central area of the country on the Pacific coast, 120 km from Santiago (as show in Figure 1). 91.6% of the population lives in urban areas and it is the second most densely populated region after Santiago. Valparaíso city - Viña del Mar conurbation and surrounding municipalities represent the second largest metropolitan area in the country after Santiago, with 1 million inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de
Estadística, 2017) (also known as Greater Metropolitan Area of Valparaíso\textsuperscript{23}, shown in Figure 17). As such, urban decisions on housing and planning are of extreme relevance for the development of the region.

The seaport city of Valparaíso and the city of Viña del Mar have played an important historical, political and cultural role in the country. Valparaíso city was declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 2003 due to its 19th-century urban and architectural development. It was once the most important port in Latin America, and as such it welcomed high levels of European migration. Since 1990 it has been the home for the Congress, as part of an attempt to decentralise Santiago. Viña del Mar, adjacent to Valparaíso city, was initially a resort city for the European aristocracy that arrived in Valparaíso. It still continues to be an important city for second homes, culture, and the service industry.

\textsuperscript{23}Greater Metropolitan Area of Valparaíso: Valparaíso city, Viña del Mar, Concón, Villa Alemana and Quilpué.
Figure 17 | Population and housing in Greater Metropolitan Area of Valparaíso

The maps outline the Greater Metropolitan Area, this encompasses the municipalities of Viña del Mar, Valparaíso city, Concón, Villa Alemana and Quilpué. (Top map) Shows the population of each municipality, in which the Greater Metropolitan Area is highly more populated than the rest of the region, also showing that Viña del Mar and Valparaíso city are the most populated municipalities. (Bottom map) Shows the number of housing by municipality, it shows clearly that people live in the Greater Metropolitan Area. Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2017), modified by author.

4.4.1 Centralisation and the challenges for local urban decisions

‘Santiago is not Chile’ is a common saying used in cities outside of the capital, as a way to contest the extreme centralisation of the country. This centralisation is seen as both natural and inevitable, normalising unequal power relations between Santiago and the rest of the country in terms of access to resources and decision-making processes (Salazar, 1999). This has been the legacy of drastic changes made to local governments during the military regime, as part of a depoliticisation agenda in which the central state gained control over policy-making, leaving local governments to deal with non-influential responsibilities (Zunino & Hidalgo, 2009).
Gradual changes have been introduced since the transition to democracy to give more autonomy to local governments and municipalities. However, policy-making still operates in a centralised manner. The legal framework gives the central state a major role in formulating and implementing national housing policies, which is implemented in the regions by a representative of the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism (called SEREMI). This leaves regional governments and municipalities, which are the local administrative units, with little decision-making power over urban issues in the city, as most guidelines come from the central government in Santiago. Figure 18 shows the three levels in which policy is implemented – on national, regional and city levels. Urban policies are formulated by MINVU (in blue) and implemented directly to the territory through MINVU representatives in the region, leaving regional governments and cities with little influence over what happens in their territory.

Figure 18| Formulation and Implementation of urban policies in Chile

In Valparaíso, the lack of decentralisation and its proximity to Santiago further undermines its independence. Eaton (2004) holds that municipalities in Chile operate in a hostile environment, as attempts at decentralisation are thwarted by the weakness of subnational actors in the political system. Furthermore, municipalities are the only public bodies that have to self-fund, increasing the
pressure on municipalities with a larger low-income population. Regional
governments and municipalities try to navigate this complex scenario, but
effectively have few tools to do so. Municipalities can gain independence from
national government in the cases where they can generate their own means, but still
in a restricted realm.

Although local governments in Chile have little control over urban decisions in their
territory, Zunino & Hidalgo (2009) identify small pockets of agency in which they
can affect local development. As they explain, "(...)
municipalities and communities
control resources to also affect spatial outcomes at the local level (e.g.
through the elaboration of local land use or community mobilisations)" (p.517).

Centralisation of public policies is key when understanding the space of influence
that cities - outside of Santiago - have in proposing and implementing their own
urban projects and housing solutions. As such, Viña del Mar poses an interesting
case, as it shows how the national urban and political process occur in a particular
local reality. The Upgrading Scheme, introduce by the regional government of
Valparaiso, is a rare case in which local agendas and influence of different actors has
led to a different urban outcome than the one dictated by national MINVU. As such, it
provides an important case in analysing trajectories of social change.

4.4.2 Viña del Mar’s urban development

Viña del Mar (or Vineyard of the Sea) is Chile’s fourth largest city with 334,248
inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2017). The city is one of the
wealthiest municipalities in the country (Alarcón, 2015). Most of the funding comes
from the city Casino, a strategic partner in terms of collecting revenues, which are
discretionary funds. As an example, the new 15-year license of the Casino was worth
$22.500 million CLP (£26million) to the municipality (El Mercurio Valparaíso,
2018). Viña also enjoys of an influx of national as well as international visitors, and
holds a cultural and sporting status due to its 13 beaches, and international events
such as the annual "Viña del Mar International Song Festival".

In a national survey (Visión Humana, 2016), the city has been chosen as the best city
in the country to live, work and study in for several consecutive years, and Chileans
associate the city of Viña del Mar with the words “relaxation”, “musical festival”,

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“beach” and “Beautiful City”. The image of the city, which has been constructed internally through its history and sustained by the municipality, has been supported by the rest of the country. In this sense, Viña del Mar plays an important role in the imagination of Chileans.

Figure 19 | View of Viña del Mar – waterfront development

Source: Chile Travel (http://Chile.travel/en/)

The city is administered by one municipality and is presided over by an elected mayor. The city is divided into 12 census districts. Virginia Reginato, from the right-wing party, has been the longest serving mayor of the city since the transition to democracy24 (From 2004 to present). Her administration has been characterised by investment in coastal areas and the maintenance of the city as a ‘tourist and beautiful city’. This has also been the source of critiques of her administration, particularly towards the lack of focus on internal social aspects, and one example is that informal settlements have tripled since 2004. Her opposition argues that she has also been responsible for the establishment of a clientelistic relationship with the middle and low-income population of the city, based on re-election rather than significant improvements (Arellano, 2005).

24 During the period 1973-1992 mayors were appointed by the military regime, since then they are elected by citizens.
The topography of the city plays an important role in its development. It is formed by low flat areas, referred to as plan, and hill areas. As such, an important part of the city is built on steep slopes and gorges, which has determined the way in which housing is built and how the city has expanded. In 1990, Reñaca, the most northern coastal part of the city, became a famous middle-class resort area, which accelerated the growth of high rise buildings and changed the look of the city. At the other end of the spectrum, the poorer areas are located in the higher parts of the city, in the districts of Forestal, Reñaca Alto, Achupallas and Gomez Carreño.

The city has the highest demand for real estate in the region, the most second homes are in the city and 51% of the new urban projects in Greater Valparaíso are constructed in Viña del Mar, as can be seen in the number of Permisos de Edificacion [Building permissions] granted by the municipality (Interview with municipal officials, fieldwork 2015).

According to Hidalgo & Arenas (2012), real estate companies in Viña del Mar control where and how new buildings are developed, undermining any larger plan for the city, and threatening is cultural heritage and the natural environment. As the authors affirm, a large amount of high-rise building has been constructed on the waterfront in the northern part of the city, destroying the existing (supposedly protected) dunes and environmental ecosystems.
Figure 20 shows the Greater Metropolitan Area of Valparaíso (*Viña del Mar city is in the rectangle*). The wealthiest population (*in blue*) is located in flat areas, usually the city-centres or coastal areas. The middle-income population (*in yellow*) surrounds the flat areas or are located in peripheral cities. The lowest-income population (*in red*) is located at the top of the hills and further from the city-centre. Informal settlements (*black dots*) coincide with the locations of the lowest-income population. The city with a large contrast between wealthy and low-income populations, and a higher concentration of informal settlements than the surrounding cities, the map starkly shows the socio-economic segregation of Viña del Mar.

### 4.4.3 Self-help: a historical (and untold) way to access permanent housing in the city

The most widely known history of Viña del Mar is based on its European legacy and aristocratic life during the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, reflected in the grand architecture of the city (Castagneto, 2010). While these buildings have been prominent in the narrative of the construction of the city, little is known about the extensive efforts made by the urban poor in providing affordable housing through self-help projects, ranging from new neighbourhoods to a new 'city'.
Initially founded by Spanish conqueror Pedro de Valdivia in 1543. In 1874, Francisco Vergara, son-in-law of Francisco Álvarez, created the first master plan of the city, which is referred to as the birth of the city of Viña del Mar (Castagneto, 2010).

By the end of the 19th century, Viña del Mar was already an important resort city. The population consisted of mainly English aristocratic families, business men who settled for commerce, and high-end politicians who had second homes in the city. The city had two distinct economies, tourism for the European elite and the industrial economy. One of the key companies was Compañía Refinadora de Azúcar de Viña del Mar [Sugar Refining Company], also known as CRAV.

The conclusion of nitrate mining in the north of country, and the earthquake of 1906 accelerated rural-urban migration and increased the population of the city to 30,000 inhabitants. The growth of the city was also responsible for changing its appearance, as previously industrial coastal areas were transformed into residential areas, and the city centre was improved by the introduction of some of its most characteristics buildings, including castles, palaces and gardens of wealthy houses, which would inspire the later slogan of the city: Ciudad Jardín [Garden City].

**Working-class building of the city**

By 1930, with the dense population in the plan of the city, working-class neighbourhoods expanded towards the hill areas such as Santa Inéns and Forestal. Although there are several cases of unions of workers, such as Población Gomez Carreño²⁵, organising to build self-help housing in the city at that time, Achupallas was the most significant and ambitious project of them all. Very little has been documented about this, and it is not represented in the housing history of Chile (where most of the cases are from Santiago). An oral history project was conducted in the area of Achupallas in 1998 by Vildósola (1999), in which older dwellers told the story of self-help housing in the area.

The emblematic case of organised self-help in Achupallas was called Ciudad Obrera Ideal [Ideal Workers City], which was created by the National Confederation of

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²⁵Población Gomes Carreño was founded in 1964. It was conceived as a satellite city – located in Reñaca Alto – with 3,300 housing units.
Unions of workers of CRAV [Sugar Refining Company]. At the end of 1940, and pushed by the lack of available affordable housing in the traditional areas of Santa Ines and Forestal, they decided to organise and buy land on the outskirts of the city (which today is a central part of Viña del Mar).

The National Confederation of Unions was comprised of workers from CRAV and other companies in Chile (a confederation of unions would be considered illegal today). The ambitious plan was to build 3,000 houses per year for 6 years, as well as schools, community centres and offices, among other utilities, on 900 hectares of land. They partnered with other workers of different socioeconomic levels. The site was divided into three main sectors, which were funded and supported by different entities: the pension scheme association supported by CORVI (former Ministry of Housing) in sector 1, CRAV workers supported by IBD in sector 2, and self-help housing funded by the State in sector 3. Collectively they create a construction company called PROBIEN (Vildósola, 1999). Some of the coverage of the press at the time can be seen in Figure 21.

Figure 21 | Local newspaper reports on the construction of a 'Workers' City'

(Left image) “In $7.250.000 the National Confederation of Unions bought a farm in Achupallas”. Source: La Unión Valparaíso (June 16, 1950). (Right image) “Urbanization of the Achupallas is not Utopia: Is a researched project and recommended by technicians”. Source: La Unión Valparaíso (August 7, 1955).

Although the project faced many difficulties, especially in sustainable funding and technical coordination, many of the houses were built and had a big influence in the development of the area. Today, this housing project and others, have remained in the collective memory of the urban poor of the city.
According to Vildósola (1999):

The experience of the construction of their own house by self-help is incorporated vividly in the historic memory of the poblador of Achupallas. The meaning that this had for the first residents remains as a factor of place-attachment in the social identity of the place (p. 126, author’s translation).

The project created housing for a population that was not being considered by the city. It was led by dwellers and designed to meet their needs. It did not only consider housing but it included schools, work spaces and other facilities. At a time when self-help projects were reduced to the provision of land and few services (as in the case of site-and-services with Site Operation), this project was both ambitious and visionary.

The housing project remains an important legacy in the collective memory of informal dwellers (Santibañez & Brignardello, 2005; Vildósola, 1999). As it was possible to confirm during the fieldwork in Manuel Bustos, dwellers knew about the self-help nature of the area, and as such see it as a possible way to inhabit the city. However, it has been forgotten by authorities, who disregard self-help as a viable way to build the city (Arellano, 2005).

In contrast to Santiago, which was mainly built by social housing projects, the city of Viña del Mar was built through self-help and further upgrading of areas, but there is no research that documents the amount of territory that has been built this way. Having this information would further validate informal dwellers’ claims, and recognise the work of the urban poor in the city.

4.4.4 Contemporary approaches to informal settlements in the city

Unlike the visible and politicised land invasions in the capital city of Santiago between the 1960s and 1980s (Castells, 1983) and active social movements that demanded better housing during the 1990s, the land invasions in the region of Valparaíso went unnoticed, many of which occurred more recently, during the 2000s (MINVU, 2013). Due to their scant exposure and the relatively low level of confrontation with political authority, informal settlements in Viña del Mar have been called silent land invasions by Vildósola (2011), as the process of land invasion
has had poor visibility in public and political spheres. The author provides three reasons for the lack of visibility in the city of Viña del Mar:

- **Decrease in social movements:** Land invasions occurred in a historical period in which the power of social movements had decreased. The transition to democracy during the 1990s and 2000s was accompanied by fewer confrontations with political groups, particularly in urban social movements, which decreased their participation after the 1980s.

- **Economic and financial control:** The local/national government imposed powerful economic and financial measures to avoid land invasion as a way of keeping order and protecting private property.

- **Contradiction with the image of the city:** Informality contradicts the image of the city built by the political and cultural elites. The drive to conform with this image has been supported by informal dwellers themselves.

The issue of the housing deficit and informal land returned to the political sphere after the results of the national cadastre of informal settlements conducted by MINVU in 2011. It revealed that the region of Valparaíso had a third of the country's informal dwellers, and that the municipality of Viña del Mar had the highest number of informal dwellers in the country. This was shocking news as the focus on informal settlements had usually been in Santiago.

In Viña del Mar and the region of Valparaíso, there is an inverse phenomenon occurring to that of the rest of the country where, according to the cadastre of MINVU (2013), the number of households in informal settlements decreased in 9 of the 15 regions. In Santiago, for example, the number decreased from 4,645 to 3,843 households. However, in the region of Valparaíso (6 times smaller than Santiago), the number increased from 7,531 to 10,153. Viña del Mar alone has 4,448 households, both more than Santiago, and almost double than the city of Valparaíso. The latest cadastre available (not from MINVU but from an NGO) confirms Viña del Mar to be the city with the largest number of informal dwellers in the country, increasing the number of households to 6,207 (TECHO, 2016).

According to the existing literature, one of the reasons for the high number of settlements is the historical inefficiency of the implementation of social housing in
the region. Contrary to what occurred during the 1990s in the Metropolitan Region where the mass construction of housing reduced the deficit by more than 50%, only 12% of the housing deficit was reduced through housing subsidies in the region of Valparaíso (Arellano, 2005), showing evident regional disparities in the allocation of social housing between Santiago and the rest of the cities of the country (Cummings & Dipasquale, 2002).

In the case of Valparaíso, this has been attributed partially to the inefficiency of the local authorities, particularly SERVIU, the body implementing the housing policy at the regional level. Housing officers interviewed refer to the technical difficulties of building in Viña del Mar and Valparaíso due to its topography (steep hills and gorges), which makes housing projects more expensive than those built on flat land. This could, in part, explain the sharp decrease in the construction of social housing in the central municipalities in the last 20 years.

In recent decades, housing projects have instead been built systematically in the peri-urban (i.e. Con-con, Villa Alemana and Quilpue) and peripheral municipalities of the region (i.e. Quintero, Quillota, Limache and Casablanca) (see Figure 22). During the beginning of the nineties (1990-1995), 70.2% of the region’s social housing was built in the cities of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar. This percentage decreased dramatically in the next decade; 21% in the period 1995-2000 and only 13.6% in the period 2000 to 2005. Between 2000 and 2005, the largest proportion of social housing was built in the peripheral municipalities, showing a steady tendency to allocate the regional social housing in the peripheral municipalities, instead of the central municipalities (Zunino & Hidalgo, 2009).
The main problem of building social housing in peripheral municipalities, is that it has not come with a comprehensive plan for those municipalities. This has left poor families in an isolated and disadvantaged urban environment and made it difficult for poorer municipalities to cope with the needs of their population. By building massive social housing compounds, the quality of life and socioeconomic status of these areas has been threatened, further deteriorating the conditions in which housing is produced and lowering possibilities for the urban poor.
What this suggests is that poor families who apply to the subsidy have little choice about the location of their households. In the case of Viña del Mar, that means moving out of the city, and into peripheral municipalities, as Zunino & Hidalgo (2009) research confirms:

The intraregional migration of poor families facing a housing problem is heavily determined by the operation of the market, which gives them few options. Only the more affluent are able to choose among alternative locations, while the poor are trapped in standardized and deprived social housing complexes (p. 528).

An important part of the motivation to live in informal settlements is related to access to a better location and the opportunities that this brings (Fieldwork 2014 - 2015). Although most of the social housing is being built in peripheral areas, 70% of the informal settlements are located in the cities of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar. The notion that informal settlements are better located in the city than social housing is a trend has been widely studied in the city of Santiago (Brain, Prieto & Sabatini, 2010), but it has not in Valparaíso region.

4.4.5 Land market – the role of private landowners and investors in the development of low-income housing.

Private investors are important urban actors in the region. Within the framework of the housing policy, real estate companies can build large housing compounds on low value land. As such, decisions about housing and land use have created urban and social segregation in which poorer households are forced to leave Viña del Mar, reproducing areas of wealth and areas of poverty in the region.

According to Vildósola (2005), the two social actors that have produced the most profound social and territorial transformations in Viña del Mar have been private investors and informal dwellers. This because informal dwellers have constructed large portions of the (higher part of the) city.

Private landowners also play an important role as half of informal settlements in the region are located on private land26 (MINVU, 2013). It is well-known in the city that most of the higher areas in Viña del Mar are owned by just two different

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26 44% of informal settlements in the region of Valparaíso are located in private land and 17% has mix landowners (private and public land), the rest of the settlements are located in municipal or state land (39%) (MINVU, 2013).
landowners. According to municipal officers, landowners would ‘allow’ informal settlements to stay as a way of raising the value of the land. These are located at the urban limit of the city, on land which tends to be difficult to access. By allowing informal settlements to remain, the land becomes more connected and habitable (initially informally, as transport options emerge, and roads and services are created). As a result, the land becomes more attractive, and pressure exerted by the dwellers to stay put could open the option for the state to buy the previously undesirable land as a way of providing a solution for informal settlements.

4.5 Wish to stay put and current actions of informal dwellers

The high number of informal settlements in Valparaíso city and Viña del Mar and their relation to the conditions of the housing policy (outlined in this chapter), has shaped a new housing claim from informal dwellers in the country – the wish to stay put.

Dwellers have defined the wish to stay put as a solution that addresses the following points: The acquisition of land in which they are currently located (individual deeds for households and collective deeds or shared with the municipality for communal areas); upgrading of the settlement through formalisation of services of water, sewage and electricity; improvement of roads and general intra-settlement and inter-settlement mobility; and the formalisation and improvement of communal infrastructure, such as football pitches, community centres, churches and squares. Dwellers do not have specific demands in terms of housing, and are mostly concerned with making the territory more habitable, rather than upgrading individual houses (Fieldwork, 2014-2015).

Since 2010, the wish to stay put has become a stronger and more articulated claim amongst informal dwellers in Viña del Mar. In the case of Valparaíso city, their specific claims have been documented recently by the research of Pino (2015). Her findings discuss the particular characteristics of informal settlements, named Toma Porteña [Settlement of the Port]. Although the wish to stay put and the rejection of social housing are similar in both cities (Valparaíso and Viña del Mar), Pino’s work shows smaller settlements (in size and population) mostly based on kinship, which are located in steep gorges, and are less organised and mobilised. In contrast, the
informal settlements of the city of Viña del Mar tend to be bigger, located in flatter areas and with a stronger community organisation. As such, the research contributes to a better understanding of slightly different type of settlement.

"Coordinadora the campamentos de Viña del Mar" [Aggrupation of informal settlements of Viña del Mar] (2009-2011) has been the only city-wide organisation of informal settlements across Viña del Mar. It aimed to advocate for the in-situ upgrading of all informal settlements in the city, and was supported by left-wing politicians, with whom they held monthly meetings. Their main strategy was to make their claims known to the regional government and regional MINVU, and in doing so, coordinated several meetings with authorities.

In May 2011, the "Coordinadora the campamentos de Viña del Mar" supported by the national aggrupation of informal dwellers "Coorporación Nacional También Todos Somos Chilenos" [National Corporation We are also Chileans] organised a march from the Intendencia to the Congress, to deliver a letter to the president of the Senate, demanding a different housing solution for informal dwellers in Viña del Mar (see Figure 23). This was the first significant step in the advancement of their claims. Informal settlements who had been working separately until then, become aware of their collective struggle and were motivated by seeing action taken. This was a turning point in their previously "silent and invisible" status.

27 National organisation of informal dwellers created in 2006. Their work has been relevant not only training and empowering community leaders in settlements across the country but play a role in advocating for improvement of the housing policy (Díaz, 2011).
The most important point the march raised was the *representation* of informal dwellers. By taking to the streets in an organised and collective manner, their claims became visible (to themselves) and to authorities. As the banner of the march indicated: "We have come down from the hills to claim rights, will and dignity". As such, although their final aim centres around issues of *redistribution* of resources, the main objective of the march was to become visible - to be *recognised* in their uniqueness and to be *represented* through a city-wide organisation.

The "*Coordinadora de campamentos de Viña del Mar*" was dissolved by the end of 2010 due to internal organisational and leadership problems, as well as discouragement by authorities that claimed upgrading to be a technical issue which has to be solved individually with each settlement, and was therefore not worth addressing collectively. Since then, there have not been any other city-wide organisations, although community leaders have expressed the need and will to coordinate again across informal settlements. Informally, community leaders of different settlements do communicate and coordinate on certain issues. New actions of dwellers include dwellers of Felipe Camiroaga chaining themselves to the entrance of the hotel where artists of the music festival were staying in February 2017.
4.5.1 Upgrading pilot project

In August of 2011, the Intendencia (Representation of the central government in the region), MINVU, TECHO and Manuel Bustos settlement signed an initial agreement expressing the intention of upgrading Manuel Bustos. Although it was not legally binding, this was an unprecedented agreement which revealed the intention to approach informal settlements in a way alternative to housing subsidies.

There were a series of events which led to the signing of the agreement: The march of 2011 which put informal dwellers on the map as social actors in the city; the new cadastre of MINVU revealing the large number of informal dwellers in the city; the work of TECHO – the NGO had already done an initial topography of each plot of land and legal research in Manuel Bustos as a way to encourage upgrading; and the excellent work of community leaders in Manuel Bustos lobbying politicians, and their use of the media, making themselves known as the “largest informal settlement in Chile”. The signing of the Manuel Bustos agreement was the result of several years of work from community leaders.

With this initial agreement, community leaders pushed for a more formal procedure leading to a second, this time regional agreement, which considered not only Manuel Bustos, but all informal settlements of the region of Valparaíso, the agreement was unparalleled in the country. The agreement was signed in December 2013 between the Ministry of Housing and the regional government (known as GORE), the agreement was named the MINVU-GORE agreement28 (see Box 1 for details of the agreement). As some of the housing officials and politicians explained in interviews during the fieldwork, the agreement was met at a convenient time of the year – as the administration of president Sebastian Piñera was coming to an end, and there was funding left which could be allocated and spent it that same year, without the responsibilities of implementation, which would go to the new presidential administration from the opposition (the Government of Michelle Bachelet had already been elected for the period 2014-2018). It also served as an important legacy for MINVU that aligned with the programme of the Executive Secretary of

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Informal Settlement (2011-2013) (discussed in section 4.1.1, in Phase 3), which had identified in-situ slum upgrading as an option, but had not yet made any significant progress.

It also allowed the regional government - usually a non-influential actor in urban decisions\textsuperscript{29} - to take a leading role. This was considered positive, especially for the Urban Commission in the regional government, which had been discussing a solution for informal settlements in the region for some time. In addition, Manuel Bustos' community leaders had established relationships with some of the politicians in the regional government as a way to create urgency.

\begin{tabular}{|l|}
    \hline
    \textbf{Box 1| Summary of Upgrading Agreement} \\
    \hline
    \textbf{UPGRADING AGREEMENT MINVU-GORE} \\
    \hline
    \textbf{General Agreement:} Signed between regional government (GORE) and MINVU. The agreement recognises the existence of 121 informal settlements in the region, and establishes upgrading for 45 of those informal settlements, to be developed between the years 2013 to 2018. \\
    \textbf{Funding:} 25,833.149 million CLP (£30,000,000). Distributed the following way: GORE 38.5% - MINVU 61.5%. \\
    \textbf{Upgrading:} Connection to water and sewage (to the individual plot of land but not inside the houses), electricity and roads. Housing is not considered in the first instance, and depending on how consolidated the houses are, residents can apply to a housing subsidy to improve their housing. The document does not specify anything about communal areas and infrastructure. There is funding for social work – which is responsibility of SERVIU (implementation and technical body of MINVU). \\
    \textbf{Consultancy firms:} Projects should be executed by private consultancy firms, which apply through a tender system. \\
    \textbf{Special case:} In the agreement Manuel Bustos is conceived as a separate project. It is the only project where GORE is paying for implementation. \\
    \textbf{Organisation:} SERVIU is the official coordinator of the agreement. The initiative sits in MINVU at the national level – and at the regional level there was one person representing the upgrading department (However, since 2013 the department has not existed at a national level). \\
    \hline
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{29} The regional government has no legal attributions in terms of urban decisions and their urban role is usually confined to the funding of roads and pavements.
The MINVU-GORE agreement managed to secure funding and create an alternative housing solution, aligned with the needs of the informal settlements in the region, which emerged from regional authorities, as shown in Figure 24. The agreement was created by the councillors of the regional government, housing officers in SEREMI MINVU (regional representatives of MINVU) and SERVIU Valparaíso (in red) and then later approved by MINVU at the central level. As such, it is a unique initiative in housing, with no precedents. It also reflected the work that community leaders, especially from Manuel Bustos, had been doing. The figure shows how the actions and advocacy of community leaders not only targeted regional but also national authorities30 (in yellow).

Figure 24| Formulation and implementation of Upgrading Scheme in the region of Valparaíso

Source: Author

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30 Informal dwellers actions (in yellow in Figure 24):
Congress: March to Senate in 2010 (+ meetings with senators 2010-2013)
Ministry of Housing: Minister visited Manuel Bustos in 2017
Regional Government: Meetings with regional councillors 2010-2013
SEREMI: Meetings with SEREMI MINVU 2010-2013
Municipality & municipal councillors: Permanent relationship
Difficulties in the realisation of the agreement

The agreement was ambitious in its coverage (including 45 informal settlements in the region) and timings (to be finished in 5 years, in 2018), which was initially well-received by informal settlements. However, this has also meant that the agreement has not delivered as announced. By 2017, the only projects to have been implemented were those already on-going at the time of the agreement and these were not connected with upgrading per se, but with building social housing on the same plot of land.

One of the key problems has been the existence of a realistic budget, given that there was no previous technical research on how to implement upgrading, nor a specific budget per project (it was calculated as an approximate for all the projects as a whole). As such, the budget has been revised again and new numbers are being defined.

As there is no precedent for upgrading in Chile, there is scarce technical knowledge on how to approach a project of this nature. The projects are up for tender to private consultancy firms, with little or no previous experience, and those that do have the technical capacity have never worked in a context of poverty and informal settlements, as professional of MINVU expressed during the interviews. In the first phase of Manuel Bustos, NGO TECHO teamed up with an engineering firm to do the preliminary analysis. The NGO has knowledge of the area and working with dwellers, and the engineering firm has the technical capacity and machinery. In Manuel Bustos second phase, SERVIU had to take up the work themselves as the budget for the work was considerably under what it cost in reality.

Another key factor in the realisation of the agreement has been the collaboration with the water company. Authorities have little control over the water company, who would need to extend connections and build water towers in the hills to provide informal settlements with drinkable water. In Chile, water has been progressively privatised, and ESVAL (regional water company) became completely private during the government of Sebastian Piñera (2010-2014). As such, public institutions have no control over water projects, even in cases such as this where funding is allocated to extend the network, and the company would gain thousands of new clients. This concern was expressed regional councillors during the
interviews. Moreover, the agreement does not include any type of subsidisation for water or other services for dwellers.

**Future of in-situ upgrading**

Although there are uncertainties around how the agreement is going to develop, the legal status of the agreement protects informal settlements and there is a will in the region to carry out the projects. However, the question is whether the agreement will continue to have national support, and if it will become a mainstream option for informal settlements in the country.

MINVU had a department of upgrading between 2011-2013 which was dedicated particularly to upgrading in the regions of Copiapó, Concepción and Valparaíso (it is not clear if they delivered projects, beyond building housing complexes on the same plots of land as the settlement), however the department does not exist anymore. In the region of Valparaíso, housing officials think that upgrading is a strategic way of addressing informal settlements given the scale of the problem, but there are no organisational nor political elements to indicate a wider will to do so.

The upgrading of informal settlements in the region of Valparaíso represents a significant effort from authorities in taking up informal dwellers claims, recognising dwellers as an actor in the city and setting up structures for dwellers' representation and participation in their own projects. As such it has a significant symbolic value.

However, the upgrading continues to be framed around the improvement of material infrastructure, rather than developing a new conceptual way to deal with informality. In practice, even if it is carried out in all informal settlements, the upgrading considers only basic infrastructure, but no paved roads, no improvements to collective amenities and no housing. The expectations of dwellers of finally being "upgraded" may be followed by frustration and disappointment, as apart from the security of tenure, there are no significant improvements that could suggest that their quality of life and relationship with the city is going to change.

Other examples in Latin America show qualitative progress in ways to think about upgrading, with the final aim of bridging the spatial and social gap between settlements and other areas of the city (see Box 2). As emerged in interviews with housing authorities, they are aware of other successful Latin American experiences,
but believe that there is not enough will to create a multi-sectorial approach to informality in Chile, and that the ‘housing subsidy mentality’ is engrained as the way to address the housing deficit.

Box 2 | New generation of slum-upgrading: International experiences

The new generation of slum-upgrading aims not only to provide housing, but also to develop an appropriate urbanism which addresses the particular conditions of informality in the city (Fiori, Riley & Ramírez, 2001; Fiori & Brandão, 2010). At its core, it questions the role of informality in the production of the city and it addresses it in a way that attends to the social, spatial and political processes, on multiple scales. It argues that previous housing policies have only been able to scale up in size, but not with a complex multi-dimensional and integrated approach. Here are two successful examples of upgrading programmes in Latin America:

- **Favela-Barrio Programme (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil):** Favela Barrio is a large-scale comprehensive upgrading programme for informal settlements in the city of Rio de Janeiro. It started in 1994 and it is the largest informal settlement upgrading programme in Latin America. What makes it unique is that it goes beyond the provision of sanitation and basic infrastructure (Fiori et al., 2001). An important achievement of the programme has been to open the favela to the city and the city to the favela. The way that this has been achieved is by; improving accessibility and a natural flow between the favela and the city; creation and enhancement of public spaces for the use of everyone; and the use of ‘city images’, inserting urban elements from the city into the favela. All this has helped break up the physical and cultural barriers between both spaces (Fiori & Brandão, 2010).

- **Integral Urban Project (Medellín, Colombia):** Similar to Rio de Janeiro, in Medellín informal settlements are located in the hills, usually on steep slopes with precarious access to infrastructure, services and public spaces. There is a high contrast between the higher poorer areas, and the lower wealthier areas. The city-scale intervention which started in 2012, aimed to bridge that divide through 5 strategies; provision of housing, transport and mobility (i.e. cable-cart), strategic planning (site-specific interventions), a comprehensive programme to tackle social exclusion, and the key aspect of bringing education and educational infrastructure to the informal settlements in the form of park-libraries and cultural centres (Gouverneur, 2015).
The two cases show a new way of addressing informality, which does not intend to make settlements ‘disappear’ or rehouse them, but improves the built environment through innovative strategies. The magnitude of the intervention is shared by both cases, scaling-up not only in the amount of solutions provided but in coordination between different institutions. They look at the role of design and urbanism to create new social interactions, not by focusing on a specific territory but on the interaction between them, and not just focusing on housing, but on other sectors such as education, transport, and art, as a way to improve the city as whole.

4.6 Research Sites

Figure 25| Map of research sites

Source: Author
Settlements in Viña del Mar

Viña del Mar has the largest number of informal settlements in the region. In contrast to most informal settlements in the region, which tend to be small (50 households or less), Viña del Mar concentrates the largest informal settlements of the region, where 15 settlements have more than 100 households, and two settlements have more than 900 households (MINVU, 2013).

A characteristic of informal settlements in Viña del Mar is their location, they are usually found on tops of hills and in gorges (where there is available land). In the following aerial picture of Manuel Bustos, it is possible to see how the settlement is located on the highest part of the mountain. Due to the location, houses and roads are accommodated on steep slopes.

Figure 26 | Aerial picture of Manuel Bustos

Source: Author in collaboration with Lautaro Ojeda.

Who lives in informal settlements? Settlements tend to have a younger population than the national average. A third of the population is 15 years-old or younger and in the region of Valparaiso in particular, there are significantly more women than men.
who live in the settlements, especially between the ages of 20 and 40 years-old (MINVU, 2013). This shows a close relationship between young women and children, and the need to provide shelter for their children.

While there is a diverse typology of households in settlements, most are young two-parent families (MINVU, 2013). However, as it was observed, there are also one-parent households (only the father or mother), queer households (only men), single people living alone and a household with non-family members. There has also been an increase in immigrants arriving to the settlements in the region, which include people from Perú, Colombia and Haiti (Fieldwork, 2014-2015).

*Manuel Bustos*

**Figure 27 | View to upper Manuel Bustos**

Manuel Bustos (hereafter MB) is located in the area of Achupallas, and considered the biggest settlement in the country with 924 households (MINVU, 2013), although informally, it is estimated that there are at least 1,200 households living there, which could be around 4,800 people. The settlement was named after a left-wing political leader and president of the Worker’s United Centre of Chile, Manuel Bustos, who died in 1999.
The settlement is divided into 18 housing committees that have grown organically since the settlement started its configuration in 1998 (see Figure 28). As a way to improve the organisation of the settlement, they have grouped the housing committees together and effectively formed seven territorial working groups. Each of the housing committees has community leaders, and the working groups meet weekly and hold monthly community meetings with all residents. As a whole, the settlement has one formal representative, and holds meetings with representatives of all the housing committees once a month. In recent years, these meetings have usually been with housing authorities regarding the upgrading project.

They have also been working with several NGOs and universities, and in particular with NGO TECHO since 2001. TECHO started by building emergency housing, but now works permanently in the settlement, supporting the community organisation, and has supported the construction of community infrastructure, such as pavements, bathrooms, water tanks, and a football pitch among other things.

The houses in the settlements are varied, but most of them are part wood and part cement, and each plot is either 10mx20m or 10mx10m.
Figure 28 | Manuel Bustos’ Housing Committees

Source: Araos Ovalle (2014)
Manuel Bustos is the pilot project for the Upgrading Scheme. The project has suffered significant delays since it was agreed in 2013 and planned to be finished by 2018. The upgrading project is divided into three phases: 1. Pre-feasibility, 2. Design, 3. Implementation, each of which has to go to tender. The first phase was completed in 2014, and included the legal analysis of the land, technical study of the risks zones and a preliminary design of the new settlement. The project was then frozen until 2017 due to discrepancies with the initial budget and difficulties finding suitable consultancy firms. A specific memorandum of understanding was signed in 2017 between the Municipality of Viña del Mar, MINVU and SERVIU to overcome this, which established a new budget and responsibilities. Although the delays and lack of precision in the information of the project reflect negatively on the future of the project, the attendance of the national Ministry of Housing at the ceremony where the agreement was signed showed a renewed commitment from authorities.
Figure 29 | Manuel Bustos. Source: Author
Felipe Camiroaga

Figure 30| View of the city and sea from Felipe Camiroaga informal settlement

Felipe Camiroaga (hereafter FC) is located in the area of Forestal. The settlement is one of the newest in the region, and was only started in 2011 by allegados. It was named after a TV presenter who died in a plane crash in 2011 in the Chilean archipelago of Juan Fernández. The accident occurred at a similar time as the land invasion, and dwellers decided to name it in his honour. The different housing committees and streets of the settlements are inspired by this event.

Dwellers of the settlement lived previously with extended family members or rented a room, and many of them were already involved in a housing project which was halted after the earthquake in 2010. It is said that the project did not comply with the budget of the housing subsidy and was not a priority after the earthquake. Many of the people waiting for the realisation of that project invaded the land. Most of them have lived in social housing in the region, or in Santiago, where the majority came from neighbourhoods commonly termed ‘bad neighbourhoods’, which generally refer to groups of social housing provided in 1990s or consolidated over time.
Similar to MB, the official number from the Municipality is of 900 households, however dwellers reported that there were at least 1,000 households (Fieldwork 2014-15). They are divided into 10 housing committees. Many of them still do not have a community centre where they can hold the meetings. In terms of housing, some households are still very precarious and are saving money to build something bigger and more solid, while others invested all their savings (in addition to loans) to build bigger house in one go. Half of the settlement (5 housing committees) started working with TECHO and with other organisations in 2015.
Figure 31 | Felipe Camiroaga, view from the lower entrance. Source: Author
Differences between both settlements: The New Urban Dweller

Although both settlements are similar in size and population, they differ in terms of community experience, the socio-economic position of dwellers and the future housing solution. FC does not have any type of housing solution and at the time of the fieldwork had not been included in the official MINVU cadastre, thus making it more difficult to access resources and legal support.

Most FC dwellers used to rent privately, while in MB most dwellers have historically lived in informal settlements. FC showed itself to be a unique case due to its socioeconomic position. Most dwellers have higher levels of education and better jobs, and did not have previous experience living in an informal settlement. These dwellers have distanced themselves from informal dwellers in the rest of the city, as they do not consider themselves poor, but as victims of a housing crisis.

What this new dweller shows – which has not been documented in Chilean academia – is that the need for housing and the desire for homeownership extends to a larger population than those in informal settlements. Invading land is not only a historical process as the case of MB shows, but also responds to new factors which has led to new types of dwellers to invade and project a future in an informal settlement. This suggests that housing struggles and informal dwellers as a movement have evolved from those characterised during 1980 and 1990s, but still represent a pressing issue for the country.

Conclusion: The relevance of Viña del Mar settlements for researching gender claims in struggles for housing

This thesis aims to address the research gaps in the value of housing as home, the practices involved in making a home, and how they can open space for change. I propose the case of informal settlements in Viña del Mar as a case to explore these issues.

1. The case is relevant for the study of home.

I have introduced the notion of home as a way to fill in the gap in housing literature, where the main focus is on material aspects of low-income housing.
The case is relevant for the study of home because of the dwellers’ specific housing claims. Dwellers’ claims of staying put and the rejection of the housing policy responds to the different levels at which they valorise home. Staying put means building their own house on their own terms and gaining control over the process of housing. By doing this (and rejecting social housing), dwellers give value to other elements of housing, beyond the stability that social housing could bring. Social housing provides an economic asset through homeownership (a highly valued element in Chile), and it improves the material conditions of living. If home is not legally owned, with access to services and better materiality, then *what is home for the informal dwellers of Viña del Mar? Why is a self-help house better than a house provided by the state? What are the characteristics of home that informal dwellers value?*

2. The case is relevant for the study of the political role of home-making practices.

The case of Viña del Mar offers a distinct opportunity to analyse covert and gradual claim-making. Distinct from to Santiago, where urban social movements and land invasion were visible and political, the informal settlements in Viña del Mar were not visible to authorities until the 2000s. Furthermore, informal settlements were created at a time when Chile had regarded housing issues as irrelevant, as it was believed that the "housing problem" had been solved.

What I argue with this case, is that even when dwellers were not active and mobilised, they were making silent housing claims, which only become evident when the number of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar was revealed in the cadastre of 2011. As such, I propose that the identification of home-making practices can be a different entry point to understanding gender and housing claims, as a gradual process of awareness and collective action.

3. The case is relevant for the study of gender issues of low-income women.

More women live in poverty (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2015), more women live in informal settlements than men (MINVU, 2013), and most of the community leaders in informal settlements in Chile are women (Pizarro et al., 2008). Moreover, in Valparaíso region, almost a third of the households consists of female single parents (MINVU, 2013). As such, women play an important role in the creation and
maintenance of home in informal settlements, and the analysis of gender issues in informal settlements in the country is therefore relevant. However, gender issues for low-income women have not been commonly studied in Chile. Moreover, gender issues have only slowly been introduced to the political agenda, and have gained a more prominent role with the recent creation of the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality.

This case is particularly interesting for the analysis of gender issues due to the high participation of women involved in finding housing solutions for informal settlements in Viña del Mar. Most of the dwellers involved in the Upgrading Scheme, who negotiated with politicians and authorities, who invaded land, and who organise daily in the settlement, are women. As such, this is a relevant case through which to analyse women's agency in creating home, as well as looking into the limitations and oppressions in which they operate.

Finally, the two research sites give a broad sample of home-making practices and provide a range of informal dwellers. Choosing two informal settlements with different organisational capacities and different housing solutions, allows me to understand the nuances of the case study. It allows me to understand how home and home-making practices play out in different contexts, reflect on the conditions under which home-making practices are political, and distinguish what elements are city-wide and which are based in specific contexts.

The following three chapters present and discuss the empirical data collected. Each chapter addresses a set of home-making practices: Chapter 5 examines the maintenance of the home, Chapter 6 the construction of the home, and Chapter 7 the planning of the home. As discussed, each chapter addresses both research sub-questions.
CHAPTER 5

Maintenance of the Home

“Only women that are strong and feisty stay in the hill”

Elena, 57 years-old, Manuel Bustos

Care work and housework structure the everyday lives of women in the settlements, both emotionally and physically. Most women bear the responsibility of the everyday functioning of the house, and activities such as cleaning, doing the laundry, cooking, and taking care of children and extended family take up most of their day. Moreover, they juggle multiple roles as mothers, wives, workers and community members, while providing care to several people and in doing so, managing a set of material and non-material resources. These practices occur in a context of lack of infrastructure, socio-spatial segregation, and in some cases, of violence.

As outlined in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.2), this chapter is the first of the empirical chapters and explores practices that maintain the home and its members, specifically
childcare and housework, and discusses the role they play in struggles for housing. The maintenance of the home has been defined as any practice that aims to reproduce, care for and preserve human life, and maintain the material home. As such, this definition includes reproductive practices, seen in the specific light of how care is manifested in the context of housing and the built environment.

Through the examination of women’s everyday reproductive practices, the chapter opens up a space that is usually hidden, both disregarded in the literature and in practice (Dyck, 2005). This is because reproductive practices are gendered and spatially bound to the private space of the household, thus tending to be invisible or go unrecognised.

This chapter argues that practices of maintenance of the home constitute a fundamental entry point to understanding women’s experience of housing. The examination of these practices does not only show the material and emotional aspects of home, but is an entry point to discussing wider political and socio-economic processes that affect women’s lives.

Traditional gender divisions of labour focus on women’s housework and care work responsibilities and how they can reproduce gender inequality, limiting women physically and subjectively to the home space, and making it difficult for them to pursue more strategic gender needs (Moser, 1993; Levy, 1996). Although the analysis supports this position, the chapter also looks at how housework and care work in this context, can be a source of awareness and, in some cases, even of empowerment. Drawing on the discussion of home in Chapter 2 (section 2.1.4 Research focus: Home as entry point to housing) the dual function of home as a site of subordination as well as a possible site of empowerment, is a line of argument that is developed in this chapter and in the following empirical chapters.

The chapter focuses specifically on two practices of maintenance: childcare in solidarity and service-less housework. I have given the practices these names because of the form childcare and housework take in this specific built environment. From all the relevant practices identified in the settlements, these two were selected as they were identified by women themselves as the most important and challenging, and are representative across the two settlements.
**Structure of the chapter**

In order to analyse these practices, the chapter is divided into three sections. The first part introduces the practices and characterises them through examples and cases. The second part analyses the function of the practices, their material and/or symbolic gains, and how they work together. The third (and last) section, answers the two research sub-questions by discussing the specific conditions in which these practices emerge and exploring the function of the practices in this context. The discussion examines the political role of childcare in solidarity and service-less work, and explores how they can open space for recognition and redistribution in women’s housing and gender struggles.

**Considerations for the analysis of maintenance of the home**

It is true to say that at first, identifying and describing practices that maintain the home in isolation seems like an ordinary and unappealing exercise. In that sense, cooking, taking care of children and cleaning are part of an unexciting, mostly universal routine. The practices themselves can be monotonous and uninteresting, as Abel & Nelson (1990) describe: “Like factory work, caregiving often involves a series of boring, repetitive, and alienating tasks” (p.6). Nevertheless, the analysis of the maintenance of the home takes on a particular meaning when looked at in the specific context of poverty and housing struggles. In this case, practices are indicators of the rhythms and routines of the settlements, the intra- and inter-relationships of households, and the manifestation of gender norms.

As was mentioned in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2.3 Selection of Participants), the research focuses on the analysis of women’s practices. However, the chapter (and the next two chapters) also present accounts of men. This is as a way to put women’s practices in relation to men’s roles, responsibilities and perceptions, in order to give a more nuanced vision of gender roles and how they are negotiated.

The chapter analyses data from households that had at least one woman, and were either mono or parental households, which are the most common. However, as presented in Chapter 4 (Research sites: Settlements in Viña del Mar), there is a diverse typology of households in both settlements. These types of households confirm the need to move away from the traditional heterosexual parental
household and think about the domestic space as a more complex and socially diverse site.

5.1 Practices

The most common practices of maintenance of the home, identified by participant observation, life stories and photography workshops, revealed a variety of practices. These included: cleaning the house, sweeping the streets, tiding up the house, making beds, cooking the night before so that their partners can take lunch to work, grocery shopping downtown, doing laundry with scarce water, getting children ready for school, walking them down and back up the hill, helping them with housework, putting them to bed in the evening, taking children or relatives to the hospital, caring for extended family or friends’ children, caring for someone with a long-term health condition, going to school meetings, and doing gardening, among other activities.

Women themselves find it easier to identify their daily activities through photo diaries than other methods used. For example, during life stories, although I asked about residents’ routines, participants did not see the need to discuss their activities in detail, either because they seemed trivial or because they were less conscious of all the activities they did. As Linda (40, MB) answered, “It is difficult to say what I do... it is just my typical routine”. Differently, at the end of one of the photography workshops, one of the participants affirmed: “By taking pictures I realised how much I do in a day!” (Berta, 33, FC).

The documentation of home-making practices through photo diaries (Photograph the activities you do in a day) was particularly helpful in making them visible for participants and as a starting point to discuss them, either in individual interviews or collectively in workshops. During the photography workshop, participants categorised the pictures of the group into nine main daily activities and prioritised them. Figure 32 (see fold-out) shows a selection of pictures taken for the photo diaries and how women categorise the pictures. And Figure 35 shows a selection of individual photo diaries.
Participants identified housework and child care as the most important practices on a daily basis, due to the time they dedicate to it and the importance they give it in the maintenance of the home. The practices identified were triangulated with other methods used, such as life stories, participatory observation and group discussions with community leaders, which confirmed the importance of the practices.

In the next section, I turn to discuss the two specific practices; childcare in solidarity and service-less housework.

Figure 32 [Fold-out] | Participatory photography: Practices identified in photo diaries

Photography workshop with women of “Centro de Madre Los Jazmines” MB (December 2014)

i) Each participant did a photo diary (Photograph the activities you do in a day). ii) Participants discussed collectively which were the most important activities and grouped the pictures into the main practices. iii) Participants identified nine main activities. A selection of pictures by activity, as categorised by women, can be found in the following two fold-outs. Source: Author
**CLEANING**

- "In the morning I sweep outside of my shop." (MB)
- "Doing the bathroom now is easier because we connected to the sewage." (MB)
- "Depending what I have to do in the day if I tidy up in the morning or when I'm back." (MB)
- "It takes time to tidy up, specially because we are nine living in the house." (MB)
- "I wanted to show how pretty it looks when everything is in its place." (MB)

**Childcare**

- "Taking the children to school and then picking them up usually takes time, is down and up the hill." (MB)
- "I usually spend all day with my grandchild." (MB)
- "I have to be home if I want the children to do homework... my husband doesn't help with that." (MB)
- "We wake up at 7am, the children clean themselves before going to school." (MB)
- "This is my grandchild, I take care of him a couple of days a week." (MB)

**Laundry**

- "It takes a long time to get to this point, when clothes are drying." (MB)
- "I wash every day specially if its sunny and I know that the clothes are going to dry." (MB)
- "Is not just washing but sorting everything out." (MB)
- "Having children means you have to be washing all the time." (MB)
- "Now that my granddaughter is staying with us, there is a lot more washing to do." (MB)

**Cooking**

- "I usually cook the night before." (MB)
- "This is me doing the washing up." (MB)
- "I cook one time a day, that’s it." (MB)
- "I wished I had a bit more space in the kitchen." (MB)
- "Is not only cooking but then you have to do the washing up." (MB)

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Source: Selection of pictures taken by participants of photography workshop "Centro de Madres Los Jazmines" MB. Each quote corresponds to the participant who took the picture.
5. ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

Environmental practices: Participants took pictures of their gardens, pets, natural environment and of a small landfill site that had just been formed in the settlement. Women affirmed that the natural environment is important, as the settlement is located on a hill. Older women were among those who took more photographs of the environment, and they recognised the benefits that it could have for their wellbeing (e.g. asthma, relaxing). They all agree that it is important to take care of their own green spaces, the common spaces, and the hill in general.

6. REPAIRS & DECORATION

Repairs & decoration: Some of the pictures documented small repairs, construction and decorations in the home. The pictures reveal the on-going process of improvements, as well as the planning that goes into the construction and aesthetic of the house and its surroundings.

7. LEISURE

Leisure: Only a few pictures documented leisure activities. The photographs showed board games, the television, going to the beach and spending time with family. Women said that they have little time to rest, as they are always busy doing something. Instead of trying to do more leisure activities, they said it is more realistic to find enjoyment in the activities they already do (e.g. Playing music while doing the cleaning).

8. PAID WORK

Paid work: Pictures documented productive activities developed in the home space, such as having a grocery shop in the house, or sewing and cooking to sell. Women that attended the workshop do not have full time jobs (unlike other women who work as live-in maids or work in a shop), but the pictures document how they use their home space to develop and find time to engage in small-scale productive activities.

9. COMMUNITY WORK

Community work: For women who are community leaders, their time is divided between housework, productive activities and community work. Only one woman in the workshop was a community leader and her two pictures (images on the left) show a community meeting with a municipal officer.

Source: Selection of pictures taken by participants of photography workshop “Centro de Madres Los Jasmines” MB. Each quote corresponds to the participant who took the picture.
5.1.1 Childcare in solidarity

In Chile, there is a high concentration of children and young people living in informal settlements and a third of the population is 15 years-old or younger. This is a higher concentration of children and young people than average in both the poorest socio-economic group and the country as a whole (MINVU, 2013). This suggests that there is a relationship between childhood and informal settlements. Although the research does not focus on this issue in particular, understanding care practices and how care manifests spatially, is an important aspect to further understand this matter.

Childcare is one of the key practices for women in the two settlements. Most households (if not all) have young children, but nurseries are not close enough and women have limited time and a large amount of responsibilities to attend to. As such, women find support for their caring responsibilities in their neighbours and extended family.

Other caring responsibilities are as important and present in the settlement, such as the care for older people and those suffering from long-term conditions. I focus on the analysis of childcare, as it is the most common caring responsibility, however childcare is interrelated with other caring responsibilities.

What distinguishes the practice from regular childcare is its informal, unpaid and spatial characteristic. It is a practice that emerges from the need to provide extensive and multiple types of care on a daily basis in a precarious socio-spatial environment. I refer to childcare as a practice that is mostly directed to children, but also (as it was possible to observe in the field) directed to young people. It is common to hear women say, "Dejé a mi hijo/a encargado" [I left my daughter or son entrusted to someone] in order to do other tasks. Most women entrust their children to the care of others in the settlement, for specific occasions, or on a daily basis, both in the private and public space.

The practice is characterised by three main elements.

1. Un-commodified help between neighbours and extended family

Solidarity is the basic exchange, in a context in which money is scarce. It manifests itself in intricate layers of favours between neighbours, extended family and friends.
A strong support network of extended family members and neighbours plays a key role for the most vulnerable in Chile, as it represents the direct possibility of survival in a precarious context (Araujo & Martuccelli, 2012).

Life stories was an effective method to identify some of these relationships and types of solidarity, allowing to identify the different ways dwellers support each other and where it takes place. Interviews for life stories took place in participant’s houses, which allowed dwellers to point to their neighbours’ houses or other places where solidarity took place. Three examples of the solidarity amongst family members and neighbours, and how it reflects in space is shown in Figure 33.

For example, Linda (40, community leader, MB) (see Figure 33, case A) lives with her three younger children, the girlfriend of one of her children, as well as her eldest daughter and her nuclear family (partner and two children). In total, nine people live in the house. The eldest daughter moved in two years ago while she waits for her social housing to be ready. Linda takes care of her grandchildren when they come back from school and prepares food for them. In this chain of care, Linda’s daughter gets help for the care of her two young boys, and in return she shares the only regular income in the house. Linda also helps her neighbours, a couple in their late 60s with limited mobility. She checks if they need groceries and helps them walk down the hill twice a month when they go to collect their pension. In turn, but not motivated by the exchange, she knows that she can borrow water from the couple towards the end of the month, as they usually run out of water in her house. In the upper part of MB, where Linda lives, they do not access to water pipes, but have negotiated with the municipality the delivery of water in a truck twice a week.

Linda is a committed community leader, mother, grandmother and a charismatic woman. She was interviewed in life stories, participated in a photography workshop and also in group discussions with community leaders. Linda’s experience is illustrated throughout the three empirical chapters, with specific references in Figure 33, Figure 37 and Box 3.
**Figure 33** | Child care in solidarity and how it manifests spatially

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**A. Linda, 40 years-old, MB.**

Linda lives with her three children, their partners and two grandchildren. Linda takes care of her two grandchildren, while her daughter and partner work. In turn, Linda’s daughter buys groceries in her car, a useful help as they live at the top of the hill.

Linda helps her next-door neighbours, Rodolfo and Doris (Rodolfo was interviewed in the life stories). The couple are in their 60s and have limited mobility. When Linda runs out of water, Rodolfo and Doris share theirs, as they are only two and usually have more than Linda.

Rodolfo and Doris’ son lives in MB. They help him take care of their grandchildren. Usually they make breakfast or lunch for the children.

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**B. Elena, 57 years-old, MB.**

Elena’s daughter moved into the same plot of land and built her own house in the back. Elena helps her with her grandchildren and also with some of her daughter’s domestic works, such as washing clothes. Her daughter, in turn, cooks for her Elena every day.
C. Estela, 33 years-old, FC.

Estela lives with her husband and two children. Opposite to her, lives her school friend, who she invited to move in. Her friend usually takes care of her daughter when she goes to work.

Estela also invited her mother, aunt and another friend to live in the settlement, extending her support network. They have named the lane after Estela’s deceased brother.

Source: Author (Data collected through life stories)
2. Spatial dimension of childcare

As it is possible to see in Figure 33, childcare in solidarity has a fundamental spatial dimension, both in decisions dwellers make on where and with whom to live close to, as well as in the use of public space.

More than 50% of the residents interviewed have a family member or friend that lives in the settlement. As it was stated by participants of life stories and group discussions, this is explained by the fact that families and friends choose to live close to one another to improve their support networks, including the support for childcare.

In practical terms, most dwellers were informed of a plot of land by a friend or family member encouraging them to live in the settlement. In some cases, a whole extended family manage to get plots on the site, resulting in many of the dwellers forming ‘family units’ in the settlement. This finding confirms the data collected by Pino (2015) in the city of Valparaíso, where dwellers form family units not only to improve support networks, but also motivated by the long-term vision of staying put in the settlement.

In Estela’s case (33, FC) (see Figure 33, case C) when her five-year-old daughter is sick and she cannot go to school, she usually leaves her with her school friend Claudia. Claudia and Estela live next door to each other in FC and they have known each other for 12 years. Estela lives in a dead-end street in which she has created a family unit for herself, choosing to live with her friends and family members, and naming the street after her deceased brother. Estela says, “It’s reassuring to go to work knowing that your daughter is in good hands with someone that I know and trust.” I come back to the concept of family units in Chapter 7, as a practice of planning the settlement.

Childcare in solidarity is also reflected spatially beyond the home space or street, to communal areas in the neighbourhood. In the two settlements, there is an implicit rule that children and young people belong to ‘everyone’, and that they are ‘everyone’s business’, especially when they are in public space.

Women usually spend the afternoon outside while children and young people are in the square or in communal areas. Women are particularly concerned about young
people, and prefer that they are in a place where they can see them, to make sure they are not getting into trouble. Women do this even if it means not getting a job in order to be present in the afternoons. Box 3 shows an account from my research diary, of one of the afternoons spent in the communal areas chatting with women while they look after their children. It highlights women’s preoccupation around their teenage children growing up in the settlement and the actions they take.

Some men interviewed showed a similar concern. For example, Tomás (25, FC) started a cultural centre in FC, so children and young people have a space to develop creative skills in a safe environment. Similarly, during the photography workshop, Jaime (32, FC) stated the importance of improving spaces for children and young people to use. He explains: “The square used to be a landfill but we worked hard to make it into a square for the children to play”. The involvement of men in the creation and improvement of leisure spaces for children and young people was seen more in FC than in MB. This could be explained because FC is not as old and thus has fewer amenities than MB. Nonetheless, the role that Tomás plays in FC, as director of a cultural centre, was not seen in MB.
Box 3 | On raising children, an afternoon at the football pitch

“In the grocery shop on the corner, opposite to the football pitch, women meet to chat in the afternoon. They usually order the bread during the day and go to pick it up in the afternoon before their partner arrives for tea time (which in the settlement is dinner). The trip to the shop seems like an excuse to get out of the house and chat with other women in the settlement. The conversations are usually about the same topics.

They talk about their children. Many of their children are around as they meet to play football on the pitch or hang out near the community centre after school, and their ages are between 10 and 16. The women chat about how their children are doing and changes at the local school. All of them seem to be worried about the malas influencias [bad influences] and that their children will start to ‘deviate’. They are aware that in this context it is only a matter of time before children fall into ‘bad behaviours’. However, they give vital importance to their presence in their children’s development. For example, they gossip about a neighbour who, influenced by religion, was too strict with her children which ended up creating a worse outcome. Her 16-year-old got a 14-year-old pregnant, and her older daughter has had ‘many’ boyfriends.

They say they cannot be blind to the context in which they are and that they should be alert to who their children hang out with, and that they do not stay out late. “You have to have them cortitos (on a short leash) one of the woman says. Several of the women say that they do not work, or that they will work when they are older or más encarrilados (on the right track). Not working allows them to monitor at what time they leave school, that they actually go back home, that they do their housework and that they are where they can see them (which usually means playing on the football pitch in the middle of the settlement)”.

Research diary, Manuel Bustos, March 2015
3. Age and nationality/ethnicity play a role in giving and accessing solidarity

As much as childcare is heavily gendered, the cases show that gender intersects significantly with other social identities, particularly with age and nationality/ethnicity. It is not only adult women that provide most of the care; older and younger people, such as grandparents and older siblings, also play a central role as caregivers.

In contrast to the traditional notion that older people are the ones receiving care (which they also do), they provide crucial childcare in both settlements. All of the older people interviewed, men and women, had some kind of responsibility for taking care of grandchildren, either because they did occasional care work or because they had the full responsibility of a child. In all of the cases, the grandchild lived in the settlement, supporting the idea of the importance of a social network. Rodolfo (67, MB) (see Figure 33, case A) and his wife make a packed lunch every morning for his son and grandchildren that live in the settlement, and also help by washing their laundry. “We have more time, so it’s easier for use to help them”.

Another similar case is Elena (57, MB) (see Figure 33, case B), she explains, “I get up at 7am every day because I make breakfast for my grandchild (who lives in another house on the same plot of land), before he goes to school. He comes down and I prepare him breakfast every morning”.

In most cases, the role of caregiver is not chosen, as households need the extra help. As much as they would like to help, for the ones that are full-time carers, the feelings toward raising a grandchild can carry frustration and exhaustion, and usually puts a strain on their own wellbeing, especially for those who have limited mobility or health issues. For example, Karin is 58 years old and she takes care of her three-year-old granddaughter full-time, and her husband who has pulmonary fibrosis. During the photography workshop, her pictures illustrated her feelings of being trapped and limited to the house. See one of her pictures in Figure 34.
“My life as you can see here, is to be indoors, locked. I don’t have activities outside of the house. I take care of my husband and granddaughter. He was just diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis. Now I started going outside more because my granddaughter is learning how to walk, so now she moves more and I have to chase her, she even goes to the neighbours’ houses. This is my world” (Karin, 58, MB). **Source: Karin, MB.**

As much as it is a widespread practice, childcare in solidarity is not a given in the settlement. For people with fewer social networks, finding support is more challenging. For example, Teresa (32, FC) has three children between the ages of 4 and 7. She came from Perú with her partner only a year ago, looking for better opportunities in Chile. Soon after, her partner left and she is now by herself raising her three children. She feels discriminated against by some of her neighbours because of her nationality, particularly by one of the community leaders, hindering her access to support from the housing committee and making it difficult to create personal relationships with other neighbours. Her brother-in-law, also Peruvian, lives in the settlement and helps her with the children. Mauro (26, FC) affirms, “If Teresa has to go out I stay with the children, I cook for them, play and do the homework. I’m the uncle so it’s my responsibility too.”

Unfortunately, there are cases in which the emotional and/or material resources for care in the settlement are not enough to secure children, indicating that housing conditions can mediate parenting opportunities. The following shows two examples in which the state has intervened.
Jacqueline’s (33, FC) sons are ten and twelve years old, and are in the care of the Servicio Nacional de Menores (SENAME) [National Service for Minors]. Before moving to the settlement, she was living as allegada and because she did not have a proper place to house them she affirms, "I had to give them away". When she started living in the settlement she got her sons back but says: “They kept escaping and I could not control them anymore, they had been in an institution for too long and it was very hard to be together again.”

Elsa (37, FC) lost custody of her younger children to her former husband when she moved into the settlement. After separating, she had been renting in several places and in the last months was living as allegada in one bedroom with her four children. She moved to the settlement as it seemed like a place that would allow them to have a more stable life. However, her ex-husband was granted custody of the two younger children, arguing that the settlement did not have the appropriate material conditions for raising a child. Elsa’s full housing trajectory is illustrated in Chapter 6, Figure 37, case D.

(...) that day they told me that two of my children were going to live with their father because of the conditions in which I lived, for living in an informal settlement. The lady said that I did not have sewage and that I did not have the basic conditions to have my children (Elsa, 37, FC).

Both cases are of women that have recently arrived to the settlement (less than three years), after living in unstable accommodation as allegados. Generally, these cases are less common in MB as most people have been living in the settlement for longer. This could be explained by the stability that the housing arrangement provides and stronger community relations. Thus, in this context, it could be argued that the settlement can act as a protective factor for childcare.

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31 Servicio Nacional de Menores (SENAME) is dependent of the Ministry of Social Development. Is the national system, which protects children in vulnerable conditions, through orphanage, day-centres and correctional centres for minors that are law offenders. The institution has been under public scrutiny when in 2016 a report indicated that more than 200 children had died in the centres and hundreds abused (CIPER, 2017). Households, even when they do not provide the ideal care, they still try to not “lose children to the system”, as women affirmed.
5.1.2 Service-less housework

The second practice analysed in this chapter is service-less housework. For many women, their day starts around 6:00 am and ends at 12:00 am or later (see Figure 35 which shows selected individual photo diaries), as it was shown in life stories and photography workshops. If they are out during the day, they will clean the house and cook for all the members of the house the night before. If they are in the house, they will wash clothes, cook, work, take and pick up younger children from school and buy the bread for the evening in the local shop. Washing, cooking and cleaning will depend of the access they have to water and electricity on that day. For those that get water delivered, they will wait for the municipal truck. Whether it comes or not, depends on the weather. It is particularly difficult in winter when it is muddy (and trucks cannot go up the hill’s unpaved roads). In the summer, if there are fires in the city, the water trucks are used to help with the fire. The maintenance of the house (and its members) can take all day.

I understand service-less housework as the practices involved in maintaining the house, the continuous process, parallel to the construction of the house and as important, that allows women to keep the house functioning in a challenging material and non-material context. What distinguishes this practice from regular housework are the conditions of material precariousness under which it takes place.
A. RUT, 26 YEARS-OLD, MB

Get up & prepare daughter for school:
"I wake up at 7:00am, I pick the clothes for my daughter and get her ready for school."

Laundry:
"I'm was busy at 8:30 am and did some of the laundry."

Spend afternoon with daughters:
"I used to take care of other people's children. But now it's just me and my daughters all afternoon."

Play dominoes:
"On this night we played dominoes with my husband and daughters."

Pick up other daughter and take them to school:
"On our way to school we pick up my other daughter. She lives in the settlement but with her father."

Cleaning & tidying up:
"Then tidy the house, clean the living room, make the beds."

Eat when husband arrives:
"I prepare tea for when my husband comes home."

Cook for the next day:
"In the evening, I cook dinner for the next day."

HOUSEHOLD PRACTICES

Figure 35 | Participatory photography: Photo diaries
B. ANDREA, 39 YEARS-OLD, MB

8:00 am
I pick the children up from school.

10:00 am
Take children to school
I take my children to school every day.

5:00 pm
Help son do homework
I'm alone all afternoon with the children, I help them do their homework.

8:00 pm
Pick the children up from school
I pick the children up from school.

Cleaning & tidying up
I come back and do all the housework, do the washing up, cleaning, the beds...
C. CARMEN, 31 YEARS-OLD, MB

Get up & prepare

"In the morning I have the cloth ready for my son. At 7:00 pm they get up."

Take children to school

At 7:40 we take them to school. I don't think they are old enough to do it on their own yet.

Cleaning & Tidying up

"I don't think that we have to do different things in the house than wealthy women. The difference between us and them is that they have a maid that makes everything and we have to make it ourselves. Sometimes I am all day putting things away and cleaning."
D. ANA, 60 YEARS-OLD, MB

7:00am

"I did some laundry in the afternoon. I washed some of my grandchild's clothes."  

8:00am

"I usually have tea at 5pm. This time my son and grandchild came to visit."  

10:00am

"I usually do some gardening in the morning."  

10:00am

"I love my flowers. I always try to make sure the house looks nice."  

5:00pm

"The first thing I do when I wake up is go outside to look at the view and my garden."  

Wash her grandchild's clothes

Cut flowers

Tea with son & grandchild

Admire the view

Gardening
The practice is mediated by three interrelated elements. First, by the access to services, second, by women's experience when doing service-less housework, and third, the possibility to access a support network to facilitate some tasks.

1. Access to services

The extent to which a household or housing committee has access to services is related to the topography and time of the settlement. The location of the household in the settlement will determine the way services are accessed, and there are certain areas where it is harder to connect to services, even informally, due to the topography of the territory.

The length of time a settlement has existed is important, as over the years a greater number of solutions are implemented by dwellers, and their ability to arrange solutions with other stakeholders is increased (i.e. such as municipality tanker trucks or a collective sewage system through an NGO).

2. Women's experience doing housework in the settlement

There is a certain wit that the women of the settlements have developed with time; they are creative, resourceful and persistent. In both settlements, women agree that the first years are the most difficult, because of the precarious access to water and electricity essential for cooking, cleaning and washing, and the inexperience of how to do the housework under these conditions. For example, Carla (45, MB) remembers the personal and collective effort to do the washing;

Before, we did not have electricity; we had to go every day to hook up illegally at the bottom of the hill. All of the men would go with a ladder at 8pm, and they would climb it and connect to the electricity. I would finish work at 1am so I would get home at 2am. At that time, I would do the washing because the electricity worked. It was like having the sun in my house, the light was so bright because nobody else was using it in the settlement. It was the only time I could use the washing machine (Carla, 45, MB).

Most women in MB that have scarce access to water (these are the households located in the upper area of the settlement) have come up with a creative system to use as little water as possible with the washing machine. At first, it was difficult to identify this practice as it is embedded in their routines, thus difficult to make conscious or be vocalised, and it was only through the photo diaries and then
observation that it was possible to identify it. While doing life stories, participants did not see the need to explain the process of washing, assuming that I either knew, or that it was not relevant. This shows that language-based methods can be limited when collecting information about everyday practices, as routines are usually interjected and can be more difficult to identify and articulate. Rosana (40, MB) explains the process in detail, and it takes her at least 10 minutes to do so:

The thing is, the washing machine washes, rinses and does everything that a normal washing machine does. What happens here is that we cannot leave it to work like that, because we don’t have access to potable water, only the tank and you have to save water until they deliver it again. You have to be very careful with water (…) Then, imagine, I wash and do three spins, do you understand? Three washes using the same water. I do one, and put in the bathtub where I rinse. Then I do the other and so forth (Rosana, 40, MB).

Rosana knows exactly how much water she saves. She says that it is time consuming to do it like this, and means she can sometimes spend a whole day doing laundry. This way of washing is widespread in the upper area of MB were access to water is scare, and only delivered twice a week.

Figure 36|Participatory photography: Washing clothes

Pictures from participants from photo diaries, the number of pictures on washing revealed the central role that washing clothes have in domestic work. Source: Participants of participatory photography workshops "Centro de Madres Los Jazmines".
3. Support network

The access to material and non-material resources through a support network is fundamental in order to do housework, particularly for women with less experience,

For FC’s residents, it has been a double challenge. On one hand, the settlement is only a couple of years old and they are still struggling to connect to services, particularly electricity. On the other hand, most dwellers have no experience living in an informal settlement, and there is thus very little knowledge on how to approach tasks under these conditions. Daily routines that were simpler before have become complicated processes, which they report as frustrating and time consuming.

For FC, the way to overcome this and help facilitate this process has been through support networks and solidarity between neighbours. In some cases, this is through the use of a neighbour’s or family member’s washing machine inside or outside of the settlement. Estela (33, FC) stated that during her first months in the settlement, she would go to her mother’s house in a different part of the city: “As she had electricity, we would go over there on the weekends loaded with bags, and then we had to bring the bags back”.

Leonor (40, FC) borrows his brother’s washing machine:

> The washing machine is from my brother, if it wasn’t for that I would not have one. He is building his own house next door. As we are solitos [on our own], we are very close, we have never said no to anything, we have always helped each other (Leonor, 40, FC).

In this example, the support is even more relevant as Leonor and her brother are from Perú, with no further extended family in the country. That is why she makes reference to being ‘alone’.

As displayed in the previous practice, accessing a support network for dwellers coming from a different country tends to be more difficult. Teresa, also from Perú, says that her daily tasks are frustrated by the difficult relationship she has with the president of the housing committee, as she has not been able to access water from her house. She is also in a more vulnerable position compared to others, as a single
mother with three children and no stable source of income, who is one of the few dwellers not to have a washing machine (or access to one).

She [community leader of the housing committee] did not want to give me access to water, so I did not have water. I have three children and I did not have a washing machine, so I had to wash everything by hand. I had to go to the main water tap that is on the top of the hill, and connect a hose. And then I carried the wet clothes back to the house. When it rained, the clothes took ages to dry (Teresa, 32, FC).

As shown in the different quotations, doing housework can be frustrating and exhausting. For many women, the amount of work can be overwhelming, to the point where they would consider leave the settlement for this reason. As Cristina (60, MB) affirms:

I’m tired of the maintenance of the house, of the plot …of everything! It is too much work for me, I don’t get any rest, my brain is constantly working because I have to think of many things at the same time. I’m also community leader and that is even more work. The worst thing is that my husband does not help me in anything, anything. (…) Sometimes I feel like throwing everything out of the window, but it is my daughter who stops me (Cristina, 60, MB).

The data collected in the two settlements showed how the maintenance of the home was considered mainly as a female task, even in cases where women had paid work outside of the settlement. The uneven redistribution of responsibilities in the maintenance of the home is not only validated by men, but by women themselves. It was common to hear women say: “If my husband does it, I will have to do it again because it won’t be right, I have my mañas (my own ways of doing it)” (Andrea, 39, MB), “Men are the breadwinners, they do not have time to do housework” (Ana, 60, MB), or “I’m all day in the house, so it is my responsibility to do it” (Verónica, 56, FC). Other explanations refer to the strategic use of resources for the household: “He gets a better job, that’s why he is working” (Claudia, 33, FC), “Now that we have small children is easier that I stay in the house, and he goes out” (Elizabeth, 27, MB).

However, through life stories with men, it was possible to see how the division of gender roles could be changing. 6 out of 10 men interviewed in life stories mentioned doing housework when asked about their routine, and only one said that was a woman’s duty to do housework. For example, Carlos (45, MB) explains, “On
the weekdays it is my wife who does the things in the house, but on the weekends, I do the washing, cook, and clean the house. We have to share the housework.”

Men’s attitudes and practices varied, but younger men tended to show more involvement in parenting and housework than older men, as the latter seemed to have more traditional gender views. The two following examples illustrate these views. Hugo (MB) is 70 years-old, he arrived at the settlement after losing his business, and the settlement offered him a place to live and to retire. In recent years, he married a younger woman. He affirms that he does not do any work in the house, although he is the one that stays at home while his wife works: “The washing and the cleaning is done by her, very occasionally I would cook something. I try to help her, but I’m machista, I was born in 1945 so you can’t ask me to be different”. His wife echoes him, “My mum always told me ‘the man has to be served’ so I have always served him.” Hugo continues, ”My mum never allowed me or my brothers to go into the kitchen, we could not do anything” (Hugo and his wife, MB).

However, there are other cases which display less traditional gender views, as was seen particularly in younger men. Tomás (FC) is 25 years-old, lives with his partner and her four children. “In the past, it was said that men went to work and women stayed at home doing the housework, but if now women also go to work then men will need to share some of the tasks of the house, because it is not only men who are the ones that go to work” (Tomás, FC). Tomás’ view, shared by other younger men, could be an indication of more shared distribution of tasks and recognition of women’s effort. Traditional gender roles could be changing as work structures become more flexible, and households need the income of both partners. This shows a less divided vision between the traditional machismo - marianismo portrayed widely in Latin American literature.

Finally, through the introduction of these two practices, women show creative ways in which they deal with the difficulties of maintaining the home. As many of the accounts show, the redistribution of domestic tasks is uneven (as shown in Figure 35, particularly case A, B and C), as women tend to do most of the domestic work, with little recognition for their work or the struggles that it encompasses. As such, although maintaining the home is extremely important, particularly in this context in which a new home is being created in the hills, the effort involved remains mostly invisible and heavily gendered.
5.2 Analysis of Material and Symbolic Gains

The notion of resistance developed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.2) is used to think about the home-making practices. Here, I identify the material and symbolic gains of these practices, and some of the characteristics to with which to think about them in the light of political practices. As such, I distinguish the uniqueness of this practice in relation to other similar ones, its main aim beyond their practical function, the social identity that dwellers mobilised through this practice and if practices are collective or individual, if they move in territorial scales, their limitations and how they work together. The discussion section builds on this analysis by looking at the practices in a wider socio-economic context.

Childcare in solidarity

Childcare in solidarity is a communal strategy based on kinship and friendship. In the short term, it aims to provide un-commodified care. In the long term, the communal aspect of safeguarding aims to mitigate economic and social forces of precariousness, by trying to create a safer environment for children and young people to grow up.

This practice is not only common in informal settlements, but amongst other low income-neighbourhoods in Chile, for example, dwellers that live as allegados. In the case of allegados, one of the reasons to live with extended family is to receive help with childcare (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2013). However, the spatial element of this practice, in which women and in some cases men, communally safeguard parks and football pitches in the settlement are a distinct characteristic of the settlement compared to other low-income neighbourhoods.

The practice is formed around their identity as mothers (and grandmothers), which recognises their common difficulties of childcare, but also as pobladora, as those difficulties stem from their class position.

Childcare in solidarity, emerges in the household – as women need to find someone to look after their children – but tends to be solved at the neighbourhood level. Safeguarding of the communal spaces, on the other hand, gives another indication of the neighbourhood scale in which the practice occurs.
It is important to acknowledge that as much as the practice is intended as a support practice, some women are put in even more vulnerable positions. This is the case of younger girls and older women (and men), care responsibilities are transferred to them in order to help the female head of the household engage in productive and community activities. Dyck (2005) refers to this as the “complex chain of care” (p.239). In the case of teenage girls, this can limit their development or options of going to school and/or work, while older women (and men) have non-optional caring responsibilities which can affect their already precarious health situations.

Service-less housework

In contrast to childcare in solidarity, which is a communal strategy employed to solve a specific problem, service-less housework refers to a set of practices embedded in a mostly individual routine, with the focus of maintaining the house. What distinguishes this practice from regular housework is the conditions of material precariousness under which it takes place. In the short term, the practice aims to preserve the home and its members, trying to provide a clean space with warm food and clean clothes. In the long term, it challenges the notion of where can people create a home, as through this preservation women are maintaining life in a place considered uninhabitable in the city.

The practice is formed around their identity as mothers and wives, but also as pobladora, as the difficulties of maintaining a home is rooted in their class status as informal dwellers. Housework under these conditions requires physical work and the ability to access services informally.

The practice usually takes place at the household level, however help from neighbours and extended family, as well as the connection to services, occurs at the housing committee level or beyond.

The practice is dependant to what women can achieve in a day, and what the conditions of the services are that they need in order to do them. There are obvious limitations, in respect to how housework can open space for women as they are not challenging their traditional gender roles, and the hard work can be to the detriment of women's wellbeing. However, it has helped women to maintain a home – that would not be possible if they did not have these daily routines – and it has given
them a sense of challenge and perseverance, which had helped forged their specific identity as female dwellers.

*Maintenance of the home; practices together*

When practices are looked at together, the amount of time, physical effort and emotional sacrifice that women invest in maintaining the house and its members becomes evident (as seen in Figure 34 & Figure 36). There is a direct relationship between possibilities of accessing more solidarity in childcare and an increase in housework.

Many family members tend to move in or stay at their parents’ house to benefit from solidarity in care (and free accommodation). This is particularly evident in the case of young daughters that become mothers, as they tend to stay in the house to receive help with their children. Nevertheless, this tends to be at the cost of the female head of the household, as it usually means more care work and housework responsibilities. For example, Lucía (38, MB) as the female head of the household has had more demands in recent times, as her parents-in-law moved in to the house because they were getting old, alongside her own children forming families. “In my case, we are 11 people living in the house, so that means I am cleaning and doing home duties all day...So every day I finish around 11pm” (Lucía, 38, MB).

There is a sense of pride, embedded in the role of mother that encourages the care of extended family members and neighbours. However, it can have a high cost for women. Both practices represent both physical and emotional work, in which multiple roles are displayed (mother, wife, worker) and can be translated as a risk to women’s own health. It can result in feeling exhausted and depressed, having less leisure time, fewer options for getting a job, or having to reduce working hours.

As explained, the relationship between these two practices plays out differently depending on women’s identity. For many women in FC with scarce experience living in a settlement, the possibility of childcare in solidarity is valued immensely, as this was less possible in their previous accommodation arrangement. However, they find housework an almost impossible task, as they are not used to the difficulties of not having basic services.
In the case of older dwellers, these two practices are particularly hard as they tend to mean more childcare duties, on top of difficulties doing housework. For immigrants, it was dependants on the possibility to create networks, as immigrants who feel ‘more Chilean’ or more entitled have managed to access social network and resources more effectively. Nevertheless, solidarity tends generally to be limited to other family members, or the same nationality.

This section has established the function of childcare in solidarity and service-less housework in women’s lives and the territory. The next section turns to the broader context, as a way to examine what the connections are between these particular practices and the conditions in which they emerge.

5.3 Discussion of Conditions for Social Change

The previous sections have characterised and analysed both practices. This section analyses the practices in a broader context, as a way to address the two research sub-questions. The first finding that is discussed relates to *service-less housework* and *childcare in solidarity* as informal strategies to fill the gap in the public provision of care. The second finding looks at how these practices forge a specific type of identity, which emerges from the difficulties of providing care and maintaining the home in this context. I have called this *feisty motherhood*, which challenges hegemonic ideas of low-income women.

In order to address this discussion, the section starts by identifying conditions in which the practices emerge (“Sites of Inequality”), and then to what extent the practices challenge these conditions (“Everyday Politics”). The section starts with childcare in solidarity, and then it goes to analyse feisty motherhood. The last part, discusses how can these two home-making practices open space in terms of redistribution and recognition (“Trajectories of Social Change”).

5.3.1 Conditions under which childcare in solidarity emerges

In Chapter 4 (section 4.2.4) I introduce Chilean social policies and laws and their implications for gender equality. Here, I bring some of those to discuss more specifically the conditions in which childcare emerges in the country, as a way to make sense of informal dweller’s practices. To answer sub-question 1, I examine
three conditions in which childcare emerges: ideology of women as primary caregivers; inseparability of paid and unpaid childcare; and social programmes of childcare.

1. Women as primary caregivers

As examined in Chapter 4 (in relation to childcare programmes) the traditional gender division of labour has positioned women in Chile as the primary caregivers. This is indicated in the way that policy and paid childcare are structured. Although the coverage of state and private childcare provision has increased, thus leading to the inclusion of more women in work, the assumption of women as primary caregivers has not been challenged by social programmes. Childcare provision aims to facilitate women's conciliation between work and family, but not challenge their role. As such, and regardless of class, women are expected to be the main provider of care for children.

2. Inseparability of paid and unpaid childcare

Commodification of childcare and housework is a wide practice in Chile in the form of live-in and non-live-in maids, and is not exclusive to wealthy households but across middle-income and high-income population. In Latin America, this is explained by the vast class inequality, racial discrimination and the immigration of low-income women searching for new work opportunities, which translates in a high supply of women willing to work as domestic workers (Arriagada & Todaro, 2012), combined with poor public childcare provided by the states (Frenschet et al., 2017).

When it is possible to afford it, (middle-income) women choose paid care through domestic workers over public or private nurseries, as it includes childcare, housework and longer hours than nurseries. For working women, these arrangements facilitate their work, as the long working hours in Chile are usually incompatible with nurseries.

Since 2014, the law for domestic workers incorporated new specifications with the aim to regulate domestic work, it establishes the work hours, rest days and non-compulsory use of an apron in public spaces (Law N° 20.786, 2014). However, the normative change towards domestic workers will also need an important cultural
adjustment, as hiring live-in maids and with little regulation is an entrenched practice in Chile and Latin America.

The use of domestic workers for childcare and housework has two main implications for gender equality. On the one hand, it means that low-income women that work as domestic workers need to find their own childcare while they provide paid care for others, as working hours tend to be long. On the other hand, even in the case of middle-class women that are able to pay for domestic workers to do childcare, this does not translate into more equal responsibilities with men or the state, as the provision of care is only displaced to domestic workers, but does not disappear as a responsibility for women.

Pobladora women are able to recognise the maldistribution of home tasks of (all) women in relation to men, and the misrecognition of their wok. As such, they identify what unites them with women from other social positions, as well as what divides them. As Carmen states in one of the photography workshops:

We are not that dissimilar to wealthy women, they still have to take care of their house, as we do. But the difference is that they have a maid that do the things for them, and we have to do it ourselves (Carmen, 31, MB).

Frenschet et al. (2017) research on female politicians in Latin America, supports the difference between low-income and middle-income women, and the double subordination of women, to men and the state:

Political women in Chile and Argentina, when asked about their own strategies for reconciling family obligations and political work, all stressed the importance of domestic help or reliance on mothers or mothers-in-law for childcare. The ability to outsource care grants upper-class (but not lower class) women freedom from the burden of caregiving while absolving men of greater shared responsibility and the state of its obligation to address the problem (p. 79).

3. Low use of state childcare by low-income dwellers

Chile has developed a comprehensive and extensive social programme focused on early childhood, called Chile Crece Contigo [Chile Grows with You], presented in Chapter 4 (section 4.2.4). It is a model programme in Latin America, however it is mostly based on poverty alleviation, rather than promoting gender equality. Because
childcare is targeted to the low-income population and commodified for the middle and high-income population, it remains segregated and does not challenge (all) women’s strategic needs.

A series of research has shown\textsuperscript{32}, that despite Chile Crece Contigo’s large investment, relatively good coverage and being targeted at low-income population, the lowest-income quintile is the income group that uses less nurseries, either public or private, than any other socio-economic group in the country (Bravo, 2013; Dussaillant, 2012). Some of the explanations are due to the vulnerability of the group, in terms of less fixed working hours, the need to provide more and diverse care (i.e. children of different ages, care for an older person), less value given to pre-school education, and also material aspects such as transport costs and distance to nurseries. As a result, poorer dwellers are more likely to use informal unpaid care strategies (see Vera, Montes & de la Barra, 2016 specific for Valparaíso city). The existing research only makes the distinction between socio-economic groups but not in specific for informal settlements. As the introduction of this chapter showed, informal settlements have the highest concentration of children and young people, as such its specific analysis is fundamental to understand care practices, not only in terms of social relations but because of the specific built environment.

The city of Viña del Mar has seven pre-schools, which are rightly located in the most vulnerable areas of the city. However, a low use of nurseries and pre-school was observed in both research sites. Each site has one pre-school located in the area, however its capacity is limited, as each one can hold 104 children, which is significantly below the number of children in the settlement (and area). In Valparaíso region, state centres tend to be further away from people’s houses compared to the metropolitan region (Dussaillant, 2012). As such, the limited options could explain, in part, the reduce use of the centres.

Furthermore, there are no other private or third sector initiatives in the settlements. This is not the case specifically for these sites but is a country-wide phenomenon. As informal settlements are considered informal (thus “illegal”), investment or social

\textsuperscript{32} The Encuesta Longitudinal de la Primera Infancia, known as ELPI [National Longitudinal Study of Early Childhood in Chile], coordinated by Universidad de Chile, has done exhaustive research on early childhood and parenthood. Website: http://www.microdatos.cl
programmes in the territories are not encouraged, although NGOs can carry out some recreational activities for children in the afternoons or weekends.

Although it is not common in the settlement to send children to nurseries or pre-school, women said they had seen an increase in the use of centres in the last few years, as Estela (33, FC) explains. "Women are using the nursery that is at the bottom of the hill more, because I think more women are becoming interested in having a job and being independent". This could suggest a cultural change in the role of women in the home, as more women are thinking of using nurseries as a way to access paid jobs. Still, as it was possible to affirm from women's account, a large group, even when working outside of the home, prefer to rely on informal strategies of care work rather than the structured, one child, limited hours service that pre-schools provide. This can explain why women's informal strategies of care go beyond the understanding of state childcare, discussed here, and how the strategy aims to compensate for the precarious social-spatial environment in which care occurs.

The three structural conditions presented referred to symbolic inequalities (misrecognition) around the expectation of women’s “natural” caregiving role, embedded in state social programmes. There is also a misrecognition of informal dweller’s specific needs, as nurseries and pre-schools do not adapt to the specific needs and context of informal settlements. As it was seen, there is no evident data (either quantitative nor qualitative) which seeks to understand childcare needs specifically in informal settlements. As such, the state programmes are tailored to a specific socio-economic group ("the poor"), but disregarding the specific spatial conditions in which care takes place. As it is analysed in the next section, informal settlements have specific strengths in terms of the collective organisation and the collective use of space that could help in thinking in the provision of state childcare.

Material inequalities (maldistribution) are reflected in the inseparability between paid and unpaid childcare, in the unequal distribution of care responsibilities between men and women, and the impact this have in job opportunities, and between the state and citizens. Other material inequalities, were identified in the practice of childcare in solidarity, when the specific material conditions of the settlement deny children to remain with parents. For example, in cases in which the court ruled against a mother that lived in FC.
5.3.2 Childcare in solidarity as a strategy of broader care and solidarity amongst women

Childcare in solidarity is an informal provision of a service, which aims to cover the limitations of public childcare, in a flexible, accessible and un-commodified way.

Although informal childcare arrangements are common practice in low-income households, they have not been studied widely (Dyck, 1996). They refer to support systems that women create to bridge the gaps between government and commercially provided care. The practice is more common in parents working in low-skilled jobs, with inflexible working hours, or single working mothers (Henly & Lyons, 2000). These types of arrangements show women's agency in navigating the complex structural landscape and creatively seek solutions that adapt to their different needs and duties (Dick, 1996; England, 1996).

There are two characteristics which show that childcare in solidarity not only addresses everyday care, as state pre-schools do, but also tackles the broader issues of care needed in the settlements. This can be seen by the multiple types of care and in the multiple spaces that it occurs. The use of informal care strategies responds to a larger socio-economic problem, beyond the availability of nurseries and pre-schools. Care in the settlement, is more than ‘looking after’ a child. It refers to the material and emotional care provided by mothers, grandmothers and neighbours who collectively try to raise a ‘good child’. As stated by women, this is important, not only in their first years but also for young people, as they believe this is a key moment to ‘keep them out of trouble’. This is reflected spatially, as it does not only occur in the home space, but in the communal open spaces.

The case shows that childcare in solidarity is mostly a survival strategy, and women engage in it because of the unchallenged role that women have in taking care of children, the limited access to state nurseries and inexistent alternatives by NGOs or the private sector in the settlement. It also relates to wider limitations in terms of multiple care responsibilities, such as older people and those suffering from a long-term condition, and the difficulties that they see for their teenage children growing up in the neighbourhood. The fact that it is mostly women who stay in the home space and settlement doing care responsibilities is also related to wider gender inequalities, in terms of access to education and job opportunities that would allow
them to have a greater space to make decisions about their activities and responsibilities. As such, childcare in solidarity has an important dimension of survival and is a reflection of women's subordination to men.

The data collected shows childcare as a survival strategy, but it also shows childcare in a different light. The practice also emerges as a mechanism that facilitates women's interactions, trust and solidarity with other neighbours and in a communal space (this relates to some male dwellers, as seen in the case of FC).

The communal aspect of childcare, in which women help each other to perform their care duties, develops a solidarity that could transcend this specific task. I suggest that the comradery that women develop as mothers, in their responsibility as carers, is a stepping stone towards collective female organisation. By reaching out to family members and neighbours in the settlement, women create an underlying fabric of support. The support comes from the empathy and understanding of other women's struggles, which are similar to theirs.

This finding would suggest that children, rather than merely acting as a constraint on women's activities, may, in fact, be avenues for the activation of support networks between them. This finding makes a specific contribution to the literature on informal childcare arrangements (see Dyck, 1996; England 1996). It does this specifically by stating the conditions under which such support systems between women in informal childcare arrangements develop in informal settlements, and the positive aspects of these arrangements, like building solidarities, can encourage women to participate as community leaders. This idea is further analysed in Chapter 7, in the planning of the settlement, in which I build on this to analyse women's motivation to become community leaders, the solidarity amongst them and why they have been successful in working together.

Finally, childcare in solidarity fills a gap in material inequalities, as it focuses on the limited access to childcare, as well as the broader context of socio-spatial segregation of informal settlements. Childcare in solidarity, however, does not address the uneven responsibilities between men and women, nor between citizens and the state, as women remain the primary caregivers, and most of the responsibility lies on them.
I go on to examine feisty motherhood as a specific identity that emerges from mothers.

5.3.3 Conditions under which feisty motherhood emerges

In Chapter 4 (section 4.2.2) I argued that in Chile, women’s identity has been largely influenced by the Catholic Church and the state (Willmott, 1999), and restrained by social policies (Franceschet, Piscopo & Thomas, 2017). To make sense to the notion of feisty motherhood as a counter-narrative, it is important to reflect on the influence that the hegemonic narratives of gender and motherhood in the country have had in women.

Patriarchy has permeated at every level of the everyday life of pobladora women, and has defined the role of what it is to be a ‘good wife’, ‘good mother’ and a ‘good housewife’. The routines and precarious environment make it even more difficult for women to find alternatives to these roles (Valdés & Weinstein, 1989). These notions have always been prominent in Chilean culture, but were further reinforced during the dictatorship.

Marianismo

As discussed in section 4.2.2, an important aspect of women’s identity is marianismo - in opposition to machismo - in the Latin American culture. Historically, this has situated women’s and men’s attributes in opposition; if men are regarded as “strong, independent and dominant”, women are considered “weak, defendant and subordinate” (Dandavati, 2005, p. 26). Which has shaped a specific type of motherhood characterised by high levels of self-sacrifice and moral responsibility (Willmott, 2002). For most women in Chile, high sacrifice for their children is not questioned. Thus, they are omnipresence in the emotional and practical tasks of the house, and carry them out in full submission (Araujo & Martuccelli, 2012).

The notion of marianismo encapsulates women’s traditional gender roles and the strong value to motherhood in Latin America. However, a strong distinction between marianismo and machismo can lead to symbolic inequalities (misrecognition) of women’s social identity, as gender roles are heavily influenced by hegemonic cultural values and norms. As more women engage in productive activities, social movements and new laws open up opportunities and spaces to for
women to develop, a less fixed distinction between marianismo and machismo is developing in the country.

5.3.4 Feisty Motherhood

I argue that contemporary pobladora women have forge a specific identity through their daily reproductive practices. I called their identity feisty motherhood, as it summarises a particular identity of sacrifice of the settlement driven by their role as mothers. This notion builds on the idea that motherhood has been a strong way in which women in Latin America have validated their participation and identity, as discussed in Chapter 4 (section 4.2.3).

Feisty motherhood could be a way of questioning or challenging hegemonic discourses around women's identity, by redefining them through their discourses and actions. Resistance here is the process of defining themselves, trying to claim individual identity, separate to what others have labelled them – as poor, weak, less capable - and actively challenging those labels by defining themselves as responsible, strong and skilled. Even if this is manifested in small and constrained forms of agency, it is in the service of establishing a more autonomous and empowered self.

In Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.2) I presented two types of resistances, material and symbolic. Feisty motherhood refers to the symbolic resistance. This was defined as the renegotiation of meanings and subjectivities, which aim to challenge hegemonic notions of gender relations, which could result in subtle changes in discourses or in personal empowerment (Thomas & Davies, 2005a).

I argue that women's identity is forged through the routines of maintenance of home, and closely related to the territory. Women are constantly renegotiating their identity with themselves and others through their practices. This was possible to see in informal conversations, in workshops and in interviews, as they were regularly interrogating, testing and defining themselves while ‘doing’ their tasks. By analysing their reproductive practices, it was possible to locate three areas in which their identity is at play: i) In ‘being’ poor’, what it means and how it looks to be poor through practices of cleaning the house and others; ii) ‘being strong’, sacrifice and hard work through service-less housework; and iii) ‘being a good mother’, and the
anxieties of raising a good child in a ‘bad environment’. Feisty motherhood can be defined and understood by these three identity processes.

1. “Being poor”

A conflicting notion of what it means to be poor emerged, both challenged and reinforced by women’s housework practices. Having the house as clean and tidy as possible was very important. Frequent cleaning of the house (in some cases even obsessive cleaning), was explained first because of the material conditions of the settlement. Nevertheless, when asked again about the time spent cleaning, a sense of self emerges in these practices.

The strong relationship between what it means to be poor and the relationship with cleanliness is illustrated in Rosana’s statement:

I do the cleaning of the house every day, because you never know. Imagine someone comes, then you have to have your house clean (...). Because if they see your house dirty, they can think that you are dirty too, right? (Rosana, 40, MB).

The practice directly tackles a particular narrative women believe others have about them. As another dweller affirms:

Sometimes, people think that because you live in a toma, and because of the prejudice of the toma, you must be dirty and super poor. At least in my case, I try to save every penny to put it towards my house and to live better (Elsa, 37, FC).

For FC dwellers, what it means and how it looks to be poor was a pressing issue, more than for MB. It was a concern that both men and women expressed individually and collectively during the course of several months. They actively challenge the label of ‘being poor’, usually attributed to dwellers of informal settlements. As discussed in Chapter 4, they represent a new type of informal dweller.

33 Methodologically, this can be influenced by my presence in the households; nevertheless, the way to capture this was to ask about their routine and the time spent in each task. By noticing the time and frequency, there were follow-up questions to understand the reasons behind it.
Some women referred to themselves as “We are not campamentistas, we are called the posh of the tomas” (Estela, 33, FC). Here “campamentista” is an invented word, used as an adjective to refer as being from the campamento [informal settlement], with a pejorative connotation. However, effectively, and in the eyes of authorities, they live in an informal settlement like any other dweller.

Their different ‘status’ could be seen in their housework and care practices; heating systems for showers, personal water pumps and paying for private school, something that has not been recorded in informal settlements by Chilean academia. Dwellers in FC affirm that they are not necessarily poor, and that they live in the settlement because of a “housing condition” (as they have named it), created by the market and housing policy. By saying this, they redefine the causes for being poor. They position their status as ‘poor’ as a consequence of an unequal system, rather than as a consequence of their own actions (capitalistic/individualistic rhetoric around being poor as due to personal characteristics, discussed in Chapter 4 in section 4.1). As a result, they are putting themselves in a new position to better engage with authorities.

However, despite redefining themselves in this way, there are still elements in their identities which subscribe the dominant social narrative. The tension around not wanting to be labelled as poor results in direct discrimination against other informal settlements. FC residents stated that they “were not poor like the ‘poor’”, and that they are different. In that sense, classism is very present, both intra-settlement and inter-settlements, as well as between all the informal settlements and the city. Thus, they are trapped in the same narrative that they would like to challenge.

2. “Being strong”

The sense of accomplishment and pride that comes from the effort expended in reproductive practices supports a narrative of a more autonomous and empowered self. The repetitiveness and sacrifice of childcare and housework practices has forged a particular identity, primarily linked to women’s experience as mothers and pobladoras.

Their effort shows, first to themselves, and second to others, that they can maintain a home even in adverse circumstances. It challenges their own notions of who they
are and what they can achieve, as some of their insecurities have been fed over a continuous period of time by difficulties in their childhood, unsupportive partners, and a lack of opportunities in work or education.

For many dwellers in the settlement, this is their first chance to "practice" the creation of an autonomous home, or "doing home" as expressed by Bowlby et al. (1997). Many young couples start living as *allegados*, and thus the settlement is their first attempt at doing things on their own and not under the rule of parents, parents-in-law and any other extended family, or a landlord.

Women believe that their emotional and physical sacrifice in maintaining the house and the community have earned them the label of strong. This is particularly relevant for MB, as they have lived in the settlement for longer than FC. In the case of FC, although they recognise the need to be strong and many were discouraged by the difficulties of the first months and their lack of experience (has discussed in section 5.1.2), they have only lived in the settlement for only a couple of years, and do not have the pride of sacrifice that MB has.

During the photography workshops sessions in MB, many of them affirmed there was one point at which they wanted to leave, or quit, but due to their perseverance and endurance they have managed to stay. For example, Linda (40, community leader, MB) states, "We arrived in August and it was freezing cold, all I wanted to do was leave, but we couldn't because we were already there, we had to finish what we had started."

In this line, participants make particular reference to women that have separated from their partners and have decided to move out, making the point that even though some of them have also separated they have not left, because they have been strong and have manage the difficulties of the settlement, even without a man.

In reality however, this is not completely true, as they have all found a new partner and recognised that it is easier to live with someone else. What they are proving though is that their sacrifice, and the time they have done it for, makes them deserve to stay and settle on the hill. They affirm: "Not any woman can live in the settlement, you need to be strong" (Cristina, 60, MB). A sentiment that Carla complements during the session: "Many people have left. Many people cannot stand a separation;
at the end the only ones that are left are the strong women. The strong and the feisty stayed on the hill” (Carla, 45, MB).

I shared this notion with women in FC during the interviews. Elsa (37, FC) agrees with and gives an example,

As a woman you have to have courage to live here. At the beginning, I would be scared of the men outside my house selling drugs, but now I just shout at them firmly (...) it is my house and these are my rules, they cannot sell outside my house. You cannot allow men to intimidate you. If you do, you lose (Elsa, 37, FC).

The narrative of 'strong woman' is needed in order to survive in the settlement; this nurtures the idea that they are capable of anything if they work hard enough (or if they suffer enough). However, it does not allow for feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability and weakness, which usually tend to be lived, in parallel, and in a more private space.

The vision of 'strong woman' does not necessarily challenge their traditional gender role of housewife (in a relational aspect to men). But it does present, in the scope of their role, a specific type of woman that is relentless and fierce. Even in their role as housewife, it means a large amount of physical work, in a context of violence and precariousness.

In this line, it is possible to identify in some accounts, a process of awareness of their gender subordination, which could start challenging the gender division of labour by using the narrative of 'strong woman'. As Elena’s account shows, she separated from her partner because of domestic violence and built her own house in the settlement:

I’m a very feisty woman, and it is not because I say it..., but I have fought all my life. I do not need a man to be by my side (...) Sometimes I hear women say, “No, he works all day, he is tired, he should rest”. And what about us? We work in the house all day, I would even say that we work more than men (Elena, 57 MB).

3. "Being a good mother"

The image of a 'good mother' endorsed by the Catholic Church and the state promotes the idea firstly, that women should become mothers, and secondly that they should be present and responsible for the care and development of children
(Willmott, 1999). There is a strong Catholic influence in the idea of the heterosexual, biparental and married household. However, the figures show a very different reality. Chile is the country that has the largest number of births outside of marriage in the OECD (OECD, 2016), and poorer household are more likely to be headed by women than wealthier households (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, 2013b). This shows that motherhood develops in a morally demanding context, and being a good mother occurs under challenging conditions which can prove to be difficult and frustrating.

Women’s responsibility over their children is intimately related to the notion of “huacho” [abandoned] in the Chilean culture, which is the label for children that have not been recognised by their father, a widespread practice in the country and in Latin America. Showing that men’s non-commitment to parenthood has been culturally accepted for centuries. This situation had legal support in Chile until the end of the 1990s, as children that were not born into a marriage did not have to be recognised legally by their biological father. Particularly for low-income women, this has meant significant material and emotional effort, as single mothers have had to raise children on their own, in a context of poverty and discrimination.

For young (and older) women in different situations - either through unconsented or consented sex, planned or unplanned pregnancy - children are usually embraced and finally celebrated. Few educational or work projects for the future make the idea of becoming a mother an important project in itself, and in that sense motherhood acts as a way for young women to define themselves and participate in the social life that surrounds them. As one of the 17-years old women affirms:

At the beginning it was a surprise, my mum was not happy because I only have a year to finish school. But she also had me when she was young too. I think is nice to be a mother, to have my own baby, I can start my own life (Leslie, MB).

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34 Huacho (“abandoned, illegitimate, orphan”), is a Latin American term which refers to children without a father figure. The concept emerged from the Spanish conquest, in which children born between Spanish conquerors and indigenous women, remained with the mother and the father disappeared. The contemporary use refers to children which are not recognised by their fathers. Culturally and psychological the term encapsulates much of the Latin American culture of lost, motherhood, and roots. Sonia Montecino (2017) in her famous book written in 1954, “Madres y Huachos: Alegorias del Mestizaje Chileno” [Mothers and Huachos: Allegories of the mixing of races in Chile] analyses the term from an anthropological perspective, examining the central role it plays in the Chilean culture.
Childcare in solidarity was presented as a strategy adopted by mothers to better care for their children. The underlying notion is how to be ‘good mother’ in a ‘bad environment’. In Meth’s (2013) research on informal settlements in South Africa, the author refers to these feeling as “parental anxieties” (p. 537), she affirms that there has not been enough research on how parents experience parenting in informal settlements. For the author, the anxieties are linked to the risk that material conditions of the settlement (i.e. fires, safety) pose for children, as well as more structural elements such as crime and urban segregation. The author’s findings echo the anxieties expressed by the female participants.

Most of the time, raising ‘good children’ proves to be an impossible task considering the precariousness of the environment and the little control they have over it. It emerges as an indefinable and generalised fear of having their children ‘seguir los malos pasos’ ['Go into bad steps'] which is unfortunately rooted in a wider context of poverty and violence (i.e. low educational level, few work options, drug traffic), which is hard for them to control.

Social housing is perceived by informal dwellers as a more violent place, than the informal settlement. This is consistent with Pino’s (2015) findings in the informal settlements of the city of Valparaíso. In the case of FC, many of the people interviewed came from neighbourhoods that have historically been portrayed as social housing ‘ghettos’ in Santiago (i.e. La Victoria, San Bernardo). Thus, the option of living in the settlement is perceive as a safer living arrangement than the social housing where they previously were. Furthermore, as they arrive from more private living arrangements, they are positively surprised by how much time children can spend outside by themselves, as well as the communal aspect of childcare in the settlement.

In summary, feisty motherhood tackles symbolic inequalities around low-income women’s identity. As such, it redefines what women (gender) and more specifically, pobladora (class) can achieve in the context of the maintenance of the home. This strong discourse helps them with the task of protecting their children, and creating and maintaining an informal home. Although it does not challenge their roles as housewives, it presents them in a more empowered position, which could start challenging the gender division of labour by using the narrative of ‘strong woman’.
5.3.5 Home-making claims of housing and gender, and the space for recognition and redistribution

The previous sections characterised the two practices, have lay down the material and symbolic inequalities in which practices emerge, as well as the counter-practices that challenge them.

Each one of these practices points to specific claims. What types of claims are made through counter-narrative of feisty motherhood and counter-planning of childcare? What spaces are they opening?

The claims made through this set of practices refer to material claims of redistribution, as childcare in solidarity targets the gap in access to more and adequate childcare. Furthermore, feisty motherhood makes symbolic claims of recognition, by redefining women’s identity, and thus positioning women in a more empowered self.

Childcare in solidarity makes material and symbolic claims of redistribution and recognition. Childcare in solidarity makes a specific material claim, related to parents accessing better childcare services that adapt to their specific needs. However, it also makes a broader claim, related to being able to raise their children in a safer environment.

The claim of childcare, does not refer to a new issue, but to an entitlement that has not been fulfilled. As discussed previously, state childcare exists, but does not meet the specific needs of dwellers. Although the claim is not new, the practice examined tackles wider care needs; caring for multiple individuals (children and young people), and in different spaces, not just the in the individual home but in the neighbourhood. This indicates broader needs, as well as new ways of addressing the issue, which are not defined nor addressed by childcare policies, and which makes a call for a multi-sectorial approach to care.

These claims stem from the precarious socio-economic position of informal dwellers, in which the settlements (and the low-income neighbourhoods around them) suffer from evident material maldistribution of resources and misrecognition, in the form of urban and social segregation, as children grow up in a context with more urban violence, and fewer educational and job opportunities for young people.
Moreover, the responsibility of raising ‘good children’ in this environment relies heavily on women, highlighting the extremely unequal responsibility of care between mothers and fathers, and between low-income dwellers and the state.

**Feisty motherhood makes symbolic claims of recognition.** Feisty motherhood, on the other hand, makes a symbolic claim. As women redefine themselves as strong, instead of weak and submissive, they challenge hegemonic ideas of what it is to be a (poor) woman in Chile. They are proud of the sacrifices that they make in order to keep a house clean and functioning. It is a way of adapting to the challenging physical and psychological conditions of creating life in the settlement. And as such, women would like to be more recognised for their skills and contribution to the making of the home, through practices of preservation.

As a way of claiming a new identity, it does not challenge women's traditional gender role as housewives, but instead uses that role to redefine what women can achieve and how powerful they can be. The importance of this, is that the narrative of feisty motherhood is fundamental in mobilising women in more collective struggles, and thus, puts them in a more empowered position to make new claims.

How can practices of maintenance make claims?

The act of caring for children and young people in solidarity illustrates a way in which home-making practices can make new claims. Women perform collectively what they would like that men and the state would also do - having eyes on their children in private and public spaces, to make sure they are safe.

Although the practice is common, and women privately organise around it, they have not advocated collectively for more nurseries or, more generally, for safer spaces. As such, although the problem is recognised collectively and there are specific initiatives that reflect this (i.e. communal safeguarding, more and better public spaces for young people), it has not led to more organised action.

On the other hand, women feel stronger and feistier by doing hard work. The claim is based on the work that they do on an everyday basis. The practice is individual at first, but the narrative is created and confirmed collectively.
Conclusion

This chapter has analysed in detail two reproductive practices: care work in solidarity and service-less housework. The aim of this chapter was to explore the possible political function of reproductive practices in struggles for housing, unpacking the value and meaning of these practices beyond their practical function. More specifically, the hypothesis was that housework and care work can be a source of awareness of subordination in terms of class and/or gender. I have argued that this is an important lens through which to look at the political nature of housing practices, as these practices allow us to look at housing from the closer perspective of daily activities, relationships and emotions. By doing this, we can analyse a new space in which to look at the political nature of housing.

Through these strategies, women develop female-oriented strategies that maintain and reproduce the home and its members, through creativity and hard work. They have resourceful strategies to create home and deal with uncertainty and poverty. They use what they have available to help their children and families, and maintain the domestic space.

As such, motherhood emerges as a powerful identity and practice, which cannot be overlooked when analysing reproductive practices. The repetition and effort of the practices in itself contributes to a sense of place and place attachment to the hill, as well as in forging a particular identity, that I have named feisty motherhood. This contributes to the narrative of success, sacrifice, and struggle that they have all become part of since they started living in the settlement.

Finally, with regard to the main hypothesis of the chapter, practices of maintenance of the home are a source of awareness of their position of class, and to a lesser extent of their gender subordination. It manifests itself in daily successes such as washing clothes with scarce water, keeping their children out of harm's way and doing multiple tasks at the same time. Women have managed to continue with home duties, insisting on creating home, even under difficult conditions.
CHAPTER 6

Construction of the Home

“While a man can build thousands of different houses, a woman will always fight more for her one house.”

Estela, 33 years-old, Felipe Camiroaga

The previous chapter discussed childcare and housework, and its function in the maintenance of the home. This chapter focuses on a second group of practices, the construction of the home. The framework defines these set of practices as when material resources are put together as a way to organise space and provide shelter.

The aim of the chapter is to examine the function and meaning of self-help housing for women, as an entry point to understanding women’s experience of home-making. The chapter argues that practices of construction have a political function in providing women with safety and stability in situations where their partners, the state, or the housing arrangement cannot provide it, or actively and violently undermine it.
This chapter focuses on two specific constructive practices that affect women. The first is the construction of a solid house, which aims for a permanent housing solution in an informal context, which I have named building progressively towards permanent housing. The second refers to the creation of safer spaces for women and their children in violent situations, which is an exclusively female strategy, named creation of safer spaces.

Structure of the chapter

Similar to Chapter 5, this chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part introduces the practices and characterises them through examples and cases from women’s housing experiences. The second part analyses the function of the practices, its material and/or symbolic gains, and how they work together. The third section, discusses the specific conditions in which these practices emerge, discussing the role of self-help in this context. It looks at the political role of these two practices and how they can open space for recognition and redistribution in women’s housing and gender struggles.

6.1 Practices

In the two research sites, building emerges as a practice that is embedded in everyday life - the construction of a house is a routine - and as such, dwellers do not separate the construction process with the final house. This is because the house is never seen as a finished outcome, but one that is constantly being made. During life stories, all of the dwellers interviewed (21 men and women) affirmed that their house was not finished, and moreover they have a clear idea of the type of improvements they would like to make.

Thus, the practice of constructing emerges as a fundamental aspect of dwellers’ lives, not only because it provides shelter, but also, as it will be discussed, because for men and women it translates into greater control and security over the material and emotional aspects of their lives.

However, self-help construction impacts women in a specific way. As discussed in Chapter 2 (in section 2.1.2 and 2.2.1), female informal dwellers in the global South tend to have lower participation in the construction of the house due to male biases.
And as such, they tend to have a greater role in the maintenance of the home (Moser, 1987b, see also Chant 1984; Larsson 2001; Young, 2000). The maintenance of the home was examined in the previous chapter. This chapter, in turn, documents the ways in which women are involved in practices of construction and the value it has for them. The findings show that women do construct, mostly with the support of others, and are widely involved in the decision-making process of the design of the house.

The house, and its constant construction, emerges as a strategic practice for women to protect themselves and their children. Women’s roles as primary caregivers play an important part, as most of the construction is motivated by providing a better home for their children in a context of instability and, sometimes, of violence.

Practices of construction were mostly documented through life stories and individual timelines. Residents were asked to tell the story of how they got to their current house, and also asked to do a timeline which included personal events and to draw the construction of the house over time. Figure 37 illustrates four selected stories. These show the housing trajectories (Tell me how did you get here?) and the construction of the house (Can you draw how has your house changed since you got here?).

The timelines in Figure 37 show: the type of accommodation previous to the settlement (on the left), reasons of moving into the settlement (in red and white dots), household composition (family icons), and finally, in the bottom part of the timeline, the construction process of their current house, as participants drew it themselves (grey rectangle).

The information gathered through these two methods (life stories and timelines) showed that dwellers of FC come from more private types of accommodation (i.e. mostly private rent), while MB tend to be poorer households that have lived previously in other informal settlements. The reasons for moving into the settlement are usually related to episodes of drastic change or violence (i.e. domestic violence, discrimination, destruction of the home or impossibility of paying rent). In both settlements, the introduction to the settlements is through a relative or friend. The timelines show that the construction process differs widely between settlements. In the case of MB, the house construction is a slow and progressive process, making use
of any resources or the help they get (as exemplified in Figure 37, case A & B), while in FC the initial investment in housing is significant and thus, established in much less time (as exemplified in Figure 37, case D).
He wasn't going to move out, so I left with the children.

We used to live in another toma in Vílca del Mar, but it was in a gorge and after a flood we lost the house.

My sister who lives in MB told me about this house. It was only a wooden room, but it was a good start.

I lived as allegada in a few houses, but once we had our second child we moved to a toma, it is not that easy to live in other people's houses when you have two children.

A friend of my husband knew about these plots. The first months living here were very difficult, it was cold and we didn't have proper shelter.

Wooden house, 5-rooms, built in 16 years by Linda with help of NGO and partner.

A. LINDA, 40 YEARS-OLD, COMMUNITY LEADER, MB

Figure 37 | Housing Trajectories and Housing Construction
B. SOLEDAD, 60 YEARS-OLD, COMMUNITY LEADER, MB

"I used to live in Talcahuano with my husband and four children. We divorced, I left the house with my youngest daughter and ended up in Villa del Mar."

"I worked as a maid and lived in the house with my daughter. But they treated her badly so I left."

"We slept in the streets, on the beach, in parks..."

"They were going to take me my daughter because we were homeless, so I got a job cleaning and rented a little house at the bottom of MB."

"I started to see little houses on the hill and came to see if I could get a plot of land."

"As it was just me and my girl I built a shelter the best way I could, with tin and plastic."

"I built a small bathroom and a kitchen."

"In 2003, the military helped me build a second room."

"In 2007, the NGO helped me build another room that is now the living room."

"In 2013, my daughter moved out."

"I did this new water connection."

"They were going to take my daughter because we were homeless, so I got a job cleaning and rented a little house at the bottom of MB."

"It was either feed my daughter or pay rent."

"I started to see little houses on the hill and came to see if I could get a plot of land."

"In 2007, the NGO helped me build another room that is now the living room."

"In 2013, my daughter moved out."

"I did this new water connection."

"I built a small bathroom and a kitchen."

"In 2001, the military helped me build a second room."

"In 2007, the NGO helped me build another room that is now the living room."

"In 2013, my daughter moved out."

"I did this new water connection."

"They were going to take my daughter because we were homeless, so I got a job cleaning and rented a little house at the bottom of MB."

"It was either feed my daughter or pay rent."

"I started to see little houses on the hill and came to see if I could get a plot of land."

"In 2007, the NGO helped me build another room that is now the living room."

"In 2013, my daughter moved out."

"I did this new water connection."

"They were going to take my daughter because we were homeless, so I got a job cleaning and rented a little house at the bottom of MB."

"It was either feed my daughter or pay rent."

"I started to see little houses on the hill and came to see if I could get a plot of land."

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"They were going to take my daughter because we were homeless, so I got a job cleaning and rented a little house at the bottom of MB."

"It was either feed my daughter or pay rent."

"I started to see little houses on the hill and came to see if I could get a plot of land."

"In 2007, the NGO helped me build another room that is now the living room."

"In 2013, my daughter moved out."

"I did this new water connection."
PRIVATE RENT

"I rented a room in a house in Santiago. It was nice but once I got pregnant we couldn't live there anymore."

"When I called up adverts, landlords would either hang up or say they didn't rent to migrants."

"The rooms that we saw were not hygienic, not for a baby."

INFORMAL SETTLEMENT

"My partner's ex-wife knew about the settlement and put us in touch with the community leader."

C. TATIANA, 40 YEARS-OLD, PC

Left Colombia to find better work opportunities

Met her Chilean partner in Santiago

Pregnancy

"Once my partner and I were expecting the baby we started looking for a better place to receive it."

Discrimination / Quality of housing

"When I called up adverts, landlords would either hang up or say they didn't rent to migrants."

"The rooms that we saw were not hygienic, not for a baby."

"My partner's ex-wife knew about the settlement and put us in touch with the community leader."

"We built this room with materials we found, everything is recycled."

CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

First structure - 2014

Wooden house, 1-room, built in a week by Tatiana and her partner.
D. Elsa, 37 years-old, FC

**Military House**

"I lived with my husband and three children in a house provided by the military, as my husband worked there."

**Private Rent**

"I rented a house and moved in with my children."

"I had to work for the first time. It was difficult because I was constantly leaving my children alone."

"I stopped working as a maid because my children were resenting it... I could never see them. That meant earning less and thus, not being able to pay rent."

**Aleglam**

"We were all living in one room."

**Informal Settlement**

"My new partner’s family were living in the settlement, that’s how we heard about the plots of land."

"I took the money I had saved for social housing and asked for loans... With that money I bought the materials. My father helped me to build it."

"The father of my children filed for custody... in court they said that an informal settlement was not an adequate place to raise children."

"The new partner’s family were living in the settlement, that’s how we heard about the plots of land."

"I took the money I had saved for social housing and asked for loans... With that money I bought the materials. My father helped me to build it."

"The father of my children filed for custody... in court they said that an informal settlement was not an adequate place to raise children."

**Construction Process**

- **Bedroom - 2014**
  - "We were all living in one room."
  - "The were very cold during the winter."
  - "We've been now working on the inside, putting insulation etc."

- **House - 2014**
  - "We were all living in one room."
  - "The were very cold during the winter."
  - "We've been now working on the inside, putting insulation etc."

- **Start working as a maid**
  - "We separated after 13 years of marriage."

- **Before 2012**
  - "New partner had a child together"

- **2012**
  - "We were a whole year with an unfinished roof."
  - "It was six of us, we couldn't continue in one room!"

- **2013**
  - "Children live with her sister while she and her partner built the initial structure."
  - "Losses custory of her youngest children"

- **2014**
  - "With the second loan we were able to do another bedroom, the bathroom and the dining room."
6.1.1 Building progressively towards permanent housing

The first practice is building progressively towards permanent housing, which refers to the construction of housing through self-help, with the aim of acquiring a permanent housing solution. This is a practice used by male and female dwellers across both informal settlements. What makes this practice particular to the two research sites (and informal settlements in Viña del Mar in general, as introduced in Chapter 4), is not the fact that dwellers are constructing housing through self-help, as that is the case for informal settlements across the country, but that the final aim of the construction is to build a permanent self-help housing solution.

As discussed in Chapter 4, informal settlement upgrading, whether institutionally or informally by dwellers, has not existed in Chile since 1970s. It is therefore not possible to access formal housing by settling on a piece of land and building through self-help construction. Currently, the most common way in which informal dwellers access housing is through the whole-housing system subsidy, thus relocating into housing that has been built by the state or the private sector. However, in Viña del Mar, as the data collected shows, dwellers do not build temporarily with a view to applying later to the housing subsidy, but instead with the hope that they will be able to stay put in their own self-built houses. Figure 35, case D is a good example of this.

The permanent aim, although key for the practice, is not necessarily identified from the start. Due to the precarious housing situations which many of the women find themselves in before coming to the settlement, the permanent element of self-help housing is, at first, not as relevant as the immediacy and emergency aspect of self-help housing. In Figure 37, the reasons for moving into the settlement are illustrated by the red dots.

The construction of a house in the settlement is usually triggered by a rupture in a woman's life, with the aim of providing immediate shelter, while at the same time aiming towards a permanent solution. In some cases, these two conflicting aims (temporary and permanent) are conscious. This can be seen more clearly in the case of FC, where most dwellers - although their move was triggered by a pressing

35 Apart from uncomprehensive initiatives. For a full account of these initiatives, see Greene (2004).
situation - were interested in building more permanent houses from the start. In MB however, the realisation of a permanent house has been progressive, and have invested more and more in their houses over the years. This is a reflection of the different economic statuses and histories of both settlements.

The paradox between the emergency and the permanent aspect of the construction of housing is manifested in the decisions dwellers make about their houses. Many would like to stay, and thus invest in their house, although there is a minority who are cautious and do not invest in case they have to move out (or move within the settlement), as shown in the following examples. In both cases, as the findings show, the immediate and the permanent solutions respond to a woman’s need to provide housing for her children.

1. Emergency housing

All of the women interviewed in life stories identified a triggering moment in which they decided to move into the settlement in need of emergency shelter. Most of these referred to either separation, domestic violence, loss of their house due to environmental issues (i.e. flooding, earthquake), the inability to pay rent, the loss of regular income, an increase in the number of family members, a new relationship, or living as allegados (usually in overcrowded conditions).

Tatiana (40, FC) (see Figure 37, case C), had been in the settlement for less than a week when I interview her. Her husband and new-born moved from Santiago, where she says that the living conditions were not suitable for a baby, as they room they were renting did not have a bathroom and they could not afford anything better. Moreover, in most cases, landlords did not want to rent to her because she is Colombian. They heard of FC through a family member of her husband who is Chilean. They hope to become more established in the settlement and keep improving their one bedroom into a bigger house. Tatiana seems hopeful by seeing the improvements that other dwellers have made to their houses over these three years: “Informal settlements are different here, in Colombia the police would evict you immediately.”
Tatiana’s case is an example of the immediacy of self-help construction in providing shelter. Usually dwellers are able to collect materials and build a provisional house in a couple of days which can satisfy the immediate needs of a household.

Dwellers’ explanations for the initial construction of housing in the informal settlement can be seen in reference to what Bayat (2013) calls “moral justification” (p.58). The underpinning rationale is that the need for housing is more important than the existing norms and rules that regulate the housing market and subsidies. As Linda explains (see Figure 37, case A),

We decided to come and live here in these conditions because there was no other option! Maybe people say, “It was your choice to go to live there, you can’t complain”. I have been here 14 years, and it was not just because I had an idea, it was because I needed a place to live with my children, that is why I did it (Linda, 40, community leader, MB).

Entities such as NGOs (eg. Hogar de Cristo, TECHO), the municipality and local government (eg. Intendencia) support the construction of emergency houses by providing a mediagua, which is a 6x3m wooden house. This support aims to help dwellers’ immediate living conditions, but it is not intended to be a long-term solution. The provision of emergency houses is facilitated by authorities as a way of alleviating living conditions for the urban poor, and in many cases to support the narrative that they are dealing with the housing deficit. However, there is no official support to continue improving self-help housing (as it is illegal to build with solid materials in an informal context). In practice, however, the emergency housing provided is used by dwellers as the initial structure on which to base their future house. This could be seen in the timelines in which dwellers map the changes in the construction of the house over time, and the mediagua is maintain as the main structure.

2. Permanent housing

Progressive self-help is used as way of building with the aim of transforming the initial emergency shelter into a permanent housing solution. There are financial and material elements that show the will to do this, which indicate that although dwellers focus on having enough resources for the present, they are also simultaneously planning and saving for the future.
Financial mechanism

It is common, especially in FC where there is greater economic capacity than in MB, to ask for a monetary loan to construct a house. Informal dwellers usually do not have access to bank loans, so they get access to loans through work (which gets discounted every month from their salary) or through retail companies, which offer loans of small amounts of money at high interest rates. As a result, households usually have high levels of debt.

Previously living as *allegada*, Elsa (37, FC) (Figure 37, case D) decided to move to the settlement to have a more stable housing situation. The account shows the different economic decisions she made in order to build her house.

I went to ask for my saving account document at the Municipality, and told them I would not be in the waiting list for social housing anymore. By the time they gave it back to me that day, the banks had already closed. So I went the next day to the bank and took out all the money. I also asked for a loan through my dad, and we went to buy the construction materials (...) When we finished the rooms, and finished repaying the first loan, we immediately took out another loan. With that we did another room, a bathroom, and part of the dining room and kitchen (...) After the second loan, we went into a third one and that is the one that we are on now. With that we are finishing the roof, putting insulation into the walls, finishing the rooms, and I have to finish the bathroom. You can use it but it does not have a shower. You still need to warm water in a pot to clean yourself (Elsa, FC).

The detailed account of Elsa’s financing mechanism gives a sense of the timing and process of construction. She initially had 560,000 CLP (£600) in her housing savings account, and then took three loans of 470,000 CLP (£550) over a period of three years. This is a total of over 2 million CLP (£2,300) in materials, in contrast to 300CLP (£400) asked as a savings contribution for social housing (as shown in Chapter 4 in Table 9).

Elsa’s account also illustrates another recurring theme amongst dwellers, especially in FC: the use of savings initially intended for social housing\(^{36}\) to build in the

\(^{36}\) As a way to apply to FSV 1, each applicant must have a minimum saving of £400 approx. in a saving account. The Ministry of Housing and Urbanism in association with Banco Estado [State Bank] have set up a specific saving account for this purpose. Thus, is common that dwellers have a bank account even if they are not actively pursuing a specific social housing subsidy.
settlement. The decision indicates that they have eliminated the idea of acquiring a house through the housing subsidy, and instead invest their savings in a house that is legally uncertain. This new phenomenon of self-help through monetary loans, and investing the savings of the social housing account, has not been documented in Chilean academia before.

Construction materials

The second aspect of permanent housing is the materials used for the construction. One of the most distinct aspect of settlements in Viña del Mar (in comparison to settlements in the rest of the country) is the size and materiality of houses. Most households, determined by their own capacity to build over time, try to build progressively with more solid materials. Thus, initial materials such as wood and plastic (common in informal settlements across the country) have been changed over time to more permanent materials such as cement. As an example, the box below shows an extract of my research diary after interviewing Luis (53, MB). He lives in MB and despite the uncertainty (before the allocation of the pilot upgrading project), he and his wife decided to invest and build a brick house to replace his small, wooden house. He is clear about the reasons why he built with cement: “I think if we move to social housing my daughters could go into bad behaviours or get depressed.” (Luis, 53, MB)
Box 4 | Luis invested the family inheritance in the construction of their new house

“Luis built a permanent house a year ago, where he lives with his wife and two daughters (15 and 21 years old). Before this house, they lived in a 4 x 4m room on the same plot of land for 8 years. His wife received an inheritance and they decided to invest the money in the house. “After all the different versions that we have heard during the years of whether we can build something solid or not, we decided to do it anyways. We needed it for our daughters. The wind would shake the house and that is why we built one with bricks. I was not sure where to put it. At SERVIU they told me to put in the middle of the plot in case they would install sewage in the future. We invested everything that we had. I would lose everything if I had to move it or leave it”.

Research diary, March 2015.

Although building with cement is a widespread practice in both settlements, the decision does not come without apprehensions. For example, Estela (33, FC) justifies their choice of building with cement by stating that her family’s quality of life, even if temporary, is more important:

We know they can evict us at any moment, but we also have to ensure the wellbeing of our children and ourselves. For me that is more important than the material. We decided to invest, but for what? In order to live more comfortably. We are not going to live, overcrowded, in a one-room house, just because they can evict us at any moment. We are aware of the risk we are taking (Estela, FC).
Other dwellers are more cautious.

One day I heard that even if they sell us the land they will move us, and I was thinking “the concrete flooring, I will lose everything that I invested!” [...] So I told my partner, let's stop building for now, with what we have now we don’t get cold, and we already have two rooms (Rosa, 30, community leader, FC).

Linda, community leader in MB, explains why this has happened:

People are overconfident, we want to believe that we are staying here 100%, (...) the ones that have more money to build do so with solid materials. It all depends on the money you have. I haven’t done it. Apart from the bathroom, which is made of solid material, the rest is made of wood. I can’t risk losing what I have (Linda, MB).

These quotations show the context of uncertainty in which home-making develops, and the tension between pursuing a better living standard and the risk of investing resources that can be lost, if the land is not secured in the future. This fear is widely acknowledged but at the same time disregarded, as a way to avoid the mental tension that it produces. As a consequence, most households are constantly improving their houses in one way or another, to the extent possible.

3. Flexibility of housing

What makes these two characteristics of the practice possible - emergency and the permanent feature of housing - is the flexibility of self-help. As a flexible process, it allows multiple changes and can accommodate the unstable and fluctuating life of a household in the settlement. The flexibility of housing does not only relate to its progressive construction - in other words the consecutive construction from one established structure to the next - but also to its dynamism, in which parts of the house can be destroyed to build new or different parts, as a way of accommodating changes in the household’s members. From the examples provided in Figure 37, Elsa’s case (D) shows how she changed her initial wooden structure for a new house made of cement.

In Box 5 there is an extract of my research diary, which shows a specific example of how a new room was built in Linda's house (her housing trajectory was shown in Figure 37, case A), the times in which it was built, who built it, and why it was built.
The example illustrates the flexibility of self-help, in accommodating to new situation in a fast and versatile way, which are usually decisions taken by women, but finally executed by men.

As the timelines of the life stories revealed, the most common reasons for the modification of the house (extensions, building an extra room, upgrading the material) are personal events in the family, such as the birth of a child, family
members moving in or out of the house, and couples getting together or breaking up. This is then followed by ways in which to finance and construct these changes.

The flexibility of housing is closely linked with the findings in Chapter 5, referring to solidarity in childcare. The possibility of accommodating more people in the house allows women to keep family members close, in the same house or in the family unit, which in turn allows them to access the resources and support that are key to their survival.

The data presented shows how construction practices have clear gender implications, as building towards a permanent solution has particular meaning for women, creating housing stability in what is an already unstable environment, and providing a ‘permanent’ home for their children. This occurs despite or independent of men’s lives, and where other immediate housing options are scarce, difficult or non-existent.

The findings showed that self-help has allowed women who usually have limited housing options and little input in the design of their house a space to create and build the home they aspire to. For many, this is the first time that they will have had a house for themselves - as they will have usually previously shared with other households - and is therefore an exciting and empowering situation.

Linda’s story (in Box 5) about having built a new room in the house when she got back with her partner is not an exception, as it is more common that men do the construction, even in the cases in which couples are separated. The men who usually build the houses can be either the woman’s partner, extended family, friends, or in some cases, a paid builder. Even in cases when women do less of the physical construction, they have control over design and construction decisions. As Rosa points out,

> It has always been my dream to have a house with a second floor... The house is done according to what I like. Maybe the spaces could have been distributed better, but I don’t care, this is how I wanted it (Rosa, 30, community leaders, FC).

Although less common, some women constructed their whole house by themselves. This was mostly the case for single mothers who have a lower income or, in some
cases, fewer social networks in order to access support from others. As Elena’s (57, MB) case shows,

After the earthquake in 2010, my house had some problems. It did not have firm foundations, so everything moved. It is all constructed by me, and my daughter helped me do the trusses. In that time, I did not know how to make trusses, so I asked a neighbour and he made me a model, and with that I did all the rest. My daughter helped me make them, and we did the roof.

In the case of FC, where men and women have less building experience, there is a renegotiation of roles, as Estela (33) affirms: “Here we divide the work equally, it is not that men do more work. We all arrived here without knowing a thing, but we had to pick up the tools and learn.”

Most women are skilful and know how to construct, especially in relation to access to services, as they have to maintain pipes and other elements during the day in order to continue with their daily tasks. As Estela explains,

For example, yesterday, all the women had to go out because men were at work, and we had to deal with a stream of water that was flooding the road. We had to make a gutter so the water would pass on the side and would not flood the houses (Estela, 33, FC).

Women state that the acquisition of a permanent house is more important for them than for men. A diverse range of women, single and married, younger and older, stated that men can move from one family to another, thus from one house to the other, while women cannot because they have to care for their children. As Estela affirmed during the life story, “While a man can build thousands of different houses, a woman will always fight more for her one house,” (Estela, 33, FC). I repeated this quotation to other participants, men and women, to see if it resonated with other dwellers. All of the women agreed, for example, Rosa reflected further on this in her life story: “Men can grab their things and leave, women can’t do that, not if you have children” (Rosa, 30, community leader, FC).

The lack of freedom women feel has clear implications for their housing decisions, as they have had to put their efforts into their current house, with the aim of making it a permanent solution. As Isabel (34, community leader, FC) affirms, “If I didn’t have children, I probably would not be here, I would be somewhere else. But I feel the need to provide for them and give them a better life than the one that I had.”
As discussed in the previous chapter (section 5.3.4 “Being a good mother”) men's non-commitment to parenthood has been culturally accepted, and thus increase women’s responsibilities in raising children. Thus, the construction of the house is intimately linked with a woman’s reproductive role as a mother. Motherhood shapes their housing options and decisions. The qualities of self-help housing allow for immediate shelter, to provide a better place to raise their children now and in the future. Additionally, the personal value of the self-help house for women comes from the possibility of giving their children a better quality of life, in which home ownership (or stability) is key.

However, although this is a general feeling among women, some men also felt insecure regarding the stability of the home. Tomás (25, FC) reacted similarly to the women when he heard the statement. He lives with his partner and her children. Because they are not his children, he feels apprehensive about the housing arrangement. He states, “Sometimes I feel insecure ... you question why are you fighting so much [for the house] when I might end up with nothing. I just think about that ... If in the future my partner and I separate ... she might throw me out of the house, although for me this house and the family are everything.” Men who live on their own also showed similar concerns, but in regard to the state. The housing policy, and other benefits, do not consider households that do not have children. Manuel (50, FC) is gay and lives on his own. “I like it here, for the first time it is something that is mine. But I know I won’t get a subsidy because they don’t give them to single men”. These quotations show that in certain cases, men also experience concerns about the stability of the home they are creating.

I turn to the second construction practice, which refers to a specific female strategy to deal with the attack to the home and body.

### 6.1.2 Creation of safer homes

More than 40% percent of women interviewed refer to domestic violence as one of the reasons behind moving out of their previous house and moving into their current house in the settlement\(^\text{37}\). This number is higher than, but consistent with the national figure, which states that 25% of low-income women reported physical

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\(^{37}\) 41.6%, 5 out of 12 women interviewed in life stories. It was also mentioned by women in photography workshops and in informal conversations.
violence by men during 2017 (Ministerio del Interior, 2017), and the worldwide figure of 35% of women who experience any type of violence (UN-Women, 2017).

Considering that domestic violence was not actively interrogated in the research, the number of women that refer to it gives an indication, first, of how widespread domestic violence is, and second, how present the strategy of moving out of the violent home is, in comparison with other strategies that could emerge to deal with domestic violence.

Although I explore violence against the home through the specific cases of domestic violence, the research also understands violence in a broader sense, and not only circumscribed to the private sphere. As discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.2.1), violence and care in the built environment emerge as two sides of home-making. The concept of domicile (Porteous & Smith, 2001) and home-unmaking (Baxter & Brickell, 2014) explores the destruction of the home through diverse practices of violence.

In the case of physical violence, this is related to the most intimate aspects of the home and body. In this case and according to the data collected from women, violence was mainly expressed in the domestic space as a result of machismo, a woman’s economic dependence on a man, and alcohol or drug abuse. It was also expressed as part of a complex system of poverty and precariousness, with specific material and spatial manifestations in the house and settlement.

However, and despite the constrained environment in which women operate, women find tactics that help them negotiate unequal power relations with men. For example, there were accounts of women denying sex to their partners as a tool of negotiation. “If I see that he is being difficult with money and I’m not getting the minimum I need to buy the groceries, then le corto el agua [I cut him the water]” (Rosana, 40, MB), which is a Chilean expression that refers to cutting the ‘supply’ of sex. Another tactic women made reference to was to threaten to move out of the house: “I have told Carlos, if he does not bring money, then I will not be in the house anymore, and he will not have anyone to cook for him and prepare his things” (Myriam, 42, MB).
These quotations show how women negotiate uneven relationships with the power that they have, mainly with their bodies, or making reference to their traditional gender roles. The ‘bargaining’ (Kandiyoti, 1988), is made by threatening the role of housewife (“not be in the house to cook and take care of her husband”) or lover (“fulfil their responsibility as a wife”). Women seem not to be afraid to create tension in their relationship in order to get what they need. This could suggest that women, even in constrained environments, are able to identify cracks and use the resources available, even when it means mobilising their traditional gender roles, instead of challenging them.

In the following section, I discuss the particular tactic women use to deal with domestic violence, by leaving the violent home and creating safer spaces. The spaces that are created can be temporary or permanent, material or symbolic, to resist acts of violence against themselves, their children and the home.

1. Temporary safer homes

Even if it is for short moments, women create safer spaces that allow them to feel protected. There are two example that show women doing this.

Soledad (60) is the founder of a housing committee in MB, and as such she was one of the first to arrive to the settlement. She tells the story of a woman with two children who arrived in the first year, and was running away from her abusive husband:

Most of the hill had already been prepared, the plots of land were ready to move in to, and although she was one of the first ones to arrive, and could thus choose any plot, she didn’t want any visible spot. She chose the lower part of the hill. She would sleep hidden between the trees under a plastic cover with her two children so that the husband wouldn’t find her (Soledad, MB).

Soledad also tells her own story of when she lived on the street before arriving to the settlement (see Figure 37, case B). She would sleep on the beach and would wrap her 4-year-old daughter in her arms: “I slept on the street with my daughter, on the beach. In the night, I would wrap her in my arms so she would fall asleep.”

These two cases show mothers creating a home with just a plastic cover or their arms, to protect their children from the outside world. These brief spaces of home
serve directly to counteract feelings of anguish and fear, and thus provide a temporary safer home for their children and themselves.

2. Permanent and material safer homes

Women in the settlements also create permanent and material safer spaces. When talking about how they got to the house they live in now, domestic violence appears as an important underpinning cause. In some accounts, domestic violence was stated explicitly as the main reason behind moving out and in to the new house, while in others it was subtler and indications only appeared when women felt more comfortable during interviews or workshops.

In most accounts, women found it impossible to make their partner leave, meaning the only way to stop the physical violence was to remove themselves from the physical space and create a new one, often starting from zero, literally building it from the ground up, as Linda (40, MB) affirms: “This was never going to end. If I didn't leave with the children, he was not going to stop.” Linda left her husband and house in the settlement to start again in a smaller house:

I had a very bad relationship with my husband, and the kids would suffer a lot because of that. I was depressed, I was in bad shape, and I lost my job (...). From one day to the other I decided to come here [to the new house]. I found a room in another part of the settlement and I came. I left my beautiful house, and I came here. It had 2 rooms and a small space for the kitchen and bathroom. The rooms didn't even have any kind of insulation, but there was peace (Linda, MB).

With the help of her sister who also lives in the settlement, Linda has been able to significantly expand the initial 2-room house into a 4-bedroom house with a living room/dining room, a new bathroom and a large kitchen. As was mentioned in the first section, she has got back together with her former husband a few times, and he has helped with the construction of new rooms in the house (see Figure 37, case A & Box 5).

The ‘escape’ of the house has the ultimate aim of enabling women’s “goals to create safe, adequate, and long-term homes for themselves and their children,” (Tutty, Ogden, Giurgiu & Weaver-Dunlop, 2013, p. 1514), rather than only secure their
immediate safety and protection. In the cases identified, most of the women moved from one house to another in the same settlement.

The new house in the settlement provides a ‘fresh start’, even if it is in very precarious material conditions. The new start is accompanied by a new sense of self; more autonomous and with higher self-esteem and self-evaluation. As is seen in the following examples, the construction process of the house in itself emerges as a restorative psychological process, as mental and physical energies are put into having a new and better home.

When talking about re-starting their lives, women used the construction of the house as an easier and less painful way to refer to the psychological process of re-building themselves after the abuse. When dealing with a traumatic situation like this one, Bernarda (52, MB) during the photography workshop, instead of talking about her feelings, talks in an emotional way about the process of constructing her new house: “Little by little you build, and build”. She used the physical construction of the house as a way of explaining how she dealt with it emotionally – as if taking control over the physical materials of the house allowed her to take control over her own life again (see Figure 38).

Photography proved to be a better medium for discussing domestic violence than interviews or group discussions, especially for women who still felt very vulnerable.
“This is my house from the outside and the one on the side is my son’s. This is the most important thing for me. I started gradually, doing the bathroom. I made the living room, I put the floor in and it has a nice kitchen. I still need to put in insulation. It has been a lot of effort, but gradually it will get finished” (Bernarda, 52, MB). **Source:** Bernarda, MB.

Elena (57, MB) used to live in another settlement very close to MB. In her words, she thinks that everything that she ‘lost’ by leaving her house she won by leaving the relationship. Since then she has not seen her former partner, nor gone back to the house. She reflects about the change in her life:

Being with him was a bad decision, but when you realise that you prefer to leave everything you know, it shows what a bad situation you are in. I said to myself, “I’m going to lose the plot of land, I’m not going to have any support [from a man],” but I wanted to do it anyway. That is what brought me to this settlement. Looking back, it was a good decision because my self-esteem was destroyed. It was something very chaotic, full of bad, bad decisions (Elena, MB).

In other cases, the new house is not only a fresh start, but a peaceful way of ending. Cecilia and Victor, both in their 70s, moved to FC a year ago. Cecilia suffered from domestic violence when she was in her first marriage in her twenties, as well as psychological abuse from her family. She was the oldest of 11 siblings, and was not allowed to go to school, so she could take care of her siblings while her parents worked. She does not know how to read or write, and thinks that some of the...
hardship in her life is due to the lack of opportunities she had growing up. When talking about their current house, Cecilia refers to it as a peaceful place where she can retire. “This is the most important house that I have ever had, we are calm here.”

The accounts of women of different ages, most of whom have children, show first that domestic violence is a common reality for many women in the settlement. The specific strategy of moving out shows the importance of creating a new home where women feel safe in the short and/or long term. The flexibility that the settlement provides allows women to stay in the same area or community (if that was what they preferred), offering a less disruptive housing solution, as they do not need to leave friends, family or neighbours. However, in many cases the difficulties of continuing to live close to their former partner remained.

These two practices illustrate ways in which practices of construction play a fundamental role for women. The accounts show that self-help housing has an important redistributive element, as women are able to access their own housing not only due to the general housing deficit linked to their class status, but also in specific cases of gender violence. Through the emancipation of women to a new home, issues of recognition emerge, as women gradually recognise the value of their lives and are willing to defend their bodies and their homes from a culture that is mostly machista.

6.2 Analysis of Material and Symbolic Gains

Building progressively towards permanent housing

As it has been presented, the creation of a permanent home through land invasion and self-help is a strategy for women to access housing in an affordable way and, most importantly, on their own terms. The aim of transforming emergency housing into a permanent house through self-help, through the use of cement and new financing mechanisms, is what distinguishes this practice from informal housing practices in other parts of the country.

The need for emergency housing is configured in the first place around their identity as pobladoras. It is initially triggered by the need for housing due to their low-income status, as they cannot afford any other type of accommodation in the city.
However, it is also triggered by their identity as women, particularly as mothers, who need immediate housing to provide shelter for their children.

The practices show the different roles that women and men have in the construction process, in which men tend to build and finance the house, while women hold the decision-making power over the design process. This includes decisions around how the house is built, and the practical needs of the home, in conformance with the imaginary of an ideal home (i.e. Detached house, two floors, a big gate etc.). Exceptions in which women have built their own houses are mostly in cases of women that have escaped their previous home because of domestic violence. In the case of FC, because men and women have less experience, the roles are renegotiated in front of a new situation and they tend to both build in the same way.

The practice occurs mainly at the household level, as it is individuals or families that build a house on a given plot. However, there are specific moments during the construction process in which neighbours and extended family support the construction.

The practice has certain limitations. The tension between the risk of building more or waiting until there is more certainty in relationship to the land presents a constant dilemma. For households that have constructed permanent structures, those structures have significantly increased their quality of life; increasing the size of the spaces, providing more peace of mind by not paying rent, allowing them to live with extended family and an increased support network. The permanent construction is not only a way of accessing better infrastructure for the household, but is it an evident statement of the (collective) wish to stay put. However, if it is not possible to obtain title deeds in the case of FC, or the house needs to be moved in the upgrading process in the case of MB, most households that have made significant investment will see themselves in an even more precarious situation, as all their resources and physical efforts that have gone into the construction of the house could be lost. It can particularly affect those in more vulnerable positions, for example, single women.

Creation of safer spaces

Creation of safer spaces is a practice which allows women to leave the violent home, and build a new, safer space. The practice is unique, in the sense that the settlement
provides flexibility and accommodates for this type of situation on a permanent basis. In contrast to the alternative, which would be to move in with relatives or find a public shelter home. This practice is formed around their identity as women and mothers, against an attack on the home. The strategy stems from their awareness of being exposed, vulnerable and in immediate danger from their partner.

The creation of a safer home is a practice that occurs at the household level, in the private sphere, but which is addressed at the settlement level. As the cases examined have shown, women find support and a new house in the area by moving out of their house and building a new one with the help of friends and/or extended family. The movement between territorial scales shows the continuum between the home space and the community, and thus the use of the public sphere to deal with gender violence. This echoes Whitzman's (2007) findings on the strategies used by low-income women who, in contexts of violence, find safety in communal spaces. However, the finding differentiates with Whitzman’s research, as although women move in territorial scales and draw on the options they have at the settlement level, they essentially, by building a new house, build a new ‘private space’ in which to feel safe.

For some of the women, this strategy has been successful, and by moving to a new house, they have found the peace and autonomy that was previously impossible. However, many women who initially escaped a violent relationship in the settlement, did get back with their partners at some point. This shows that safety is fragile, cyclical and dependent on the emotional, constructive and economic status of the new home. Women acknowledge that they go back to unhealthy relationships because they need the economic support, the constructive capacity of men or just because they ‘feel lonely’.

Others, although they have not got back together, still do not feel completely safe as their abuser still lives in the same area. This reflects their vulnerability and the structural difficulties of emancipation. Although the feeling of safety was temporary and not permanent, removing themselves from the space was at least significant for escaping the immediate threat, as well as in building their self-esteem and sense of autonomy in the new home.
**Practices together**

The two practices presented here complement each other, as many women who suffered from domestic violence in their previous house, left it to find a safe space in the settlement, and start a new life by constructing a new house which could be more permanent housing solution.

However, these two practices can also act in opposition, as the desire for a permanent house can undermine the desire to move out, as by doing so, women would lose the possibility of acquiring a permanent house. This was seen in the cases of Linda (MB) and Elena (MB), who both had lived a considerable amount of time in their houses. They considered what they were leaving behind, before making the decision of leaving the initial self-help house, as resources, effort and time invested in the construction of the house are extremely significant in this context. This is why many women stay in arrangements that do not suit them emotionally, but do make the possibility of accessing housing possible. For example, in the case of MB, where the list of households that are participating in the upgrading pilot project is set, there is less flexibility for moving out and into a new plot of land in the same settlement.

The next section identifies the broader material and symbolic inequalities in which these practices emerge, and how can counter-practices navigate this scenario.

### 6.3 Discussion of Conditions for Social Change

The chapter has introduced two specific construction practices which are important for women: progressive construction of permanent housing through self-help and the creation of safer spaces to escape violence.

Chapter 5 looked at the practices that maintain the home and its members, and their political role in struggles for housing. This chapter, on the other hand, examines construction practices through self-help, as a strategy to deal with material and symbolic inequalities. This section analyses the practices in relation to the research questions. First, it analyses the conditions in which current gender and housing inequalities take place, and how these home-making practices are a reflection of these inequalities. And second, it looks at how can these practices, make claims of
recognition and redistribution. The first finding refers to how dwellers are providing an alternative way of acquiring and constructing housing. The second finding looks at how women create safer spaces to protect themselves from violence.

6.3.1 Conditions under which permanent housing through self-help emerges

Self-help emerges as a strategy to cope with the lack of emergency and permanent housing of the market or housing policy in the city. In Chapter 4 I introduced the characteristic of the housing policy and the housing landscape, here I look at them in more detail, in relation to self-help.

1. Housing market

There are three aspects that obstructs dweller's access to private housing, as showed in the fieldwork. These are: financial mechanisms, either related to paying rent or accessing mortgages; discrimination in the rental market and the bad condition of housing available (as identify by dwellers during interviews); and a dominant ideology of homeownership over renting in the country.

Renting privately and buying a house through the housing subsidy (with a voucher from the state) are the most common ways in which informal dwellers have access to private housing. As dwellers affirmed, many of them have rented either a room or an apartment privately in the past.

According to dwellers in FC, the way that the housing market works has directly affected their ability to access housing, as they cannot access bank loans due to the risk they represent to the banking system. This is an option that they have considered because many households do not comply with the very low-income status needed to apply to the social housing subsidy.

Private rent, on the other hand, poses evident difficulties for dwellers who do not have a regular income, as it demands a monthly payment. For example, Linda (40, MB) affirms that, “I knew I could make a one-off payment to build a room, but I would not be able to sustain a regular rent payment”. Moreover, as Valparaíso and Viña del Mar are touristic areas, there is higher demand for housing during the
summer period (even for low-income housing, as people come for seasonal jobs during the summer), which affects the price of rent and availability.

In this sense, living in the settlement represents an affordable and more secure living arrangement than renting, as Elsa (37, FC) affirms:

> It is such a relief to wake up and go to bed not having to think, ‘I don’t have money to pay the rent, where can I get it from?’ Before it was the 28th of the month and I knew I had only 3 more days to get the money, it was so stressful … Now I’m happy with my house, even if it is in a toma (Elsa, FC).

Not paying rent can not only help satisfy the aspiration for affordable housing, but also other aspirations such as education. For example, Mauro from Perú purposely lived in the settlement in order to pay for his course at the technical university, and now that he graduated, he does not live in the settlement any more. As such, it can be a strategic decision that allows dwellers to achieve in not only housing, but in other aspects of their lives too.

In Chile, there is no social rent scheme and rent is not regulated by the state. Many dwellers who used to rent found difficulties, not only maintaining a monthly payment but also in the type of accommodation available for the amount they can afford. These included material conditions as well as restrictions in the number of children, and in some cases discrimination. For example, in the case of Tatiana who is Colombian, “I couldn’t call to ask about the room, because the minute they heard my accent they would not rent it to me”. And the rooms that they could afford were “not hygienic and not suitable for a new born, some of the rooms didn’t even have a bathroom” (Tatiana, 40, FC).

In addition to its logistical obstacles, renting in Chile is not seen as a permanent solution, as the idea of home ownership is strong, not only for the low-income population but in Chilean society in general (Cummings & Dipasquale, 2002). As a result, households often try to access permanent housing, but as they cannot do so through the private sector, the only alternatives are social housing, or in this case, informally.
2. Social housing

Although many dwellers have accessed accommodation through the private market, social housing is the most likely way to access more permanent housing solution and most dwellers will have experienced social housing in one form or another. Most will have lived with a family member in social housing, rented in social housing, lived in an area with high concentration of social housing or visited friends and family at some point. No one in the settlement is a stranger to social housing.

In Chapter 4 (section 4.1.1), I explained the different housing subsidies, and also discussed the historical and contextual reasons that have led to informal dwellers current rejection to social housing. More specifically, there are several reasons that explain why dwellers are not actively pursuing these subsidies.

The reasons are mainly around issues of eligibility and availability of the housing subsidy, and construction standards of social housing. Other aspects of social housing are discussed in the next chapter, in terms of planning, social and collective aspects.

**Availability and access to social housing:** In the last years, the application processes for housing subsidy have been simplified both as online applications and in allowing individual as well as collective applications (in the case of those who may prefer to apply individually). Despite that, in the case of Fondo Solidario 1, [Solidarity Fund 1] the process can be long and difficult. Although there are no official figures, dwellers state that they have been on waiting lists for years without any tangible outcome. The available options are not ideal either. In the region, social housing is usually not located in the cities of Viña del Mar or Valparaíso (Zuñigo & Hidalgo, 2009).

The subsidy Vivienda Usada [Used Housing] requires users to find a house on the market for the amount of the voucher they have received. This proves to be difficult as it relies on the availability and cost of housing on the market. The problem tends to be that once users receive the voucher, they have a limited time to find a house that complies with the characteristics defined in the subsidy.
Eligibility: These specific subsidies are targeted to the lowest socio-economic quintile. It is measured through the Ficha de Proteccion Social, and dwellers need to have under 14,000 points. A widespread problem, particularly in FC, is that they do not qualify to the subsidy as most households have a higher score. Dwellers also made reference to the difficulties of renewing or updating their score once there were changes in the household, as the municipal process tends to be slow and bureaucratic.

Another problem of eligibility is that those dwellers who have already received a subsidy in the past are not allowed to apply again. The same goes for individuals or those that do not comply with the eligibility of the subsidy.

Constructive aspects: Many dwellers, especially men, do not approve of the material structure of social housing, which they attest to interviews as using cheap materials that affect its insulation and privacy (5 of the male interviewees work in construction of social housing). Residents have very little or no participation in the design and the size of the house. Usually they tend to be apartments in high-rise buildings, which do not fulfil the dominant idea of owning a detached house. Usually 2 or 3 bedroom apartments are not big enough for actual sizes of families, and are not flexible enough to accommodate changes in the family composition.

As this section shows, there are material and symbolic inequalities in terms of housing. The maldistribution of housing, is further deepen by the difficulties that low-income dwellers experience in accessing housing in the market (e.g. accessing bank loans or affording private rent) and state housing (e.g. eligibility, long waiting lists and difficulties in the application process). In addition to the misrecognition of specific needs and aspirations of low-income dwellers (e.g. accommodate numerous family, aspiration of homeownership, housing standards), and in some cases even of discrimination towards other nationalities or prejudice towards poorer households, denying access to housing.

38 It was not possible to access participants’ scores officially at the municipality, as they are private information. However, most participants know their score and many had records of their current score and were shared on an individual basis.

39 A common problem has been dwellers that received social housing during the first years of the policy, or not even a house but a caseta sanitaria [site and services] they are not able to apply. Unfortunately, the housing options delivered in the 1980-1990s were a lower quality and many dwellers abandoned or sold them to go back to informal settlement.
6.3.2 Permanent housing through self-help as a housing strategy

*Self-help* is an alternative way of acquiring and constructing housing, in opposition to the logic of the housing market and housing policy. This form of acquisition is affordable, democratic and unbureaucratic.

Despite the historical precedent of self-help in the city of Viña del Mar discussed in Chapter 4, self-help as a way of building has been disregarded in the city (Arellano, 2005; Vildósola, 2004). This has also been in the case at the national level, after the introduction of the current housing policy in the 1980s. The practice currently addresses the difficulties the urban poor have in accessing housing in the city, and explicitly challenges the ideology and operation of the housing policy, as will be further discussed in the next chapter.

The process of self-help housing in informal settlements responds to a unique logic of construction which is different to the regular phases of building a house on the market, or through the whole-housing system (Turner, 1976). It is important to keep in mind that self-help housing goes against Chile’s planning regulations, thus by doing so they challenge the established norms and rules. In order to build a house, dwellers require permission to use the land and a construction permit from the municipality. The municipality approves all construction in the borough, which is based on three planning instruments; Master Plan (*Plano Regulador*) done by the municipality, General Law of Urbanism and Constructions (*Ley General de Urbanismo y Construcciones*), and General Law of Urbanism (*Ordenanza General de Urbanismo*), both defined by MINVU.

The findings show that the construction process in the two research sites is continual, dynamic, adapts to the needs of the household, and is not confined to an early phase of the building process. Figure 39 illustrates the logic of self-help housing in comparison to the private housing market and to the housing subsidy.
As it was shown by the examples in this chapter, dwellers experience the stages of the construction of the house simultaneously, as there is no clear boundary and timeline between the planning, design of the house, construction of the home and the inhabiting of the home. In the figure, this is illustrated in the section “Self-Help” through the presence of the resident (in black) in each of the phases of construction. It also shows that self-help allows for dwellers to access housing immediately (house symbol), as it was discussed in the previous sections. The investment in the house is done in relation to the different moments in which the house is upgraded and depending on the resources of the household (symbol of an arrow). In the case of MB where there is upgrading scheme in place, municipal and housing authorities and private constructor will have a later role in formalising the area (grey and red symbols).
The other two examples in the figure, show the access to housing through the private housing market and through housing subsidy. In the former (Figure 39, see “Private Market”) the stages are: the planning of the house by authorities (i.e. building permissions) (red symbol), design by an architect (yellow symbol), construction by a private company (grey symbol), the purchase of the house by the future resident (black symbol) and later inhabitation (black symbol). The payment of the house starts from the moment of purchase, usually in the form of a mortgage with a private institution (symbol of an arrow). In the later example, last (Figure 39, see “Subsidy”) the stages are planning by the municipal and housing authorities (i.e approval of housing project) (in red), resident applies to housing subsidy (in black) paying a minimum saving (symbol of an arrow) and then the design and construction of housing is commonly done by a private company or municipality (in grey), and then inhabiting. The figure illustrates the different logics and the opportunities that self-help brings for informal dwellers.

The examples identified in the characterisation of the practices, shows that self-help has specific qualities in this context:

1. Open-ended process: Although building is typically a male realm, the informal and progressive nature of self-construction has opened a space for dwellers in general, and particularly women, to participate more in the construction itself and take control over the housing process. As such, allowing a redistributive element in terms of access to more housing, particularly the possibility of women of acquiring housing.

2. Adapts to household needs: Self-help allows for more a flexible approach to construction and can accommodate any changes in the composition of the household. It also operates to their own rhythm of time and resources. Recognising dwellers specific needs and aspirations.

3. Stability of building/living: The nature of self-help as a constant process of building gives stability (or at least a sense of stability) and control to dweller’s lives. As interviews showed, the control gained by building, through a sense of

40 John Turner (1976) states that one of the most important aspects of self-help housing is the control that dwellers have in the process, in comparison with social housing. The lack of control can undermine dwellers' personal wellbeing and fulfilment.
purpose and a material goal, channels other anxieties and uncontrolled situations in women's lives. This was particularly evident in women suffering from domestic violence. The housing policy does not support this way of building, taking out a fundamental aspect of control for dwellers not only in the constructive process but as a form of living.

4. Stability to raise children: By providing a ‘permanent’ house, women find a place to provide a better life for their children, in the present as well as in the future.

In summary, self-help tackles material inequalities, around the conditions in which housing for the urban poor are established and also, symbolic inequalities by gaining control, ownership and recognition of their own skills and needs.

I go on to examine creation of safer-spaces.

6.3.3 Conditions under which creation of safer-spaces emerges

As examine in Chapter 4, gender violence in Chile emerges in a particular context of a machismo (and marianismo) culture and a current domestic law based on a conservative patriarchal ideology. The existing social programmes are mostly reactive and focus on the victims – with no consistent programmes directed to men. However, feminist social movements in Chile (and Latin America) have been pushing for changes in the law and to change the machista culture, with direct implications for gender relations and a more supportive environment for women.

1. Machismo culture and violence

A conservative approach to domestic violence has perpetuated a machista culture that is widespread in the country. In a survey by Instituto Nacional de la Juventud (INJUV) [Youth Institute dependant of the Ministry of Social Development], young people in Chile attribute domestic violence in the first instance to alcoholism, and in the second to “machismo in the Chilean society” (INJUV, 2016). As discussed in the previous chapter (section 5.3.3) The consequences of a machista culture in Chile are
reflected in the expectation that women remain submissive (*marianismo*), while men express superiority and even violence with pride (Dandavati, 2005).

2. Gender violence legislation

Drawing from Chapter 4, although domestic violence law was one of the first gains for feminists after the dictatorship, it was passed using a conservative approach in which it is the family unit (and not the victim) that is protected first by the law. By putting marriage before women’s safety, feminist activists in Chile affirm the law has given the message that women should ‘be patience’ and men should ‘behave themselves’ (Haas, 2010, p.111), thus normalising men’s behaviour and ignoring women’s rights. This could be seen in women’s accounts, as Linda (40, community leader, MB) recalls, "I knew that when he would get drunk I needed to be quiet or far away because if not, I would pay the consequences”.

Some changes have been introduced recently: the incorporation of femicide to the law in 2010 (Law N° 20.066, 2010), thus classifying a woman’s death at the hands of her partner as homicide, which makes the penalties of the intrafamily law more severe; and the creation of the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality41 in 2015 (previously it was a service dependant of the Ministry of Social Development), which is a significant first step in safeguarding women’s issues, as well as mainstreaming it to other ministries.

Furthermore, a new bill was presented in November 2016 calling for “The right of women to a life free of violence” with the aim of changing the current intrafamily law, by introducing a new project that would act as an umbrella for all types of gender violence, broadening the scope and understanding of violence, and framing it as gender violence in the private, as well as in the public sphere. If approved it would radically change the conception of gender violence and further the protection of women.

However, this is not only a gender issue, but also one of class. In the cases that women do decide to make legal complaints, those on low-incomes find it more difficult than wealthy women, as navigating the legal system, hiring a lawyer and

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41 Website http://www.minmujeryeg.cl/
issuing a formal complaint can be expensive and complicated. In Richard’s (2004) research with pobladora activists in Chile, the author recognises this problem:

For poor women, they said, it was often better not to issue a formal complaint, not only because they did not have the financial means or external support to live anywhere but with their batterers until the process was concluded (Richards, 2004, p. 94)

3. Social programmes

As seen in the case study, housing options, either emergency or permanent, are key to safeguarding women and children’s immediate safety. There are two programmes at the national level. There is emergency accommodation called Casas de Acogida [Shelter homes] which provides short-term housing solutions for women with children under 12 years old, as well as food, legal support and therapy. There are 40 of these in the country (Ministerio de la Mujer y Equidad de Género, n.d). The shelter homes tend to be difficult to access and priority is given to the most severe cases.

There is also an existent agreement between MINVU and SERNAM since 2008 (MINVU-SERNAM, 2008) to prioritise housing subsidy for women that have suffered domestic violence, through the housing subsidy FSV CNT or Used House. These are the same subsidies that informal settlements can access, and in the case of domestic violence, the condition of being in the lowest quintile is not considered, so that women of any income can access the benefit. The program specifically targets the difficulties in acquiring housing once women move out of a violent relationship, as the agreement document acknowledges;

MINVU commits to provide preferential access to applications to the Programme of Housing Subsidy for women victims of intrafamily violence, that best fits to their current condition, and thus contribute to overcoming conditions of housing deficit experienced prior to entering the “Casas de Acogida” administered by SERNAM (MINVU-SERNAM, 2008, p. 2, author’s translation).

The agreement represents the significant intent to mainstream gender issues through collaboration with other ministries, in this case with the Ministry of Housing and Urbanism.

The authorities involved in the agreement acknowledge that it is a common strategy for women to leave the house, removing themselves from imminent danger while at
the same time putting themselves in an equally vulnerable position of homelessness. As the director of SERNAM affirmed in their website,

Many women, in order to break from violent relationships, have to leave their house with their children, and that means not having a place to live. In this context, the agreement is pertinent because women manage to reintegrate to the borough, in a place free of violence (Maria Graciela Corvalan, Ministerio de la Mujer y Equidad de Género, 2014)

The region of Valparaíso has been the most active region in assigning housing subsidies to women in these situations, and between 2008 and 2016 it has given 67 subsidies (MINVU, 2016). However, the numbers are still low in comparison to women that suffer domestic violence in the country. For the application process, women need to show they are victims through a document or sentence from the corresponding court, as well as having passed through a Casa de Acogida first. In addition, the assignment of subsidy does not indicate that it would guarantee remaining in the same city, as Valparaíso region already has low social housing provision. Remaining in Viña del Mar seems like an unlikely option.

The existing social programmes have focussed mainly on women and are mostly reactive. There have been initiatives of preventive programmes directed at men, but these have been scarce and ineffective42 (Maravall, 2016).

The housing programme is important when analysing the strategies that women use to deal with domestic violence, as it shows the importance of providing permanent housing, and having a specific programme in place. However, the low quantity of housing provided by the state, in addition to the informal conditions in which women live, make it difficult for women to claim for this entitlement.

4. Social movements

This feeling of frustration peaked in 2016 with the South American social movement “Ni Una Menos” (“Not one More”), triggered by the death of young women in Peru.

42 In 19991 a few rehabilitation centres for men were introduced. During Michelle Bachelet’s first mandate (2006-2010) the “Red de Centros Oficiales” was created, which continued during Sebastián Piñera’s government (2010-2014), with the aim of helping violent men to be reinserted into their normal lives. However, no preventive programmes are in place. In 2012, SERNAM introduced a preventive programme for men called “Programa Nacional con Hombres que Ejercen Violencia de Pareja”. Although it is open to anyone, only those men that have a court order have attended (Maravall, 2016).
and Argentina. This brought the issue of gender violence into the public sphere through massive street demonstrations in cities across the continent (BBC, 2016).

Since 2016, feminist social movements in Chile and in Latin America have been raising the issue in a more overt and public manner. In Chile, there is general political frustration from civil society, as cases of femicide have increased in recent years\(^\text{43}\), and the perception is that gender violence has not been given the priority it deserves.

The following quote is from one of the dirigenatas of MB. She wrote this on social media after a femicide case in Viña del Mar, when a young mother was found dead and her child with hypothermia, in an area close to the settlement in August 2017:

> Today, the TV news gave priority to the political candidates. For me, it should be the death of a young mother. She asked for help, and the justice system did not hear her. I think the candidates should worry about this and work to change the judicial authorities so women don’t wait a day longer. Unfortunately, the candidates forget about these stories and they don’t do anything once they are elected. [...] We are the ones that should be putting on pressure to make a reform in the law. I’m extremely frustrated by the death of this woman in Miraflores. She asked for help saying that she could die, so what else is there to do, wait for more women die to do something? (Victoria, 60, community leader, MB, in August 2017 through Facebook with open access).

Victoria’s quotation reveals a frustration with the political system, holding politicians accountable to prevent the death of more women.

Domestic violence in Chile stems mostly from symbolic inequalities, linked to the misrecognition of a woman’s value in a machista culture, and in the state, that has protected the idea of the ‘nuclear family’ over women’s safety. Material inequalities can be also seen in limited access to shelter home and permanent housing that women can receive through state programmes.

\(^{43}\) Even with the new Law of Femicide, the cases have continued to rise from 40 in 2013, 40 in 2014 and 45 cases in 2015 (Ministerio del Interior, 2017.)


### 6.3.4 Safer spaces as a female housing strategy

*Safer spaces* can be small spaces of agency in a precarious environment and within a system that fails to protect women effectively. The practice of creating safer homes suggests that women, despite uncertainty and the threat to their bodies, persist in the creation of a home for themselves and for their children.

The concept of ‘counter-spaces’ or ‘safer counter-spaces’ have been used in the literature to refer to cases of state or domestic violence. Shalhoub-Kevorkian’s (2006) uses the term counter-space (p.113) to refer to Palestinian women who, under military attack from Israel, create homes from the rubble by inventing sleeping places and cooking in the middle of ruins. The author uses these examples to demonstrate the way in which women resist, often not with violence but through the maintenance and nurturing of the home. Similarly, Whitzman (2007) uses the concept of safer counter-spaces (p.2724) to refer specifically to cases of domestic violence. The author discusses the way in which women use public space and services to escape from isolation and fear inside their homes.

I take these notions to define *safer spaces* as the strategy used by women to provide an alternative space from the violent (or non-existent) home, either temporarily or in the long-term. The findings suggest that safer spaces is a strategy to escape violence, isolation, fear or any threat to the body and mind. Using the resources available at the settlement level, women create a new private space for themselves and their children. Thus, it distinguishes from Shalhoub-Kevorkian’s (2006) findings as women do this not only in the maintenance of the home, through practices of cooking or cleaning, but in the actual construction of a new home. And it distinguishes itself from Whitzman’s (2007) findings, as although women leave the private space to look for safety, they find safety in a new ‘private space’.

Safer spaces as a women’s strategies emerges as an efficient way to deal with a pressing situation in the context described. The agency is expressed by taking control over the abusive situation and leaving the home. When a woman decides to leave the house, what she is doing is dissolving the relationship to save her life, against what the law tries to protect and her responsibility as housewife. The practice allows her to create a new space that is safer to rebuild her life, as well as maintaining social networks and location in the city. This is in line with Whitzman’s
(2007) recommendations, in which women should be able to stay in their same community (if they wish to) to avoid the risk of homelessness and relocation.

However, the practices do not deal with the prosecution and rehabilitation of the aggressor and support for the victim(s), as the victims usually do not press charges or follow the legal procedure. This can perpetuate women’s vulnerability, and it is a clear sign of the distance between the legal system and women in informal settlements.

The strategy of women in the settlement is to “occupy” a new space to feel safe and provide new accommodation. The practice shows individual actions supported by others in the community, however there are no indications of more collective organisation around the issue. Other examples from feminist groups in civil society using individual occupations as a collective strategy is the case of the social movement Sisters Uncut from London (UK). Who occupied an empty flat in a council estate in 2016 to create a temporary safe space for women suffering from domestic violence, as well as a way to advocate for more and better housing accommodation for women that escape gender violence.

However, as shown in several cases, relationships with abusive men do not have a clear ending, and the process tends to be cyclical. At least half of the women that moved out had got back together with their partner at some point, as they felt they needed help, support or money. Domestic violence in informal settlements responds not only to household inequality, but to the physical conditions of housing and to a wider system of precariousness characteristic of the settlement, which reflects issues of vulnerability, insecurity and urban segregation. This has implications for the notion of home, as it is presented as both “hell” and “heaven” at the same time. As such, stability and safety in the settlement are in constant negotiation.

Safer spaces is a strategy that tackles material inequalities by providing a practical and tangible new space which feels safe. It also tackles some of the symbolic inequalities, by allowing women to take control over the situation, and recognise the value of their lives by putting themselves in a new and more empowered position.

44 Website www.sistersuncut.co.uk
6.3.5 Home-making claims of housing and gender, and the space for recognition and redistribution

The previous sections characterised the two practices, identified the material and symbolic inequalities in which practices emerge, as well as the practices that challenge them.

Each one of these counter-practices points to specific home-making claims. What types of claims are made through self-help and the creation of safer spaces? What spaces are they opening?

**Practices of construction make material claims of redistribution.** The home-making claims made through this set of practices refer mostly to material claims of redistribution, as self-help and safer spaces target the gap in the provision of housing, as such both practices aim to secure housing, on a temporary or permanent basis.

These home-making claims do not necessarily refer to new issues but to entitlements that have not been fulfilled. In the case of housing, the difficulties are manifested in the application process, the availability of housing and the general conditions in which social housing takes place. In regard to domestic violence, although there is a domestic violence law, *pobladora* women find it difficult to navigate the bureaucratic system, as well as their own shame produced by a *machista* culture.

Although the claims are not new, the practices examined offer new solutions to these issues. This is evident in construction of the house, as that which is valued in self-help is not an option within the current social housing policy – i.e. housing that is located in the city, that is flexible and adapts to the needs of the household. This also refers to safer counter-spaces, which offer immediate, unbureaucratic access to shelter on a temporary and permanent basis, and in which women can live with all their children (not only the younger who are allowed into shelter homes) and maintain their support network.

The material claim stems from the precarious socio-economic position of informal dwellers, caused by the material inequalities of maldistribution and misrecognition of housing for the urban poor. As has been examined, the claims emerge from
specific conditions in which private and social housing do not offer adequate or affordable housing for informal dwellers.

**Practices of construction also make symbolic claims of recognition.** As we have seen in this chapter, the maldistribution of housing does not impact all informal dwellers in the same way, as women are more affected by this material inequality. This is because the acquisition of housing plays a fundamental role in the survival of women and their children, not only as temporary and permanent shelter, but in the creation of a safer home to escape violence.

Although the main home-making claim is material, as both practices aim to acquire housing, the creation of safer homes also refers to a **symbolic claim of recognition**, as violence stems from a position of inequality between women and men. This is manifested in the power and control men exert over women’s bodies and homes.

The creation of safer-homes implies that women take back some of that control and make decisions for their own benefit and safety. By putting themselves in a new physical, but often also a more empowered position, they shift the previous power dynamic in the relationship.

*How can practices of construction make claims?*

The creation of safer spaces illustrates the potential of practices to make claims. In the delicate context of domestic violence, which manifests deeply not only in a physical but also psychological way, the act of taking control over the situation by removing oneself from the violent environment and building a new house is a powerful assertion.

Although the practice is common, women have not organised collectively around gender violence. There are no known initiatives which address this issue at the settlement level. This suggests that gender violence still remains a mostly private issue. This can be explained by the multiple constraints that women face from everyday *machismo*, as well as prejudice around gender violence, distance from the legal system and insufficient social programmes or appropriate laws. At a personal level, even when there are feelings of empowerment through taking control of the situation, it was also combined with shame of past events and the uncertainty of what might happen in the future (given the evident economic and emotional
difficulties of total emancipation from their partner). This context could explain women’s difficulties in organising more collectively around this issue.

However, even when gender violence has not become a collective struggle, there are signs of self and collective awareness that rose during the fieldwork. The accounts of women, especially in the context of the photography workshops, in which women told their experiences to one another, and the more they told their story, the more acceptance and willingness there was for other women to tell theirs. In addition, Victoria’s (60, community leader, MB) declaration on social media about the pressing nature of the issue, this gives a first indication of the awareness of women in the settlement of their position of subordination to violent men, their self-worth, and ultimately the need for change. In other words, even when the claim is not voiced collectively as a gender issue, it is practiced as a gender issue.

Furthermore, although building a house (as counter-building or safer counter-space) is an individual practice, the construction of housing is widespread, acknowledged and organised collectively. The final aim of acquiring permanent housing is clear and socialised within the community. The more dwellers build, the clearer and stronger their collective aim to stay put becomes.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has presented two practices regarding the construction of self-help housing, arguing that building progressively towards permanent housing and the creation of safer spaces tackles unstable housing arrangements and the insecurity of housing in contexts of violence.

This chapter has shown how agency is expressed through practices of construction as a way for dwellers to fill a gap where the state has either failed or been inefficient. Although it is not always ideal, in self-help, dwellers have found a source of relative security and control over the built environment and their lives.

The chapter shows how individual housing practices has political role in the creation of home, which does not only refer only to the material construction (and thus the possibility of acquiring shelter) but creating a sense of control in the life of informal dwellers, in particular to women.
The informal and progressive nature of self-construction has opened a space for women to participate more actively in the construction process and also allowed them to secure a house for themselves and their children, independent of their partners, and ultimately provides more stability than other housing arrangements.

This chapter, looked at the construction practices mostly at the household scale, but has not addressed how the coordination of the construction of housing (and services and communal areas) take place at the settlement level. It also discussed the role of women in construction of housing. Chapter 5 through the concept of feisty motherhood introduced some of the collaboration and networks between women. The following chapter (And last empirical chapter), by building on the findings of Chapter 5 and 6, analyses the planning of the settlement and the role that women have in the process.
CHAPTER 7

Planning of the Home

“If you move in to social housing, you lose your married life, peace of mind, your privacy ... they isolate you”

Isabel, 34, community leader, Felipe Camiroaga

The two previous empirical chapters discussed the maintenance (Chapter 5) and the construction (Chapter 6) of the home. Specifically, Chapter 5 discussed how women deal with housework and care work in a context of material precariousness, and Chapter 6 examined the progressive construction of housing and the creation of safer spaces as a way to provide stability and safety for women. In doing so, the chapters discussed the political functions of practices of maintenance and of construction.

This chapter, in turn, builds on both chapters to discuss the planning of the informal settlements and the collective action led by women. In section 3.3.2, I defined the planning of the home as the practices of organisation, planning and acquisition of collective outcomes towards housing. These outcomes can be tangible, such as
infrastructure, or intangible in the forms of specific housing claims. These actions are organised in a collective manner.

The two practices examined in this chapter are planning by dwellers and female organisation. The first practice refers to the ability of dwellers to shape the urban space of Viña del Mar by planning settlements that effectively host 1,000 households. The planning includes the definition of land uses, size and allocation of plots, the creation of roads and points of access, the connection to services and the creation of communal spaces. The second practice refers to the material, organisational and emotional effort women make to organise the settlement on an everyday basis, alongside the long-term vision of a permanent housing solution by navigating the politics and policies of the region of Valparaíso. The chapter argues that planning practices reflect the vision that dwellers have in transforming the settlement in a permanent solution, as well as the new spaces for participation and representation that women are claiming through the organisation of the settlement.

Structure of the chapter

Following the structure of Chapter 5 and 6, this chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part introduces the practices and characterises them through examples and cases from planning practices. The second part analyses the function of the practices. The third section presents the specific conditions under which these practices emerge, discussing the role of planning and organisation in this context, and looks at how these practices can, in the form of planning practices, open space for recognition, redistribution and representation in women’s housing and gender struggles. In contrast to the two previous chapters, this chapter also discusses issues of representation.

7.1 Practices

Practices of planning were identified through group discussions and collective timelines with community leaders. Life stories with female community leaders were useful to understand women’s life events that led them to engage in the settlement’s organisation, as well as a private space to discuss women’s feelings towards the role of community leader, and their work in relation to male community leaders and authorities.
7.1.1 Planning by dwellers

Figure 40| Aerial view of Manuel Bustos – planning by dwellers

The image shows the top south part of MB (Housing Committees Villa Las Americas and El Esfuerzo). It outlines some of the public amenities dwellers have planned and built – a church, playground, football pitch, community centre and the main road that goes around the whole settlement. The planning has been taken into account for the upgrading pilot project. Source: Author in collaboration with Lautaro Ojeda

The planning of the settlement takes place in parallel with and in support of the construction of housing examined in Chapter 6. Some aspects of planning occur before houses are constructed as a way to establish the blueprint for the settlement's development. As such, most founding members plan the settlement carefully and strategically with the aim of turning it into a place that is both inhabitable in the present and can be a consolidated neighbourhood in the future. Other aspects, however, are reactive and emerge as needs develop and resources become available. What makes this practice distinct is the long-term vision of consolidation and the principles that guide the planning process. The practice is characterised by three elements: strategic land invasion and assignment of plots, access to services and construction of roads, and communal infrastructure and appropriation of space.

Group discussions and timelines with community leaders allowed for the identification of the main planning practices. Figure 41 is a representation of the
timelines done by each settlement, summarising the main events of housing and planning. Although each settlement has had different trajectories, it was possible to identify patterns between the two timelines. I have grouped these patterns into four main planning phases of the settlement: Foundation, Formation, Consolidation and Permanent housing solution. The timeline shows the level of development of each informal settlement and their organisation.

The first three phases were present in both settlements (Foundation, Formation, Consolidation), and the last phase (Permanent housing solution) only in MB, as it has a formal housing solution. The phases are distinguished mostly according to the level of construction of housing and the access to public amenities and services. The timelines showed that FC has had a quicker constructive development, mainly due to the aim of making the settlement a ‘permanent’ place to live, and the significant initial investment of dwellers (in only 4 years). On the other hand, MB has made slower progress, with the progressive construction of housing (over 20 years), which has, however, allowed them to gain better community and political experience, and securing an upgrading pilot project.

Figure 41 [Fold-out] | Timeline: Housing and Planning of MB and FC

(See next page)
TIMELINE: HOUSING AND PLANNING OF MANUEL BUSTOS AND FELIPE CAMIROAGA INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

1998 - 1999
- First families arrive to MB
- Start working with TECHO

2000 - 2001
- Constitution of Housing Committees
- Organisation across housing committee, spokesperson for MB elected.

2002 - 2003
- Start working with TECHO
- Minvu expands, as new housing committees are added.

2004 - 2005
- Aug.-Sept: First plots of land "Cemetary": Plots with crosses of family name
- Sept: Change name from Vista las Palmas to Felipe Camiroaga

2006 - 2007
- Jul: First meetings to organise land invasion
- Cadastre

2008 - 2009
- May: March to Senate
- Informal settlements across city
- Cadastre

2010 - 2011
- May: March to Senate
- Informal settlements across city
- New organisation as MB, new spokesperson elected.

2012 - 2013
- Dec: Agreement MINVU-GORE. Formalization of upgrading project
- New community leaders, plots are reassigned to families that live permanently

2014 - 2015
- Pilot project approved
- New community leaders, plots are reassigned to families that live permanently
- New organisation as MB, new spokesperson elected.

KEY
- Manuel Bustos
- Felipe Camiroaga
- Foundation Phase: Founding members invade land, first houses are built.
- Formation Phase: Construction of housing and informal access to services, roads and amenities.
- Consolidation Phase: Construction in more permanent materials, consolidation of public space and amenities. New residents 'buy' houses.
- Permanent Housing Solution Phase: Formal housing solution coordinated with authorities (e.g. social housing, in-situ upgrading).
- Starting date of the settlement

Source: Author (Data gathered through timelines and group discussion with community leaders of MB and FC)
1. Strategic land invasion and assignment of plots

Soledad (60), founder of the housing committee *Acogida 2001* (MB), was encouraged to move into the area by seeing that "(...) little houses were appearing on the hill every day". Soledad invaded in the area of Achupallas in the early 2000s, adjacent to the other housing committees who had settled in 1998. The aggrupation of 18 housing committees formed what it is known today as the informal settlement of MB.

*Figure 42| First years in MB*

Soledad’s personal pictures taken in 2000. *(Left)* Shows the hill mostly inhabited. *(Right)* She made her house herself from tin and recycled materials. It was then extended with the help of the army that built a wooden structure. *Source: Soledad’s personal collection*

Soledad’s housing committee researched information on the landowner before invading and went to the *Ministerio de Bienes Nacionales* [Ministry of Land and National Assets] in the regional government to see a map of the area.

> There we saw that this land was identified as ‘protected green area’, and higher on the map it said it was from the ‘army’ and ‘privately owned’. So, after seeing this, I decided our housing committee should stay in the ‘green areas’ and no house should be allocated further up, as it would be less likely to get evicted *(Soledad, MB)*

The quotation indicates the use of local and institutional knowledge by dwellers, in order to make an informed decision of where to invade. Previous research in Viña del Mar (Urquieta, 2004; Vildósola, 2011), also shows that informal dwellers go to public offices to inquire about landowners, as there is a common understanding that
if land is public, there is a greater chance of formal acquisition of the land in the future.

Although most previous research of informal settlements in Viña del Mar points to this type of land invasion – what Vildósola (2011) calls land invasion by aggregation, a silent process informed by the knowledge of founding members - FC shows a different form of land invasion which was organised and commodified by ‘land brokers’ (as shown in Figure 41, Foundation Phase).

I refer to land brokers as the leaders that initiated and organised the land invasion with a clear aim of profiting from the (informal) sale of the plots without the intention of living in the settlement themselves. According to dwellers interviewed, the land brokers held informational meetings in a community centre in the neighbourhood adjacent to the current settlement to explain how the land invasion was going to take place and the value of the plots of land. This is an unusual land invasion for the city, as they tend to be organised by dwellers that would like to live there.

According to the interviews, on average, FC dwellers paid 300,000 CLP (£350) for the plot of land to the initial ‘brokers’. Estela (33) from FC explains why she paid for the plot;

At the end, the need is more important and you pay for the land. Even when you know that it does not have a title deed, and it’s not signed by a notary, you don’t have anything that shows that you actually own the land, but still you think “I may end up with nothing if I don’t pay this,” so you buy it anyways (Estela, FC).

The quotation indicates that dwellers understand the precarious conditions of the land arrangement, but they choose it anyways as the alternative of not getting a plot of land is worse. The fact that dwellers pay for their plot also suggests the hope that it is going to represent a more permanent solution in the future.

Different to MB, the land in which FC is located is mostly private. Dwellers themselves only became aware of the landowner in 2013 (2 years after the land invasion) when they received a lawsuit claiming, ‘theft of land’ by the landowner. No more legal actions have taken place since then, which could indicate that this was done as a way to leave a record that the land was invaded, without immediate
intention of eviction. The silence that followed the lawsuit has generated expectation among families that they can stay on the land, as Estela (33, FC) affirms. "If they would have wanted to kick us out, they would have done it when we received that lawsuit in 2013, but nothing has happened. We know the lawyer, and he has not said anything". More on the relationship between private landowners and dwellers has been discussed in Chapter 4 (in Land market – the role of private landowners and investors in the development of low-income housing), in which I argue that there seems to be a silent collusion between the different regional actors, as those involved are aware of the speculation of land with informal settlements, but ignore it.

In both settlements, independent of the form of land invasion, the selection of dwellers operates very similarly. Dwellers need to be recommended by someone or show an urgent need for housing (i.e. priority is typically given to single mothers or families with children). In both settlements, dwellers had to occupy the land immediately and maintain their presence. If dwellers are not occupying the land or building a house, the plot may be reassigned to someone else. This is as a way of assuring that all the plots are been used at their full capacity and that people are not taking a plot without needing it. This is not only a preoccupation of community leaders, but of everyone in the settlement, usually enforced in the Formation Phase (see Figure 41).

Rosa (30) community leader of FC, explains what happened when she arrived: “You had to put a cross and a Chilean flag and come to clean the plot (...) you have to be working on your plot, if not they would take the plot away from you". Rosana (40) is from MB, she did not pay for the plot but had to show she needed it. She arrived in the settlement when there were already a few houses and she wanted to get a plot. She did this by coming every day and sitting on the land to show community leaders she needed it.

My niece was checking a piece of land and one day she told me ‘Why don’t you come and see one for you?’. Every day, when Carlos was at work, I wouldn’t say anything to him, and I would come... I would leave my daughter at the nursery at 8am and at 8:30am I would come with my [other] baby. And I sat here for hours. I did that every day for 2 months (Rosana, 40, MB)
The quotations show the importance of the use value of housing in both settlements, even in the cases where there is profit in the sale of the land, indicating an intricate co-existence between exchange and use value.

Community leaders play an important role in the first stages of the settlement, in assigning plots and selecting dwellers. However, this changes with time, as once all the initial plots of lands have been assigned there is no clear assignment policy for the new dwellers who move in to already constructed houses. The process becomes more private, leaving leaders with less control of the overall process (Figure 41, Consolidation Phase). However, new dwellers still need to go through community leaders in order to join the housing committee. Being in the territory but not being a member of the housing committee can be problematic for dwellers - as they will not be included in any future housing solution that the committee organises.

One example is of new dwellers that have arrived to MB who are allegedly drug dealers, and tend to not engage with housing committee organisation. According to community leaders of MB the arrival of these type of new dwellers has distorted the “informal housing market”.

There are people who have sold their house for 4 to 5 million CLP (£4,500-5,500). If in order to apply to the subsidy you need to save 700,000 CLP (£800) maximum, who would pay that amount for something informal?! It is only people that prefer to be in the settlement, as it is more removed. The ones that pay that amount are drug dealers. We have been talking to authorities to make these people leave (Victoria, 60, community leader, MB).

Although the presence of drug dealers has increased in MB in the last 5 years (as affirmed by community leaders and as it was possible to observe), new dwellers who have a better socio-economic position have also been paying more to move into the settlement. In MB, houses have been selling for the last few years, and when dwellers leave, the new ones that arrive pay a higher amount. Before this phenomenon, the usual economic transaction between the dweller that was leaving and the one that was moving in considered the costs of the physical structure as a way to compensate for materials that had been bought. Now however, dwellers affirm that there is an increasing informal housing market and houses are being sold for high prices considering their informal nature (i.e. no title deed and no access to services). The following sign (Figure 43) shows a house that was offered for
$2,300,000 (£2,600). I found the sign in a shop in an adjacent consolidated
neighbourhood, which shows the intention of capturing the interest of people
external to the settlement.

**Figure 43| Poster advertising a house in MB**

![Poster advertising a house in MB](image)

Translation: "House for sale: 1 big room, living rooms, dining room, “American kitchen” and
bathroom. It is located in the *tomas* [informal settlement] of Villa Independencia, Viña del Mar!".

**Source: Author**

There are divided opinions amongst dwellers on whether housing and land in
informal settlements can be commodified, firstly because they do not own the land
and secondly, because in both settlements there is a sentiment that use value of the
land should take precedence over the possible exchange value of the house and land.

As Estela (33, FC) argues,

> I don’t understand the people that invade land for a living - they
> invade a piece of land and sell it on to someone. I think they should
> be ashamed of themselves. They want to take advantage of
> something that is not theirs, they sell the land and the land is not
> ours, it belongs to SERVIU, everyone knows that here (Estela, FC).

This phenomenon has intensified in MB, as the upgrading project has made the land
more attractive and other residents see this as an opportunity to access cheaper
housing that will eventually be formalised. Authorities are aware of this issue, and
community leaders are worried that more people arriving may put the upgrading
project at risk. Together they have developed a strict household list for the
beneficiaries of the upgrading scheme, which was created in 2013. However, this
new phenomenon suggests that there is a wider housing problem in the city, in
which it is not only the poorest who are trying to access housing through upgrading,
but also a wider low-income group.
2. Access to services and construction of roads

As well as distributing plots of land, housing committees plan roads and access to the settlement, which are extremely important as the topography limits dwellers’ mobility.

Where main roads are possible, they are planned to be between 8m and 10m wide, as a two-lane system for cars to access, and this is clear in both settlements. In addition, the main intra settlement access points are staircases and pavements to deal with ravines and steep inclination of the hill. Santibañez (2004) interprets the width of the roads in settlements of Viña del Mar as dwellers’ capacity to anticipate the growth of the area and city. It can be argued that this is strategic thinking, as this kind of planning allows the municipality and MINVU to envisage a way in which the settlement could be upgraded. For example, in the case of MB, the main road built by dwellers is now being considered as the main road in the upgrading project (as shown previously in Figure 40).

Figure 44 | Participatory photography: Existing wide gravel road vs. paved road in the city

Cristina’s pictures of the photography workshop shows (left) one of the main roads in MB which usually gets muddy in winter, thus affecting access in and out of the settlement. (Right) A picture she took of a street in the city to visualise what she would like for the settlement. **Source:** Cristina, MB.

The access to water, electricity and sewage is an on-going struggle, and differentiates widely depending on the location of the housing committee, as topography defines most of the access. Initially, founders identified possible ways that they could hook up informally to established networks, organising collectively
to improve the access. Soledad (60, community leader, MB) explains how they hooked up to electricity at the beginning:

There was a person [from the community] in charge of hooking and unhooking [electricity], but sometimes he would not make it or he forgot and Chilquinta and the police would come, and take all the cables, and I had to pass again house to house collecting the money to buy new cable (Soledad, MB).

As explained in Chapter 5 (in the practice Service-less housework), access to services improves with time as residents develop different tactics to access it in different ways depending on the possibilities they have. However, formal access to water and sewage is conditioned by the land tenure, and as long as they are informal settlements, it is not possible to significantly improve access.

3. Communal infrastructure and appropriation of space

The prioritisation of public amenities over the construction of more houses is clear. Dwellers of all ages recognise the importance of these spaces in the maintenance of urban life. They have collectively created community centres, squares, churches and football pitches, among other spaces (see Figure 45). Considering that the topography of steep slopes and ravines limit the options for common areas, dwellers claim the right to public space in any form they can.
Mapping done by dwellers of MB with an NGO, with the aim of visualising the existing public amenities, as way to advocate for incorporating them into the upgrading project. **Source:** Araos Ovalle (2014), modified by author.
Space is appropriated through the daily use and the naming of the territory. All of the housing committees, roads and passageways, have names chosen by dwellers. For example, the housing committee *Juventud 2000* [Youth 2000] is named by the young couples that arrived in 2000 and one of the main roads is named Millennium, as a way to express the start of a new life (in a new century). Family units, introduced in Chapter 5.1.1 (in *spatial dimension of childcare*), are also a distinct reflection of place-making and appropriation of the environment. In the case of Estela (33, FC), she invited her family members and friends to live in the same passageway, and they have named it in memory of her brother who passed away (shown in Chapter 5, Figure 33).

The importance of public space was evident during the photography workshops. In the task that answered the questions "*What does home mean to you?*", a significant number of pictures were taken of public space in the settlement (as shown in Figure 46). For a complete selection of pictures of the activity see Figure 47. This shows how important neighbourhood life and the infrastructure that facilitates it is in the creation of home.

In terms of the sustainability of public space, funding is an important aspect. In MB community leaders affirm that the informal characteristics of the land limits their ability to apply for funding to improve the spaces. The upgrading project, although it would formalise the space, will also bring challenges, as the project does not consider funding for existing areas or the creation of new ones. Once they are formalised, public areas will have to be maintained by the community at higher costs, as they will, for example, need to pay the electricity and water bills of community centres and churches.
“The square used to be a landfill site and because of us, our effort, we managed to do this. I wrote the sign of the square and painted the little house” Jaime, 32, FC. 
Source: Jaime, FC

“This is my front yard. I had to take a picture because before building the community centre we would always meet here. Birthday parties, Christmas parties, community leader’s meetings, everything was here. This place is important because is our meeting place” Isabel, 31, FC. 
Source: Isabel, FC

“I spent most of my day here, the football pitch is a very important place for us” Carlos, 16, MB. 
Source: Carlos, MB
i) Each participant took three pictures that answer the question: “What does home mean to you?”. ii) Participants in each workshop discussed collectively their pictures, grouping them into their own categories of home. Some of these were housing, places to meet and socialise, relationships with others and nature. Source: Author
**Built Environment:** In contrast to the answers in life stories, in which home was mostly referred as the home space and the family, the photographs in the workshops showed a range of scales of home: from bedrooms and houses, to backyards, streets, community centres, squares and views of the city. The number of photographs of public spaces taken by men and women, young and older participants alike, shows the importance that these spaces have in creating community life, and feeling at home in the settlement. The use of these spaces also shows the fluid relationship between ‘private’ and ‘public’ spaces. For example, backyards are used as community centres and playgrounds as places for individual reflection.

**Objects:** The pictures also documented objects as part of home. This was mostly done by young people. They documented their rooms and the objects that they value, such as televisions, computers and medals.

**Nature:** Both settlements are located on the tops of hills, surrounded by green gorges and Chilean palm trees. Through the photographs, participants showed their appreciation for the natural environment. The pictures documented the green life that they have created in the hill, as they have planted trees and flowers and introduced allotment plots. Participants recognise the view and their surroundings as an important part of making a home in the hill. Those who come from social housing, particularly value the possibility of having greater access to green spaces.

**Feelings & People:** In life stories, participants related home with only positive feelings, mostly related to love and care towards the nuclear family. In contrast, the feelings portrayed in the photographs were more nuanced and made reference to: safety, privacy and control over the built environment. They also showed negative feelings towards the difficulties of maintaining a home in the settlement. Friendship and solidarity emerged as an important component of home, going beyond the nuclear family, and showing pictures of friends and neighbours.

**Source:** Selection of pictures taken by participants of photography workshops in MB and FC. Each quote corresponds to the participant who took the picture.
Each participant took pictures that answer the question: "What would you change about your home?" Participants discussed collectively their pictures, grouping them in the most important home aspirations. Participants used elements of the city to visualise their aspirations. A selection of pictures can be found inside. **Source:** Author
Better access to services: Most of the pictures, from both settlements, referenced the wish to improve access to water, electricity, sewage and rubbish collection. Electricity is the only service that it is possible to access formally without owning the land. However, the other services are accessed informally in different ways, depending on the location of the house and the organisation of the housing committee. The pictures visualise what had also been raised by community leaders in group discussion and in life stories.

Better mobility & transport: The pictures showed a range of difficulties for the mobility of pedestrian and cars, and scarce access to public transport. Participants took pictures from other parts of the city as a way to visualise what they would like. The issue had been raised in some participants’ life stories, but it was more widely covered through the photography workshop. Transport and mobility issues were not raised by community leaders. This could be explained by the emphasis that community leaders put on supporting the wish to stay put by narrowing their claim to the access to land.

More public amenities and grocery shops: Pictures in the previous exercise ("What does home mean to you?") showed the importance of public space. Here, pictures validate this claim and show the need for more varied spaces and public amenities. These include free and open spaces, such as better playgrounds and squares, as well as religious spaces such as a bigger church and a closer school, and the need for better access to places for grocery shopping.

Land ownership & improvement of housing: The pictures did not provide new information about the wish for land ownership beyond what had already been discussed extensively with community leaders and participants in life stories. However, the photographic exercise in general showed that land ownership is as important as better access to services, mobility and public space. It showed more nuanced urban claims than those of community leaders who have focused intensively on the access to land.
7.1.2 Female organisation

There is a saying about being dirigenta that I say a lot: dirigentes have to have the feet of elephants and the skin of pigs; feet like an elephant’s to have a clear and solid base, which means to speak from the facts and with clarity to authorities, and the skin of a pig to endure the stabbing in the back, the gossip, the problems. There are some dirigentas that at first, they cry, they are afraid ...That is why I tell them this saying, to keep strong (Victoria, 60, community leader, MB).

Victoria is one of the most experienced dirigentas in MB (and probably in Viña del Mar), she is also the spokesperson for the settlement, representing all the housing committees. With this analogy, she makes reference to the challenges that the job entails in respect to its two main responsibilities: towards its community and to the external public. Being a dirigenta relates to the material aspects of the settlement in the acquisition of infrastructure, and to the political aspects of managing the relationship with authorities, the media, NGOs, universities and the other actors involved. It also relates to the relational aspects such as identifying who of their committee needs help and support, taking care of their neighbours, and maintaining a positive environment in the settlement.

Dirigentas, especially the experienced, show a range of skills and capacities in diverse areas such as: social and urban policies (local and national), communication skills, and social skills. This is an indication of the possibilities of formal and informal learning - through doing and through others - as a way to build capacity in a context of poverty and the lack of formal educational opportunities.

As Victoria (60, MB) affirms:

The preparation that our leaders have now, has made all the difference. Any organisation that has offered us training, we have taken it. I went to Santiago to the Universidad Alberto Hurtado for a full academic year. With that course, I met people from informal settlements from across the country (Victoria, MB).

In MB, almost all the community leaders of the 18 housing committees are women, and they also hold the most important positions, such as president of the housing
committees or spokesperson of the settlement. Differently, in FC the proportion is lower, as there are more men, and they hold important positions 45. The high proportion of men in FC is unusual in the Chilean context, as usually women who hold most of the positions (Pizarro et al., 2008). Nevertheless, when they are, it tends to be in positions of greater power, such as president of the housing committee, while women would usually take positions of secretary or vice-president, as it is shown in this case. This is not necessarily because they lack the skills, but because women tend to put themselves in lower positions when men are in neighbourhood associations, as previous research shows (Ducci, 1994).

1. “I got excited, we could do so many things!”

Few women had experience as community leaders before arriving to the settlement 46. Their reasons for joining the housing committee varied. Some argued that they needed a break from their housewife role, others because a female friend in the settlement had encouraged them to join, or they had seen cases of corruption in previous leaders, and inactivity in their housing committee. Linda (40, MB) became involved 13 years ago as a way to break away from her role as a housewife:

> When the children were young my life was to do things for them and to work (...) But then when they were a bit older, I started to feel a bit restless. One of the volunteers at TECHO encouraged me to join. I started talking to people, I become friends with more neighbours, I was curious, I could see we had so many needs. I got excited, we could do so many things! (Linda, MB).

Her account shows how becoming a community leader changed her perspective of what she could do and achieve for her community. Isabel (34) from FC affirms, “I work for the dreams of my people. Their dreams are a big weight (...) I do not want to fail them, failing them is failing myself. It is frightening, but it gives me courage.”

Similarly, in national statistics the main reason that informal dwellers in Chile become leaders of housing committees is because they want to see a positive change

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45 This was at the time of the fieldwork 2014-2015, this number has changed in the last 2 years, the most important change is that now the spokesperson is a woman.

46 Other community role in which women exert and practice leadership are Parents and Guardians Associations at school, worker’s unions, or Centro de Madre.
in their community, which in turn brought a higher satisfaction to their own life, 79.6% of community leaders affirmed this (Pizarro et al., 2008).

Dirigentas recognise that having the opportunity to develop in a political/social role (defined by them as this) has helped them to have a higher self-esteem and a wider engagement with residents, authorities and institutions. This is in contrast with the few spaces women available for women to develop, as the fieldwork showed. As work satisfaction tends to be very low for women and men, as they tend to engage in low-skilled jobs, usually with repetitive tasks and no clear promotion line.

Their engagement as dirigentas has also created a greater gender and class awareness. They are able to better articulate their claims and relate them to a wider political scenario, showing a greater political awareness, in comparison to women that are not community leaders. As it was possible to observe during life stories and group discussions.

The initial encouragement to work together comes from the support they give to each other. Once they are dirigentas, they spend a considerable amount of time together, and although there is rivalry, and arguments at times, they are aware that they have each other’s support. They understand what it means to be a leader, particularly in the difficulties of dealing with their multiple responsibilities as mothers, wives and workers. As Carmen (42, MB) explains, “We have been through so much together, the good and the bad, I don’t think I could be a dirigenta without them.” Solidarity and support, is not something that emerges immediately just by virtue of being women, but it is a (sometimes complicated) relationship that builds over time, as the case of MB indicates, where they have been working together for longer, and have a stronger understanding of the experiences they share.

And thus, becoming a dirigenta is not only an individual development, but is collective process based, I argue, on female solidarity. Drawing from Chapter 5, in which I stated that childcare is an important way of developing relationships between women, here I suggest that the process of becoming and being a dirigenta

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47 Dwellers that work full time, they usually receive minimum wage independent of the years of service, with no promotion and scarce security [Many said they were put in a new contract every few months, in order to avoid accumulating years, thus to avoid paying pension and compensation if they are made redundant]. The only group that showed interest in their work (besides the economic compensation) where men that work as builders, as it had a clearer promotion line than other jobs.
builds on that initial solidarity, which makes the individual and collective process of empowerment possible.

2. Female leadership participation and style

Women recognise that men and women perform the role of community leader differently. “We have a different style of leadership than men, we have more patience, we are softer, but we are also willing to make more sacrifices. There is something about the way we do things that I think is better.” Rosa’s (30, FC) explanation of men and women as community leaders is shared by most dirigentas.

In a group discussion with community leaders in MB, Beatriz (50) explains, “I think we [female community leaders] are more persistent, we fight more for what we want. Instead, I think men enjoy it, but as soon as things get difficult they give up.” Pedro (58, MB), a male leader present from MB agreed. According to him, “Men go to work and then back to the house, they avoid social gatherings”, which would explain why being a dirigente would appeal less to men.

In FC (where there are more male community leaders than MB), they tend to agree, but think that men should be in positions of power, as they would be better at negotiating with authorities. This was identified both by men and women: “I have to accept that I think it is more useful to have men when talking to authorities, but I think we do a better job in the community” says Isabel (32, FC). Although, Hernán (60, FC) stated, “I think women are better in dealing with authorities, while men are better during community meetings”. Rosa’s and Hernán’s comments point to a similar issue, that of the difficulties of female community leaders in being respected in both internal and external spaces of negotiations. This could also indicate FC’s learning process, as MB female leaders did not mention this as an issue.

In both research sites, men who are community leaders have the time to participate because either they do not work or they are retired. If they do have full-time paid work, they tend to be excused from attending the coordination meetings, but would make time for meetings with authorities. This can be problematic as they may not have access to all the necessary information, and can undermine decisions that were taken as a group.
On the other hand, women tend to balance their work and their community responsibilities more equally. Most women do not have a full-time paid job, but the ones that do work find work that is compatible with their responsibilities as a community leader. Female leaders in both settlements claim that their availability does not necessarily mean that they should be doing all the work, and thus affirm that they (women) should be the first to value the work they do. This is shown by the following conversation from a group discussion with community leaders in MB, when explaining why there are more female leaders (see Figure 49).

**Figure 49 | Extract of group discussion of MB’s community leaders**

- “I think that it is because we have more time than men, almost all men work so they are out all day” (Beatriz, 50)
- “Yes, but we have to value our time too, more than availability, it is a sacrifice and effort, because there are many women who take the position knowing that they have a job, and they make a big effort to juggle all their responsibilities” (Victoria, 60)
- “Look at the single mothers that are dirigentas, they make double the effort because they are alone - they provide for their house and on top of that they are dirigentas, so it is a double, a triple effort!” (Montse, 40)

As shown in the extract, some women negotiate triple roles, not only in maintaining the house, but also in earning money and playing a community role in the struggle for housing. This shows that many women do not necessarily have more time available, or as Moser (1987a) puts it, this is “a convenient myth” (p. 181), as women work the same as, or more, than men, in multiple types of work.

3. Local politics and collective action

In Viña del Mar, there is a close relationship between informal settlements and local politicians (Vildósola 2011; Pino, 2015). Dirigentas are aware that some aspects of the relationship are clientelistic48, but they know that in order to have their claims

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48 Concept widely used in Latin America to refer to a relationship based on political subordination in exchange for material goods (Fox, 1994).
heard, they need to develop contacts and forge relationships with authorities and politicians.

Clientelism intensifies during election periods, as more politicians approach the settlements to make gifts or promises linked with the upgrading of the area (even when their expertise may not be in urban issues). Even when leaders recognise that it is problematic, they value the opportunity to have authorities and politicians visiting the settlement. This is significant, as the settlements are located in parts of the city which are isolated and segregated from the city centre.

In MB, they have developed a principle amongst the housing committees, whereby their doors are only open to candidates during election periods who have supported the settlement before, independent of their political party.

If a candidate, whether he/she is a councillor, CORE [regional councillor], MP, Senator or whoever he/she is, but has never been to the settlement before and he/she only wants to come for the elections, we say “Why, if we have invited you for the four last years and you always had problems to come up to the hill, are you coming now for elections?” (Victoria, 60, MB).

Over time community leaders have learned how to deal better with these relationships, as is possible to see in MB, which has set boundaries and negotiates with politicians in key moments. In contrast, the less experienced leaders of FC, have had less control over visits to the settlement and have believed more of the politicians’ promises. This was possible to observe during meetings with politicians and authorities, which I attended for both settlements, and the latter analysis in group discussion with community leaders.

Community leaders in MB have also become more involved in traditional politics. At least two of the leaders in MB are active members of political parties, and have suggested to run for councillor for the area, which would provide new channels of representation.

We have a good relationship with authorities of the two governments, both the past [right-wing government] and the current [left-wing government]. As dirigentes we have our political side, and there are dirigentes that have their political colours, but we keep this away from the meetings about the settlement. Some dirigentes are members of political parties, and they do their work in their own time, and it has helped us to get to authorities. In that
sense, we have always said "We work with the politicians, not with the politics". Their contacts have opened a network of useful people to us (Victoria, 60, MB).

The main strategy used by both settlements (and in general for the region), has been to make housing claims through dialogue. For MB, this strategy has yielded good results, as they have managed to secure the upgrading project through years of meetings at different political levels. Dialogue is a long-term strategy as it is based on building agreements, and on the capacity of community leaders to navigate the political and bureaucratic system, as well as to understand policies and programmes. Thus, it is a more sophisticated type of participation than direct action. "We do things with dignity and respect, you have to respect authority, but obviously we still make ourselves heard. We don't let passion guide our negotiations, and that's why the authorities respect us" (Victoria, 60, MB).

However, there have been two moments in which dwellers have taken direct action, as a way to express their frustrations to authorities with the lack of recognition of their needs. As introduced in Chapter 4 (section 4.1.4) the two main events since 2010 have been the march to the Congress in 201, which included all the informal settlements of the city, and the direct action of FC in February 2017. Dwellers of FC chained to the entrance of the hotel were the artists of the musical festival were staying (El Mercurio, 2017). Direct action from informal dwellers is extremely uncommon in Chile's recent history, and this was therefore widely covered by the local and national press, and discussed extensively in different platforms, bringing attention back to the deficit in housing and illuminating the social contrasts of the city of Viña del Mar. The approach of FC, with a clearer message based on housing rights, has been a revitalising tactic at the city (and national) level, showing the deficit in housing to a wider audience, and with an urgency and presence that had not previously been expressed in Viña del Mar.
The question of how to scale up from an individual settlement to a citywide mobilisation is unclear. The pressing material needs of individual informal settlements continues to hamper a collective strategic vision. Attempts made before (E.g. Aggrupation of informal settlements of Viña del Mar in 2010), did not last, as the individual and complicated logistical aspects of upgrading are highlighted by leaders, but mostly by authorities, over more strategic issues, such as the recognition of informal dwellers’ needs and better representation at a city level. In this context, clientelistic promises to individual settlements dominate and undermine negotiations for broader and more collective, but less immediate, gains.

### 7.2 Analysis of Material and Symbolic Gains

**Planning by dwellers**

The planning of the settlement, mainly by founder members and community leaders, aims for a clear material gain. By creating roads, dividing plots of lands and defining different uses for that land, dwellers have created new housing for the poorest by inhabiting the hills around the city. A particular characteristic of the strategy is the well thought-out definition of space, the organisation and systematic admittance of new members, in which founding members and community leaders play a central role.
The creation of the settlement, is configured around their class identity, it stems from a lack of housing, alongside other urban elements determined by their socio-economic position. The aim of the practice is not only to provide shelter, but to create a new urban life that is in order and in solidarity with others. This can be seen in the different decisions dwellers make and by how urban planning norms are used. The practice does not only tackle housing maldistribution, by making housing available, but also housing misrecognition, by addressing specific needs and channelling wider urban aspirations.

The practice usually takes place at the housing committee level. Land invasion and access to services is initially planned by the housing committee, led by the community leaders board. However, main roads or access to services (e.g. water pumps for an area of the settlement) can be planned in coordination with other adjacent housing committees. Still, the most important planning decisions take place at the settlement level, such as negotiations with authorities and politicians about future housing solutions. These negotiations rarely happen at the housing committee level, unless they address an issue specific to the committee. The organisation demands a high level of coordination between community leaders, as for example MB has 18 housing committees, with at least 3 community leaders each.

The practice, however, has evident limitations. Dwellers plan what is within their means, such as the construction of housing and gravel roads, alongside what they are able to achieve from individual coordination with the municipality and private service companies. However, planning is a complex and multi-sectorial issue, with implications at a city and national level, many of which are not within the reach of informal dwellers.

**Female organisation**

The second practice introduced is female organisation. The practice aims to provide material gains, infrastructure, by using a specific style defined by consistency, effort and everyday work. The strategies that dirigentas have developed are mainly based on dialogue with authorities, however they have used direct action in specific cases. The practice is not a particular characteristic of informal settlements in Viña del Mar, as it is common to have female leaders in grassroots organisations across the
country. However, the closeness with politicians, interests in pursuing a political career, and the most recent direct actions, show a particular form of the practice.

The initial involvement as dirigentas is triggered by the need to provide infrastructure as part of their identities as pobladora, both for their family and the community. As dirigentas get more involved, the nature of their participation changes. They develop greater political awareness and personal fulfilment. They enjoy being involved in different types of activity, that are different from their reproductive and productive responsibilities, because it allows them to develop new skills in a challenging environment.

The practice takes place at the community level, specifically at the housing committee level, where women join the board, but can then move to the settlement (as a macro board that represents all the housing committees of the informal settlement) and extra-settlement level, to local authorities (especially in the case of the spokesperson of the settlement). There are also spaces for collaboration between informal settlements in the region, country, and internationally across Latin America.

Although women’s leadership is strong in the settlement and consolidated in the region, it can be undermined by the clientelistic and machista environment in which it develops.

*Practices together: Planning by dwellers and Female organisation*

Planning by dwellers and female organisation are practices that act together, as women are usually the ones that plan and organise the settlement. Thus, the better women become at being dirigentas, the better opportunities arise for the planning of the settlement. The aim of women’s participation is to fill the gap in the state’s planning of low-income areas. They take control over the upgrading, and negotiate with different ranges of actors in the city in order to manage a solution.

However, the pressure put on women to fill in the gap of the state urban planning puts them in a difficult position, as they have a great responsibility to deliver in an extremely precarious context.
The next section looks at these practices in the broader context, as a way to discuss their political function in negotiating housing claims and redefining gender relations.

7.3 Discussion of Conditions for Social Change

The chapter has presented two practices; planning by dwellers and female organisation, both of which have showed the planning practices of informal dwellers. Drawing from the research questions, there are two main issues that this section addresses. First, the conditions under which current gender and housing inequalities take place, and how these home-making practices are a reflection of those inequalities. Second, the ways in which these home-making practices can open space for the advancement of social justice for women in struggles for housing.

The first finding refers to how planning by dwellers constitute informal strategies to fill the gap in the provision of housing and create a new urban space. The second finding looks at how organisation among women helps generate a specific identity, building on the term feisty motherhood, introduced in Chapter 5, and developed specifically for women as community leaders.

7.3.1 Conditions under which planning by dwellers emerges

There are specific conditions at a city and national level that explains dweller’s need to plan their own informal settlements as a way to access housing. Drawing from the discussion on Chapter 4 of the national housing policy and the housing conditions in Viña del Mar, here I discuss five specific elements.

1. Neoliberal approach to housing, strict national planning norms and no space for informality.

As discussed in Chapter 4 in section 4.1 (Chile’s neoliberal housing agenda), housing for the urban poor since 1980s have developed in an extremely neoliberal context which has led to the liberalisation and privatisation of urban planning, resulting in segregation and marginalisation of poorer communities.

The approach to informality has been influence by this paradigm. Chile has a strict sense of formality and legality, which is reflected in its planning norms. There is very
low acceptance of informality and low capacity to adapt to the urban informality of the country (Siclari, 2012). Thus, there is no clear strategy or policy to address housing informality at the city scale, except for housing subsidies in the form of ‘micro housing projects’, which remain insufficient to address dwellers housing aspirations due to the location, materiality and lack of participation of dwellers.

2. Viña del Mar as “beautiful city”

Viña del Mar has been historically associated with summer resort, entertainment and second homes, as discussed in section 4.4.2. The strong image contradicts with the high number of informal dwellers. As argued by Santibañez & Brignardello (2005) the strong narrative around European descendants planning and building the city, has excluded the historic role of informal dwellers in the construction of Viña del Mar. Moreover, Vildósola (2011) argues that one of the reasons of why informal settlements remained invisible was because dwellers themselves did not want to contradict an imagine of the city that they felt proud of.

3. Low prioritisation of investment in low-income areas at the municipal level

Viña del Mar is one of the wealthiest municipalities in the country (Alarcón, 2015). The result is a higher technical capacity to develop urban projects than most of the other municipalities in the country, as expressed in the interview with the director of SECPLA (Department of urban planning at the municipality). The rest of the municipalities have to apply to a communal pot at the national level, thus making it more difficult to get funding allocated.

However, as some of the municipal officers explained, urban planning in the municipality tends to be reactive and low-income areas have not been prioritised. The politics of the municipality means that important decisions of urban investment are dependent on the political impact they might have, more than the infrastructural needs. As such the decision of the department of planning are in juxtaposition to the municipal interests of popularity and re-election. The relationship between the municipality and informal settlements has been kept through the everyday services they provide, such as water truck, waste collection and social help. Which satisfies the immediate need, but with no clear vision of improving living conditions in the long-term. As a consequence, the infrastructure and wealth of the city centre is in
clear contrast to the infrastructural deprivation of the hills areas. The upgrading project of MB, is the first large investment from the municipality (in coordination with other institutions) towards a substantial improvement of low-income areas.

4. Low construction of housing in the region

If we add to this scenario the low historic construction of housing in the region by MINVU-SERVIU (institutions of housing that represent central government in the region), the infrastructural deprivation in which the poorer of the region exist becomes clearer. Drawing from the data provided in Chapter 4, section 4.4.4 (Contemporary approaches to informal settlement in the city), the construction of social housing in Viña Del Mar during the 1990s represented only the 12% of the housing deficit (Arellano, 2005). Moreover, there has been a sharp decrease in the construction of social housing in the municipality of Viña del Mar, in favour of other peripheral municipalities in the region (Zunino & Hidalgo, 2009). This shows the consistent deprivation of infrastructure in the city, particularly in the higher areas, which has perpetuated poverty and lack of provision for the low-income population of the city. This can also be explained, partly, due to the low level of control municipalities have in the allocation of housing programmes, as discussed in section 4.4.1 (Centralisation and the challenges for local urban decisions).

5. Bad reputation of housing policy

As examined in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6, due to the poor condition of social housing provided during the 1990s, dwellers in Valparaíso have developed a strong stance against social housing and would rather stay put through self-help.
Isabel, community leader of FC who lived in social housing before moving to the settlement, raises key points against social housing, which are shared widely amongst dwellers of both settlements:

In the end, I think that to accept the houses provided by the government, is to give up. You lose more than you gain. If you go to a house of the state, you lose your married life, peace of mind and they isolate you (...) and you lose privacy. At least here you have your own space, here you'll find a way of extending. But when you are on the fifth floor, where are you going to extend? It is impossible... And the only thing it does is to isolate you and "ghettoise you", because first they are never going to give you a house in the city centre - they will always throw you to the outskirts where there is bad transport, that you'll have to take a bus for hours to get to your work. Second, they are only temporary solutions. For me, even with a bad solution I prefer to stay here. If I don't have a house because I'm evicted, I'm prepared to put a tent up outside of the municipality or parliament as a sign of protest (Isabel, 34, community leader, FC).

The quotation above summaries the concerns dwellers have about moving into social housing, but especially for FC dwellers as most of them have lived in social housing before, and have a clearer idea of how it feels and how life develops in social housing.

As this section shows, there are material and symbolic inequalities from which planning by dwellers emerges. The most evident is the maldistribution of housing and the material deprivation of poorer areas in the city. The conceptualisation of housing by the Chilean housing policy, as mainly shelter disregards the subjective aspects of creating a home and the relationship between housing compounds and the city, as they tend to be isolated solutions disconnected from urban life. It also responds to specific conditions in Viña del Mar as the systematic low prioritization of investment in poorer areas and the low construction of well-located social housing. In addition, the symbolic inequalities respond to the contradiction between the narrative of the city and the discrimination towards low-income population. To the extent to which informal dwellers had introjected negative discourses of themselves, and thus, sustaining the city narrative of a “Beautiful and Touristic city” (Vildósola, 2011). By rejecting the current conditions of social housing, dwellers are challenging not only its material conditions but how they define themselves. Planning by dwellers, is a call for redistribution of housing with a fundamental
dimension of recognition of dwellers as worthy of more and better housing opportunities as citizens.

### 7.3.2 Dwellers’ planning as a collective housing strategy

The provision of self-help housing and planning of the settlement by poorer communities is a way in which informal dwellers are shaping the urban space in Viña del Mar. Their contribution to planning and production of these spaces is evidence of a productive counter-planning in opposition to policies which have failed to deliver effectively. An example of what dwellers plan for their area is expressed in Figure 51. For a complete selection of pictures of the activity see Figure 48 (Task: *What would you change about your home?*), the pictures not only include housing, but transport, rubbish collection, schools among other urban assets.

*Planning by dwellers* is the informal planning and production of the territory, including the distribution and use of land, communal infrastructure, and the provision of services. Planning from below challenges the normative and regulatory characteristics of the city, as well as the vision for Viña Del Mar, by offering new forms of planning that adapt to dwellers specific needs.

**Figure 51 | Participatory photography: Infrastructure to be improved in MB**

Cristina’s (40, community leader, MB) pictures in the photography workshop show some of the aspects she would like to see improved. She identifies the need for closer grocery shops, easier transport options, better playgrounds for children and better rubbish collections. She took the pictures in other areas in the city, as a way to visualise what she would like for MB, more pictures in Figure 48. **Source: Cristina (MB)**
Although all dwellers that were interviewed articulated the will to stay put, their claims have distinguishing elements. In the case of MB, these stem from the place-attachment they have developed as a result of everyday practices in the 20 years that they have lived there. The collective claim to stay put comes from their place-making (Chapter 5) and from the progressive permanent housing (Chapter 6). On the other hand, FC’s claims stem from a clearer understanding that their current state relates to a wider housing deficit and segregation, not only in the city, but in the country (Chapter 5, discussed in the section “Being poor”).

**Principles of planning by dwellers**

Four principles emerged from dwellers’ planning practices.

1. **Use value over exchange value:**

   The allocation and in turn, the removal of a household from the settlement, is based in the presence of dwellers in their plots and houses. Independent of whether dwellers have ‘paid’ for the plot or not, in both settlements the principle of use value is greater than the exchange value. This is shown as dwellers privilege the use of the space on a daily basis over economic gain.

   Dwellers do not only use this logic internally (in the settlement), but also externally (relationship between the settlement and the city). They use the total number of people in the settlement as a way to justify the occupation of the land, and to further claim the land from its landowners. As Estela affirms: “The landowners are never going to sell to us if there are 1000 plots of land and only 400 people living here” (Estela, 33, FC), suggesting that all plots of land must be fully utilised in order to show their need.

   However, as it will be seen later, the principle of use value is in contradiction to the commodification of land (and housing) in the settlements.

2. **More inclusive to minorities and socially excluded identities:**

   Based on the principle of use value, the criteria to accept people is based on their need for housing. Thus, the settlement tends to be a more inclusive place than other housing arrangements that dwellers have experienced, such as renting or living as allegados. The interviews showed that this is particularly relevant for single
mothers, older people, immigrants, LGBT dwellers, and those who are looking for alternative ways of living.

In the case of immigrants, some of them encountered discrimination previously with private landlords (as seen in Chapter 6). On the other hand, Lorena, community leader in MB affirms, “In my housing committee more and more immigrants from Perú, Colombia even Haiti have arrived. They need a house, the same as us, so I have welcomed people in my housing committee”. The arrival of immigrants is a tendency on the rise, although most housing committees have been welcoming (as many of the informal conversations with immigrants in both settlements showed), there were cases of discrimination, as shown in Chapter 5 (in Age and nationality play a role in giving and accessing solidarity).

It is also a place that allows for different lifestyles. Alfredo (31, MB) is a Rastafarian and came to live in the settlement because he does not believe in the commodification of land. His house is built mainly with recycled bottles and different recycled materials:

I liked it here because you are surrounded by nature, and I have always believed that the earth is for everyone, there is not one landowner. So, I thought the right thing to do was to live here and build my own house (Alfredo, 31).

3. Balance between private and collective property

The way in which the settlement has been organised clearly shows the value of public space, even when it can be difficult to create on the topography of the hill. Its use shows a fluid continuum between private and public spaces, such as meetings held on patios, streets, and outside houses. This also allows dwellers to create family units, promote social networks, and build relationships with neighbours.

This emerges in contrast to the low prioritisation of public space in social housing and the fact that Viña del Mar has a lower percentage of green spaces in comparison to other cities in the country (El Mercurio, 2016). The housing policy usually funds one community centre per 150 households, less number and less varied than what the settlements have (i.e. community centres, recreational, religious and educational spaces).
4. Collective and historic co-production of knowledge

The construction and planning knowledge of dwellers has passed from one generation to the next, and from one settlement to another. This is possible to observe in the planning of the settlement. For example, most settlements have the same sized plots (10 by 20 m), and the main roads all have double lanes. When MB started, they consulted with other community leaders, and 20 years later, FC consulted with MB. Furthermore, there is a collective memory of self-help, as dwellers have passed their knowledge down through generations.

However, housing authorities have systematically disregarded the skills, knowledge and local practices of informal dwellers (Vildósola, 1999; 2004; Santibañez, 2004).

*Replication of neo-liberal logics*

As much as the settlement is based on principles of use value, solidarity, collectivism and co-production, they are not disconnected from the broader Chilean capitalist dynamics, which are replicated in the settlement in different ways.

Miraftab (2009) argues that in order for planning practices of informal dwellers to defy the current neoliberal values of housing and commodification of services, they need to challenge the inequitable aspects of neoliberal governance through inclusion. The case shows that there is no clear-cut distinction between inclusion and neoliberal values for poorer communities. While there is a narrative of use value over exchange value in both settlements, dwellers find it difficult to act independently of the strong neoliberal logic of land and housing in the country. On the one hand, the planning of dwellers has elements that challenge the current mode of housing provision, while on the other, some of their actions assimilate the ideas of housing as commodity and profit through the sale of land and housing. In contrast to Miraftab (2009) and Meth (2010), the findings show that the principles co-exist and vary depending on the area, on the phase of the settlement, and on personal relationships. This reveals the complexity of fully embracing principles of inclusion, in counter-planning processes.

The co-existence of these values, and the disagreement between dwellers, shows that this a contested issue, with a moral connotation, and one which is also affected by the conditions in which their housing struggles take place. For example, in the
case of MB it is mostly explained by being in a more consolidated area and because of the upcoming upgrading project, which has increased the expectations of property titles and infrastructure improvements. The fact that the upgrading project focuses on individual titling, thus residents’ plot (and house) will enter the real estate market, makes the context particularly difficult, even for those dwellers that today are against profiting from their houses and feel ashamed that their neighbours are “selling”. And thus, dwellers initial values of inclusion and collectivism are confronted with a state that strongly promotes individual ownership. However, the fact that the negotiation of the project is collective and that it is based on strong organisation in the ground, through 18 housing committees, might provide certain collective guarantees.

Although the critiques to individual titling in the literature, shows that it can lead to commodification and a market-driven displacement of the original inhabitants as well as the propagation of the idea of private ownership (de Souza, 2004; Durand-Lasserve, & Selod, 2009), undermining collective solidarity and demobilises social movements (Frediani, 2009). There are cases in which this has not been necessarily the case. Varley (2017) who has studied for decades titling processes in Mexico, shows that titling has not led necessarily to displacement or gentrification. And that individual homeownership more than create a need, legitimates a will of informal dwellers of homeownership, most residents value ownership not because of its exchange value, but the recognition of being homeowners. Although in this case is difficult to know how the upgrading project will affect land value (and further a process of gentrification), Varley’s findings echo the findings of Chapter 6, in which women value homeownership not because of its exchange value, but because they can provide control and stability for themselves and their children.

The notion of citizenship is also at play in dwellers own negotiating of what inclusion means. Dwellers move from notions of economic inclusion to a more rights-based approach. In the discourse of upgrading there is an element that is always repeated by community leaders, “We don’t want gifts from the state, we want to pay”. This is particularly in regard to land and services. Specially for MB, the way that inclusion with the city is understood is in economic terms, where citizenship is equated to being a client. However, FC has introduced a more rights-based discourse, by stating that they are there because there is a housing crisis in the
country, and housing should not be a commodity, as one of the community leaders argues; “If the State does not provide it is then up to you, and how lucky you are in generating the means in your life. We are no longer talking about a right but a commodity, but what if you do not have money?” (Germán, 57, community leader, FC).

7.3.3 Condition under which female organisation emerges

In Chapter 5, through the introduction of the concept of feisty motherhood I examined how female dwellers challenge the predominant ideas of women’s identity by showing themselves to be strong, feisty and responsible. In this chapter, I explore the specific identity of dirigentas, building on the concept of feisty motherhood, and adding new characteristics that are specific to the identity and work of community leaders. This section discusses how dirigentas are managing an alternative housing solution for their communities and opening spaces in politics, and by doing so are creating a counter-narrative for low-income women.

As discussed in Chapter 4, female organisation and participation emerges in a context of historical traditional gender roles, social policies which do not effectively promote gender equality, such as in childcare, and significant disparity between women’s participation at the grassroots organisational level and the representation of women in office.

1. Traditional role of women in the private sphere

Historically, women’s identity has been bound to the private sphere, in which women should be “uninterested in politics” (Dandavati, 2005, p 26). It has been argued that, that due to the pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, Chilean women have had a tendency towards slower, non-confrontational change, instead of radical change (Aylwin, Correa, & Piñera, 1986).

However, even in constrained environments women found other ways of being political. As discussed in Chapter 4, Centros de Madres and ollas communes were important spaces for participation for low-income women, and although not intentionally, these spaces represented “ruptures in the patriarchal model” (Dandavati, 2005, p.71), as women not only appeared in leadership roles, but also started questioning the source of their previous exclusion from roles of power.
2. Social policies and programmes

There are still structural constraints and cultural narratives that privilege feminine ideals of caretaking, and hinder women’s access to politics. Furthermore, social policies have not yet attended women’s strategic needs, such as sharing more responsibilities in the house and with regards childcare.

The director of “Corporación Mujeres Líderes para Chile” [Corporation of Female Leaders for Chile] explains,

> It is important to have more women in power, but the conditions are bad. Women have fewer political networks, thus less funding, and have multiple roles as mothers and workers. In the end, it is very difficult for women to pursue a demanding political career, but we need more women there (Interview, May 2015).

There are a few social policies that illustrate this fact. For example, men until 2011 only had 5 days of paternity leave 49. And as Chapter 5 showed, public childcare aims to reduce poverty more than challenge traditional gender roles of caring responsibilities.

The findings of Franceschet et al. (2015) with female politicians, show how motherhood in Latin America has allowed women to engage in politics, but has also created unequal structural obligations that constrain women’s political careers. As the authors affirm, “Female politicians in Latin America must choose between attending to their political obligations or attending their families” (p.13).

3. Representation of women in politics

There is an evident disparity between the number of women in leadership positions in grassroots organisations and the number of women in parliament (Errázuriz, 1992; Ducci, 1994), regardless of their socio-economic situations. In Chile, women participate more than men at the neighbourhood level, and have a greater presence in religious organisations, elder organisations, and in neighbourhood associations (Casen, 2013). In informal settlements, the difference between men and women’s participation as leaders in housing committees is overwhelming, as 80% of the

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49 In 2011, the law was modified and men can exchange 6 weeks of the woman’s leave (Law No 20.545)
community leaders are women (Pizarro et al., 2008). This number is consistent with the findings of the case studies.

According to the female director of "Corporación Mujeres Líderes para Chile" the way the political system is set up has a large responsibility, as there was no incentives to nominate women in political parties (Interview May, 2015). The new quota law\(^{50}\) introduced in 2015 aims to help with this problem. It was designed during president Michelle Bachelet's term, and it requires a minimum of 40% of female candidates for parliamentary elections. This is an important step for the country, as Chile holds one of the lowest female parliamentary participation rates in the region (15,8% compared to the average of 27,8% in Latin America) (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2017). Higher participation across the continent has been related, partly, to the earlier incorporation of gender quotas.

The percentage of female candidates for the elections of November 2017 increased to 40% due to the law. The effectively elected women was 23%, increasing from the past election of 15,8% (Servicio Electoral de Chile, 2017). However, the way the law is structured is problematic, as it focuses on the quota of candidates, but not on women actually being elected. Thus, political parties may ‘fill’ the number of women just to comply with law, and not necessarily incentivise the actual incorporation of more women into political parties.

This section has shown that female leadership emerges mostly from symbolic inequalities related to women's expected role, responsibilities and aspirations in Chile. The misrecognition of women's political participation is manifested in the social policies, ideologies and in everyday relations. However, having had recently a twice elected female president in the country and the change in the quota law for politicians are first steps for changing issues of representation, as more women become visible in positions of power. The challenge remains in how to bridge the gap between the high proportion of women in the grassroots and the low number of women in political positions.

\(^{50}\) Law 20.840 (2015), includes a financial incentive for the political parties when women are effectively elected. Additionally, the law 20.900 (2016) for the "Strengthening and Transparency of Democracy" established that 10% of public funding to the political parties must go to increase political participation of women.
7.3.4 Female's organisation as a representation strategy

As discussed in Chapter 5, *Feisty Motherhood* was introduced as a way of questioning or challenging hegemonic discourses around female dwellers’ identity. In the case of female community leaders, they challenge the idea of women as ‘submissive’ and ‘uninterested in politics’. They do this by managing a set of skills and resources to practice and exert leadership, challenging expectations for low-income women about positions of power. Women are not only leading their communities, but also finding new spaces for negotiation and decision-making at the city level.

The findings show that there have been three ways in which women have become more actively involved, and in some cases more confrontational than what is ‘expected’ from their roles as community leaders. The first is their ability to engage actively in meeting and agreements with high-end politicians, an example of this being the relationship MB has established in securing the agreement and process of upgrading. This has required *dirigentes* to act in unity and show a range of diverse skills. The second way is through confrontational politics, engaging in direct action and in opposition to authorities. The march of 2011 and protests in 2017 are an example of this. The third relates to the interest of women in running for political positions and being active members of political parties.

*Nature of women’s participation*

According to Moser (1987a), a way to understand where women engage in residential-level struggles as an extension of their reproductive role is to examine the nature of their mobilisation and the manner in which they interpret it. Women participate as community leaders not only because they are more available and spend more time in the settlement (as it can be seen as natural work, accepted by men), but also because they believe their efforts can make changes to their community and city.

Some community leaders have move beyond the parameters of the domestic realm and their reproductive roles into political action, “breaking the tacit agreement between sexes” (Moser, 1987a, p. 168). In the cases of Victoria (60, community leader, MB) and Carmen (42, community leader, MB), both are members of political parties, and actively participate in promoting political campaigns of candidates. Both
have also expressed their intentions to run as municipal councillors. The constituency-based politics role is relevant as according to the findings, women’s leadership is not only exerted in their community, but in a wider political context. This would be an advancement in their sphere of influence, moving out of the settlement to a political role in the city.

*From mothers and community leaders, to potential politicians*

It is possible to assume that the training, real and on the street, of being dirigentas empowers women and gives them a greater perspective of their future possibilities. These findings echo research with pobladoras in the 1980s and 1990s in Santiago (Dandavati, 2005; Hardy, 1989; Kirkwood, 2010; Richards, 2004). The authors describe how low-income women’s participation in an organisation had changed the way they understood themselves, gave them a social vocation and allowed them to believe they could make a difference in the lives of others. The similarity in the findings suggests that positions of leadership in informal settlements or low-income neighbourhoods are effective spaces for pobladora women to develop political awareness.

In contrast to Santiago (where all the previous research has been conducted), the region of Valparaíso offers more opportunities for low-income women, as there is an indication of a closer relationship between community leaders and political spaces. According to the director of Corporación de Mujeres Líderes para Chile, there is already a closeness between these two worlds, as in the region politicians and dirigentes know each other well. However, she affirms that it is necessary to empower more women, train them and support them so they can pursue more strategic positions in politics.

The director’s own work is an indication of this. In 2015, Victoria (60, community leader, MB), was elected “Prominent woman” of the country by the organisation (alongside politicians and other influential women). This also suggests another type of relationship, which is one of solidarity between middle-class women and pobladoras. According to Richards (2004), this relationship was strained after the dictatorship, but examples such as Victoria’s show progress in the recognition of women of different socioeconomic class.
Their greater awareness has allowed *dirigentas* to open more space for participation and representation. For example, a few months after the fieldwork, Victoria was chosen to be the representative for Chile in the Latin American forum for community leaders of informal settlements organised by TECHO in Mexico in 2015. She had also been awarded as a “Prominent Woman” in the country in 2014 by the “*Corporacion de Mujeres Líderes*”51 [Corporation of Female Leaders for Chile], and featured in an article writing by the Spanish newspaper El País in 2016. This is an indication of the widening scale in which their work is taking place.

*Double subordination to men and to the state*

As women have open more space and challenge traditional gender roles, there are still structural limitations that hinder their aspirations. Women’s accounts show a double subordination; in relation to men in the settlement, and to the state and the responsibilities of providing housing.

The following quotation52 shows the need for women to redistribute responsibilities with men, as well as claim recognition for their efforts. Carmen (42, MB) is one of the experienced *dirigentas* of MB.

> What happens is that the effort ultimately comes more from women (than men) because to either get out of here or to be able to own this land, we are the ones that are struggling to make it happen. In the end, our husbands are probably going to be the ones that put up the money (for the house), but the everyday struggle comes from us, the women. Here, 80% of the people that attend community meetings are women, the ones that participate in the activities are women, the ones that organise the activities are women, the ones that are responsible for handling the paperwork are women. Therefore, we are the ones making the biggest effort to either get out of here or to be able to stay (Carmen, MB).

In interviews with men, women’s community work was valued, especially in MB where there are tangible results. They recognise the significant amount of work and sacrifice women make, usually expressed by the saying, “*Han dejado los pies en la calle*” [They have left their feet in the street] (Luis, 53 and Ricardo, 62, MB). This

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51 Non-profit organisation based in Viña del Mar that advocates for the inclusion of women in political parties in the country. See website [https://www.mujereslideresparachile.cl](https://www.mujereslideresparachile.cl)

52 This quotation is at the beginning of the thesis, it illustrates the interest and spirit of the research.
usually refers to the physical effort expended working outside of the house, particularly in walking up and down the street to get something done, something which in this context directly relates to the work that dirigentas do inside the settlement (walking up and down the hill) and in the city centre (going from one institutions to the other).

However, women expressed that most of the support they receive from men comes only in economic terms (as discussed in Chapter 6) and not in the everyday work where it is needed. This reflects two things; first the recognition that women's community work is as important as the productive work of men, and secondly, the recognition that women's work – in the maintaining and planning of the home - are essential to everyday life and the acquisition of housing.

This is also reflected in women's community work in relation to authorities:

We have learned through all these years as dirigentes that if it wasn’t for the social organisations, the neighbourhood associations, centros de madre, sports clubs... authorities would not have work. The member of the local authority sits at his/her desk, but it is the dirigentes who are the ones that come with the list, the maps, and organise the meetings. And yet it is them that get the very good salary at the end of the month, they are the "professionals", but a big part of the job is done by us, “and who pays us?” That is why we have learned to claim what is meant for us, because we are workers without a salary (Victoria, 60, community leader, MB).

Victoria’s vision is supported by the director of Corporacion Mujeres para Chile, she affirms that the state relies in the work of community leaders without acknowledging their work: “They [women] make a contribution to society (...) The state does not get involved and just appears at the end, at the opening ceremony, having been completely absent during the whole process” (Interview May, 2015).

7.3.5 Home-making claims of housing and gender, and the space for recognition, redistribution and recognition

The previous sections characterised the two practices, identified the material and symbolic inequalities in which practices emerge, as well as the practices that challenge them.
The practices of planning point to specific housing and gender claims. What types of claims are made through counter-planning and counter-narratives? What spaces are they opening?

The home-making claims made through this set of practices refers first to material claims of redistribution, as planning by dwellers targets the gap in planning in the city and allows informal dwellers to access housing and infrastructure in Viña del Mar. And second, the female’s organisation makes symbolic claims of recognition and representation around women’s capacity as leaders.

**Planning by dwellers makes material claims of redistribution.** Housing and gender claims do not refer necessarily to new issues, but to entitlements that have not been fulfilled. In the case of planning, these relate to strict laws, the underfunding of low-income areas and the lack of adaptation of the housing policy to address informality.

The material claim stems from the precarious socio-economic position of informal dwellers, due to the material inequalities of maldistribution and misrecognition of housing for the urban poor. As was examined, the claims emerge from the specific conditions of the planning context, such as the touristic vision for the city and reduced investment in low-income areas. In turn, this context has perpetuated poverty and urban segregation for low-income areas of Viña del Mar.

The main claim of dwellers is the wish to stay put through self-help housing, however the motivation is different between settlements. In MB, it stems more from a long process of place-making and place attachment in the territory, while in FC is a direct response to the housing context, and the impossibility of accessing housing through the market or housing policy. For the poorest, mainly dwellers from MB, their claim relates to having a housing policy that provides a comprehensive urban solution, and for the other dwellers, mainly from FC, a state or market that provides an affordable housing option.

*How can the practice of planning by dwellers make claims?*

Planning by dwellers is a way in which a practice can make claims, as by practicing the type of urban environment dwellers would like to have, they are making urban claims of the type of city they would like to live in. The amount of green and
community spaces that they have allocated, and the appropriation of spaces with specific meaning, are illustrations of this.

The practice is collective, and widespread, using the historical and shared knowledge of informal dwellers. The more they build and share planning knowledge, the clearer and stronger their aim to stay put becomes.

The fact that dwellers are able to build large and organised settlements, does not only tackle material inequalities, but also it shows their skills and abilities in challenging the misrecognition of their capacities as citizens. In planning literature, authors have also related the practice of planning with broader claims of citizenship in the city, establishing a direct relation between practices of counter-planning and renegotiating the relationship between citizens and the state (Holston, 2009; Miraftab, 2009).

**Female’s organisation makes symbolic claims of recognition, through the practice of redistribution.** Female leadership focuses on the access to housing and infrastructure, making a clear material claim for the redistribution of resources, in contrast with other possible claims around gender issues, such as domestic violence or childcare (issues that are relevant as seen in Chapter 5 and 6). Although their claims are framed in terms of class, there are evident gender issues that relate to those claims.

Housing and gender claims do not refer necessarily to new issues, but to entitlements that have not been fulfilled. In regard to female participation, the recent quota law is the only formal intention towards parity in women’s political participation. However, the conditions are still extremely constrained for (low-income) women, as policies in childcare and other social policies do not allow them to share their responsibilities in the private and public sphere, and thus facilitate their greater participation.

Their material claims stem, from the misrecognition and maldistribution of class and gender inequalities (e.g. as victims of domestic violence, single mothers, or with lower salaries). Although the outcome of their claims is about *material outcomes*, the *process* raises gender issues that women are able to identify. This relates mainly to
the double subordination examined earlier, in relation to male dwellers and to authorities, in certain aspects of their work.

In particular, they recognise inequalities in the process and in the everyday work, as they do not share the same responsibilities. They make a claim for more recognition and the greater redistribution of labour with men and authorities. In relation to authorities in particular, dirigentas would like to be recognised for their skills and knowledge of issues around planning and social development, and therefore have more input in policies and programmes.

Although the process raises gender issues, it is also made possible because of their gender. Their work as dirigentas is built on their gender solidarity. The encouragement to work together comes, from the empathy and understanding of other women's struggles as well as their own. And from the sense of collective endeavour provided by the responsibility and challenge of finding a housing solution, led by strong and fierce women.

*How can female organisation as a practice make claims?*

By practicing leadership, women who had never previously been in a similar position to this, have learned a specific set of skills that has allowed them to negotiate on different scales. Thus, by practicing their leadership, they are showing a different dimension of their own identity (to themselves and to others). Although organisation is not specifically around gender issues, the fact that the solidarity of being dirigentas is based on gender, has created greater gender awareness.

Female leadership in informal settlements is a widespread practice in both the city and the country. The longer women are in their roles as dirigentas, the more skilful and strategic they become, developing a greater political awareness.

Women's participation at a grassroots level, as seen in this case, indicates that women have the interest and the capacity to deal with complex political scenarios. The nature of their participation is motivated by motherhood, but seeks validation as human beings (and not only as women). Furthermore, the different types of participatory spaces that they have opened, gives a good indication of the possibilities of improving participation and representation.
However, women’s participation is mostly driven by class-based struggles, as gender issues are intertwined with issues of class. Differently to the activities of middle-income women, which can articulate aims for gender issues more clearly (as seen with "Mujeres líderes"), it is difficult for pobladoras to advocate more concretely for gender issues, when their gender issues are interrelated with class, and defined by a context of extreme socio-economic inequality. Thus, it is evident that when looking for change, pobladoras cannot dissociate their gender needs to their class needs.

**Female organisation makes important claims of representation.** Female organisation and how they create counter-narratives is an evident claim for representation. Differently to Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, which discussed issues of recognition and redistribution, this chapter addresses the collective planning of the home, and as such, it is possible to analyse issues of representation. What the practice has shown is that women are opening formal and informal spaces of decision-making, to express their needs and aspirations, with the aim to further their claims.

By using direct action (placing themselves in the centre of the city), they claimed spaces for participation were previously was inexistent, securing a place for dialogue with authorities. This also widens their audience, making their claims known at the city and national level. Another important space of participation initially claimed by dwellers, is the decision-making process over the new upgrading scheme. This is a new opportunity for dirigentas to have input in a housing project, as it is a pilot project that does not have the rules and conditions previously established as the housing policy does.

There are also horizontal spaces for sharing knowledge between settlements, creating their own spaces to influence and exhibit their issues and priorities. Other spaces of representation relate to the interest of community leaders in pursuing political positions, which could open new avenues for formal representation, in traditional politics.
Conclusion

This chapter has discussed collective housing practices as a way to articulate the individual practices of men and women at the neighbourhood scale, with wider aspects of planning and participation at the city scale.

The findings show that dwellers are skilful planners of their own habitat, in a context where municipal and central government has not provided housing or infrastructure for lower-income areas in the city. By doing this, women have taken on positions of leadership, driven by the need to provide for their children, but also motivated by a new space in which they can find personal and collective fulfilment, not only as mother and housewives, but as citizens.

In contrast to Chapter 5 and 6, which analysed more individual practices, issues of representation emerged more clearly in this chapter. First in the relationship between male and female community leaders, and in regard to authorities and politicians. Although social policies and hegemonic gender norms make it difficult for women to participate in higher positions of power, there are small spaces that women are claiming, which will hopefully open more space for women’s representation in the political sphere.
Chapter 5, 6, and 7 analysed home-making practices by discussing them in relation to maintenance, construction and planning, as categorised in the framework (see Chapter 2, section 2.4). By discussing the political role of these practices, the chapters revealed that these played out differently in the two informal settlements.

This chapter focuses on the similarities and differences between both informal settlements, cutting across practices and focusing on the specific types of claims the home-making practices make. The chapter presents the differences between settlements, and then it goes to analyse the settlements in relation to claims of redistribution, recognition and representation. A table is presented to summarise the findings by claim and informal settlement.
8.1 Two different informal settlements

The research examines informal dwellers’ claims of staying put, presented widely in the city of Viña del Mar. In order to so, the two largest informal settlements of the city were selected, as a way to examine the collective claim represented by a large number of dwellers and to access a variety of individual home-making practices.

As discussed in the empirical chapters, the different characteristics of the research sites played a role in the findings. In selecting the research sites, I considered the level of organisation of the settlement and whether they had a formal housing solution. These decisions related to the differing ages of the settlements, as a way to capture trajectories of change, and to governance, which referred to each settlement’s capacity to organise and negotiate with actors in the city.

MB was selected as it had a strong community organisation and was the pilot for the regional upgrading agreement. FC, on the other hand, had only just been constituted by the time of the fieldwork, and was thus less organised and did not have a housing solution. The assumptions that the selection of the case studies made was that: (i) the longer a settlement had organised and worked together, the greater their organisational skills and political awareness. This proved to be correct, as MB’s community leaders had a better understanding of the politics of the region, knew how to better navigate social programmes and policies, and had more skills to manage the internal organisation of the settlement. The following assumption was that: (ii) having a housing solution would lead to more articulated housing claims. This proved not to be correct. The findings showed that MB had a strong housing claim of staying put due to place attachment to the territory and their struggle for upgrading. However, FC showed that other motivations, beyond the age and governance of the settlement, could also play a role in strengthening dwellers’ claims to stay put. As discussed in chapter 7, FC showed a strong claim based on the narrative of housing as a right. Their previous experiences in social housing, as allegados and in private rental accommodation had given them a background to articulate their housing claim, even when they had not lived in an informal settlement before and had not been in the territory long at the time of the fieldwork.
The differences between the settlements in relation to the set of practices is analysed below.

### 8.2 Redistribution of resources: How have women opened space for the access to better resources?

The analysis of home-making practices in the previous chapters has shown that women have opened space for the redistribution of resources through everyday practices. The material gains, in terms of infrastructure and services, can be seen to different extents in the practices of maintenance, construction and planning.

MB has been able to access greater infrastructure than FC, due to the age of the settlement and better organisation. As well as housing, MB has built pavements and staircases, informal sewage, water pipes; municipal trucks to deliver water twice a week and rubbish collection; football pitches, churches, community centres through state grants and NGOs; and formal electricity through the electrical company. The largest redistribution of resources is evidently the upgrading scheme that will take place in the following years. It encompasses individual land titling, collective land titling for communal spaces, formal of access to drinking water and sewage, and the improvement of roads. By owning the land, access to new resources to improve communal areas and access to housing subsidies will also become available.

FC on the other hand, had less community infrastructure, and there was a need for pavements and staircases to improve the intra-inter mobility of the settlement. Some of the community halls were being built during the time of the fieldwork. Although water pipes had been connected, electricity (even informal connection) was still a major problem. It was this that led to the direct action against the municipality in 2017. Housing has been built quickly and with a larger initial investment than at MB, giving the settlement a more developed look, even though it has only had been there for a couple of years.

The **maintenance of the home** in both settlements, manifested in the practices of childcare and housework, showed that although they allowed for the access to material gains, these come with significant effort. In terms of maintenance of the
home, experience played a significant role. In MB, although dwellers reported that maintenance of the home was difficult, they have become more experienced over time and have developed creative strategies to deal with it. In contrast, it has been very difficult for dwellers of FC to adapt to this new way of living, and the fact that they do not have formal electricity and water has had a negative impact on their capacity to do housework.

In the case of childcare, although both settlements have developed similar networks, and safeguarding occurs in private and public spaces alike, women in MB were more worried about young people than in FC. They are more aware of the effects the environment can have in their children, which could be because of the time that they have lived in the neighbourhood. In the case of FC, having come from social housing in rougher neighbourhoods, many dwellers were pleasantly surprised by the communal aspect of childcare and the 'security' that the settlement offers. However, in FC it was also possible to see more cases in which women had lost custody, either to the state or to the father, due to their previous, less stable housing arrangements or because of the material conditions of the settlement. This indicated that the more stable housing arrangement of MB could offer a protective set up for childcare. In both cases, formal access to childcare was possible through pre-schools located close to the area, but with very few vacancies and due to the multiple tasks and caring duties of women in the settlements, this option was not preferred.

In terms of construction of the home, although MB has been able to access more housing infrastructure over time, especially considering its communal infrastructure and the upcoming upgrading scheme, the self-help process has been slower, as they have fewer economic resources than FC. In FC, the construction was accelerated by greater disposable incomes. Which allowed for the settlement to have bigger and more solid construction in less time. In many cases they paid a builder, as they did not have previous experience building.

In terms of the planning of the home, MB is significantly more organised – has more active housing committees and experienced community leaders – which has allowed it to acquire and improve the infrastructure of the settlement over time. This has mostly happened through collaboration with universities, NGOs and local
government. In the case of FC, the initial organisation of the land invasion was done by “land brokers”, showing that dwellers did not organise land invasion collectively, but paid for a plot. With time, housing committees have organised and slowly developed skills. For example, community leaders consulted with MB about the size of the roads and advice on how to approach the municipality. What has been interesting about FC is that their lack of experience creating dialogue with authorities, forced them to find other ways to claim resources, such as the direct action to get the municipality to install electrical posts.

8.3 Recognition of women’s skills: Is women’s work recognised and valued?

Beyond the redistribution of resources, the recognition of women’s specific needs and aspirations, as well as their effort and skills, is fundamental in supporting low-income women in struggles for housing. The analysis of different aspects of home-making showed to what extent and in which spaces women are being recognised and supported.

Although in both settlements men and women tend to comply with traditional gender roles, it was possible to observe that younger couples were more flexible, especially in terms of paid work, and to a lesser extent, housework and childcare. In older couples, men tended to be more machista, expecting women to do housework and stay at home. However, although there is an expectation that men should be the main provider - both from women and men - in reality that is not the case, as households need the income. This translates mostly into men looking for more formal jobs in which they have an employer and a contract, while women tend to have multiple short jobs or find informal ways of getting income (i.e. selling groceries, taking care of children, or making products to sell in the settlement or city centre). As women’s jobs tends to be less formal, and therefore less recognised, there is an expectation that women should take responsibility for childcare and housework, as they would potentially have more time.

The findings of the research showed that women found small spaces to renegotiate their gender roles in the household, and were recognised for their skills and
accomplishments as community leaders, both by dwellers in the settlement and by other actors in the city.

In FC, as most dwellers had not lived in an informal settlement before, there was more space to negotiate gender roles in the construction of the home, as neither men nor women knew how to build. Here, more of the women interviewed had formal paid jobs than in MB. However, in other spaces, they replicated unequal gender relations, by assuming that men would be better for higher positions of power, as was seen in the number of male chairs in housing committees. On the other hand, in MB gender roles tended to be more traditional. More of the women interviewed did not have formal jobs, and their limited work opportunities were also related to a general lower educational level in comparison to dwellers in FC. However, unlike FC, the most important positions of leadership in the settlement were held by women. The men interviewed valued and recognised women’s skills in these positions, something that was also acknowledged by authorities that work with community leaders in MB.

The practices of the maintenance of the home in both settlements showed a traditional division of gender roles. However, 6 of 10 men interviewed reported doing some kind housework and showed recognition of women’s work in the household. Furthermore, although housework limits women’s possibilities of engaging in other activities, the effort put into housework and childcare helped women redefine their identity as fierce, strong and capable. By maintaining a home in adverse conditions, women feel proud of the work they do. By doing childcare with others, they also create a network of support amongst women. Both characteristics are key for understanding the possibilities of becoming community leaders, as was examined in Chapter 7.

In terms of construction of the home, the negotiation of roles was different in each settlement. In MB, it was expected that women usually design the house, and men build it. This occurred even in cases in which women had separated, as the former partner would often help with the construction, as Chapter 6 showed. In FC, the lack of construction skills of both men and women, gave a new space for them to build and renegotiate new roles. The practice of building a new house in cases of
domestic violence, particularly observed in MB, showed how women are able to regain control of their lives, bodies and home, and ultimately shift some of the power imbalance.

In terms of planning of the home, in MB, dirigentas have developed multiple skills and knowledge due to the upgrading scheme. Female community leaders’ efforts are recognised by male dwellers and policy officers. In FC, female community leaders may be less skilled than those in MB, but they have a stronger narrative of housing rights, which they used effectively in the direct action against the municipality in 2017. FC’s struggle for recognition goes beyond specific actions and encompasses being recognised as an informal settlement, as they formed after the last national cadastre and identify not as “poor”, but as victims of a “housing crisis”.

One of the most important findings was that women use motherhood - a traditional gender role - to put themselves in a more empowered position. Motherhood drives the mobilisation of women to claim more resources and recognition from their partners, other men in the settlement, and the state. In the research sites, women redefine themselves as strong and skilled, in order to claim for redistribution of resources, recognition and participation.

Although women have found spaces for recognition of their skills and value, particularly in their roles as dirigentas, there were some fundamental issues that manifested gender inequality in relation to homemaking. First, the high level of domestic violence – particularly in MB – and second, the pressure women feel in providing a house for their children, as they affirmed that men are freer to leave the house and start a new family. This was summarised by the phrase of one of the participants in FC: “women build one house, men build many.”

8.4 Representation: Have women claimed new spaces of representation and participation in the city?

Similar to the rest of the country, most of the community leaders in both settlements are women. However, there was a distinct difference between MB and FC. While in MB women were in all the positions of power (i.e. chair of housing committees and
representative of the settlement), in FC there were more men on the board and many were in the most important positions. This aspect, as well as the level of experience of community leaders, is one of the most distinct differences between the two settlements.

**MB** is recognised in the city and by policy makers, proved by the fact that they were chosen as the pilot upgrading project. Women have a highly sophisticated representation system in the settlement and have opened space through dialogue and close relationships with politicians and political parties. On the other hand, **FC** has less experience managing a settlement and dealing with authorities. Nevertheless, in only a couple of years they have become known in the city due to the direct action of 2017.

There were some differences of how participation was claimed and in what spaces it occurred. In the case of **MB**, because of the larger participation of women in leadership positions over a longer period of time, they have developed a range of skills and greater awareness of their gender position in relation to both men in the settlement and the state in general. They are more aware of the spaces of inequality than **FC**, and this has become clearer the more they achieve. Victoria, a representative of **MB**, discusses this in chapter 6. She argues that the state (and male dwellers) take advantage of their work, as the better they become, the more they fill gaps in other actors’ responsibilities. They thus recognise that the balance is fragile and that the negotiations are constant.

In terms of the awareness and mobilisation around claims, the discussion section in each empirical chapter examined the extent to which practices of dwellers have developed into claims and transformed into action. In both settlements, although there is an awareness of unequal relations in the **maintenance of the home**, no claims have been voiced or organised in the settlements. In terms of **construction**, there is a clear and agreed claim - the rejection of social housing - expressed in the everyday practices of self-help construction towards a permanent housing solution. This has been translated into a more visible **planning** role in the city. The extent in which this claimed has been voiced to authorities varies in the two settlements. In **MB**, it has been via a continuous dialogue with authorities, which started in a pilot
project and then moved to a regional upgrading scheme. The conditions of the construction and planning are negotiated, as funding constraints, dwellers' aspirations and authorities' expertise makes it a flexible ground for negotiations. The process of negotiating housing has meant some of the female community leaders have caught the attention of the public. Victoria, representative of MB, was awarded “Prominent Woman” by an NGO and invited to represent Chile abroad.
| GENERAL |
| REDISTRIBUTION | RECOGNITION | REPRESENTATION |
| MB has accessed more infrastructure due to the age of the settlement and better organisation. MB has more communal spaces, better access to services, more community centres. Housing has improved slowly with time, differently to FC that was able to build quicker. | In MB community leaders are recognised by their skills in the settlement, city and by policy makers. They are also more aware of their subordination to men and the state. In FC men are in more positions of power. But there was more space to renegotiate gender roles in the construction of the house. | In MB women have a highly sophisticated representation system in the settlement. Have open space through dialogue and close relationships with politicians and political parties. FC were less experienced and less organised. Women did not hold all the positions of power. Strategy of direction action. |

| MAINTENANCE |
|Women recognised the difficulties of doing housework with limited access to services. | In both settlements women do most of the housework and childcare. | No claims around these issues were voiced or organised. |
| [MB] They have developed creative tactics. [FC] They were trying to find ways to deal with it. Women help each other with childcare. | [MB] There is some recognition of men of the unbalanced workload, especially from young men who tend to engage more evenly in housework, and to a lesser extend in childcare. | |
| Limited access to childcare due to availability and because it does not adjust their needs. | In this unbalanced relationship in the maintenance of the home, women find strength in their daily efforts, and have claimed an identity characterised as a Feisty motherhood. | |
| [MB] Women are mostly worried about young people, as they are aware of the challenges of the environment they live in. [FC] They enjoy the new communal aspect of childcare and the use of public space (Men involved in activities in the public space). More cases of children lost to custody or child services due to unstable living before. | |

| CONSTRUCTION |
|Quick, affordable and unbureaucratic way of acquiring shelter. | Women build less but have more control over the design of the house. | The strongest claim in both settlements is the rejection to the conditions of social housing, and the wish to stay put building in their own terms. |
| [FC] No skills, more difficult to build (men know less about construction). But they have more resources. Pay builders. Build in cement quicker. | [MB] More female women have built their own house, specially in the cases of domestic violence. | |
| [MB] Slower construction process, less resources. Men know how to build more. | |

| PLANNING |
|Through planning practices, dwellers have been able to build the two largest settlements in Chile. | Dwellers claim recognition as citizens by constructing a new area in the city | This is the most distinct aspect between settlements. MB has been able to open space of dialogue at the city and regional level, to negotiate the upgrading scheme. |
| [MB] Have secured more communal aspects through collaborations with organisations. | [MB] Their wish to stay put comes from the history with the place, place-attachment. | [MB] Stronger solidarity between female leaders, more experienced and better skills. Better at negotiating and dealing with clientalistic relationships. |
| [FC] Have been able to secure more through their own efforts, as they have more resources. Learnt from MB (i.e. Sizes of plots and roads). | [FC] Their claims come from their experience in social housing. They will like to be recognised as victims of a “housing crisis”, and to be included in the national cadastre of informal settlements. | [FC] Less skilled as leaders, men in more positions of power. |
Conclusion

The comparison between the two informal settlements highlights important aspects about the politics of home-making.

In terms of the trajectory of the settlement, its age and organisational level proved to be important aspects for better engaging in the difficulties of the maintenance of the home and on planning a permanent solution for the settlement. However, although less organised and experienced, FC showed that they have been successful in the construction of the home. Their different class position has allowed FC dwellers to access loans and savings to build bigger and more permeant houses than those of MB. Less experienced than those of MB, FC’s community leaders have engaged in the political landscape less gracefully, but with effective direct action to get their voices heard at the city and regional level.

In terms of the housing solution and specific housing claims, the findings showed that MB has voiced a unified and consistent wish to stay put. On the other hand, FC has done so in a shorter time-frame, but still with great clarity. They are not informed by a long history with the territory and dialogue with authorities, but instead by the urgency of housing conditions experienced while living in social housing or as allegados.

Although there are differences between the strategies and level of organisation between the two cases, the housing claim is the same, as they both have voiced their wish to stay put and build their own houses. It is from that common goal that the two settlements have interacted with each other. The same way that MB asked older housing committees in the area for advice, FC has done so with MB. Community leaders know each other, have met and helped each other, mostly with the guidelines of how to plan an informal settlements and support on how to be a community leader. The way knowledge is shared between settlements manifests spatially in the similarities of construction and planning practices, such as the same size of roads and size of plots. The most important aspect of the shared dimension of home-making has been MB pilot upgrading project. It has opened the space for the settlements in the city, and eventually for the region through the upgrading scheme,
to access the same type of solution. In this sense, MB has positioned itself as the pioneer in dealing with authorities and managing an upgrading project, and is one that is looked up to by the other settlements.

Finally, in terms of gender relations, women in both settlements have engaged in the struggle for housing in the first instance through the material need of securing a minimum shelter. The findings show that later, the maintenance of the house, the new construction and the engagement in the planning can increase women's awareness of their gender and class position. The different ages of the settlements showed this clearly, in both the accounts of MB community leaders who have been working in the settlements for several years, and those in FC, where women have only been in the role for less than two years. In the process, women from both settlements have found solidarities with other women, dwellers, and other actors in the city, helping some of them put themselves in a more empowered position. This was the case for community leaders who participated in the research. Their high level of awareness around housing rights, could translate not only into planning the home practices, but to other rights that have been neglected or diminished.
I started this research driven by my personal involvement in the case study and the question, *what is the political role of home-making practices?* I had two aims in mind by exploring this question: to understand the use of the theoretical notion of home for the study of low-income housing, and to explore the possibility of establishing a relationship between home-making practices and housing claims.

This last chapter looks the three sets of practices and examines the main findings. I address the main research question and the two sub-questions by looking at housing and gender inequalities, home-making practices, and the space for advancement of social justice.
I go on to discuss the implications of the research for theory and practice. At the end of the chapter, I present some ideas for further research which emerge from this experience.

9.1 Research findings and crosscutting themes

The thesis explored the everyday practices of women in two informal settlements in Viña del Mar, in order to answer the two sub-questions posed in this research.

In Chapter 2, I introduced the analytical framework, The Politics of Home-Making, which takes into consideration literature of everyday politics and sociology of resistance, feminist geographers’ notion of home, and Fraser's social justice tri-dimensional model. The framework is informed by this set of literature, in which I highlight the agency of informal dwellers through home-making practices. The framework draws on notions of feminist geographers, adapted for low-income housing and use in housing studies. The framework puts forward three main sets of practices from which to analyse the role of women in struggles for housing. These are the maintenance of the home, the construction of the home and the planning of the home.

Chapter 3 positioned the research within a specific epistemology of social constructivism and feminist research, reflecting on issues of positionality, particularly on the relationship between being an insider/outsider, as a 30-year old Chilean woman doing research in a familiar place. It discussed the research design and introduced the set of methods used. The participatory visual methods, particularly the participatory photography workshops, were a space not only to collect information, but proved to be transformative, as participants showed signs of greater awareness and empowerment in relation to themselves, and also towards collective housing and gender claims.

Chapter 4 contextualised the research, analysing the neoliberal origins of the housing policy and explaining why there has been little space for in-situ upgrading of informal settlements in Chile. It positioned women’s claims in perspective by mapping the main social policies and laws that affect women in the country, and the historical role of women’s participation in Chile. As it was explained, motherhood
and everyday practices have been key ways in which women of any class status have engaged with politics in the country. The second part of the chapter explored the regional upgrading scheme and discussed how it was possible in a country where urban decisions are mainly taken at the central level. The specific case of informal dwellers of Viña del Mar has been under-documented, and as such this second part consists of primary data collected during the research.

**Chapters 5, 6 and 7** analysed and discussed the findings. The empirical chapters identified six key home-making practices of women in informal settlements in Viña del Mar, and discussed them in relation to men's practices and the socio-political context from which they emerge. The main practices identified are shown in Table 13.

**Table 13 | Home-making practices identified in empirical chapters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 5</th>
<th>Maintenance of the Home:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Service-less housework</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Care work in solidarity</td>
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<tr>
<th>Chapter 6</th>
<th>Construction of the Home:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Progressive construction towards permanent housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Creation of safer spaces</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Chapter 7</th>
<th>Planning of the Home:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Planning by dwellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Female Organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source: Author**

**Chapter 8** provided a comparative analysis between the two informal settlements. The chapter honed-in on the similarities and differences between the settlements to highlight important aspects of the politics of home-making in relation to the redistribution of resources, recognition of skills and representation at the city level.
Research Questions

The two research sub-questions addressed in the analytical chapters identified the conditions in which the home-making practices emerged, in relation to housing and gender inequality.

Research sub-question 1:

How do the home-making practices of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar reflect current gender and housing inequalities?

Each empirical chapter identified gender and housing inequalities from which the home-making practices emerged. In the chapters, they have been referred to as material (redistribution) and symbolic (recognition) inequalities, and here they are further divided by housing and gender. Table 14 summarises the conditions examined in the discussion section of the empirical chapters. The inequalities identified responded mainly to:
Table 14 | Gender and housing inequalities identified in empirical chapters

| Housing Maldistribution | Low availability and difficult access to social housing  
|                         | Impossibility of access to private housing  
|                         | Rejection of material conditions of social housing (construction standards, size, design, location)  
|                         | Disparity in investment from the city of Viña del Mar  
|                         | Low construction of social housing in the region of Valparaiso, (particularly in the city of Viña del Mar)  

| Housing Misrecognition | Housing subsidies do not fulfil dwellers needs  
|                        | Narrative of touristic city - invisibility of informal dwellers  
|                        | Difficulties in accessing a bank loan  
|                        | Eligibility (narrow targeting of social housing)  
|                        | Bad reputation of housing policy in improving quality of life  
|                        | State childcare does not adapt to dweller’s specific need  

| Gender Maldistribution | Inseparability between paid and unpaid childcare  
|                       | Low availability and difficult access to shelter and housing for victims of gender violence  

| Gender Misrecognition | Women’s traditional role in the private sphere, reinforced during dictatorship  
|                       | Latin American value of marianismo, expressed in high self-sacrifice and moral responsibility for children  
|                       | Women as primary caregivers in social programmes  
|                       | Gender violence as part of a machista culture  
|                       | Conservative legislation around gender violence  
|                       | Disparity in women’s representation between grassroots and parliament (low representation of women in positions of power)  

Source: Author

What does this tell us about how housing mediates gender relations? The identification of conditions in which practices emerge allowed me to map the structural landscape in which women operate. It made evident that the difficulties in accessing the housing that dwellers value is not determined by their class position or gender relations. In terms of access to housing, the findings show that although there is a significant provision of social housing through the housing policy, the conditions in which it is provided does not meet the needs and aspirations of dwellers. Dwellers of the two largest informal settlements of Viña del Mar critique the lack of control and participation that exists in the current social housing process, as well as its low material conditions, as indicated in Table 13: Housing Maldistribution and Housing Misrecognition. Dwellers identified these conditions as
detrimental for their wellbeing and ultimately, as a lack of recognition of dwellers as equal citizens.

Additionally, the strict and inflexible approach to informality has limited the options of the housing policy to whole-housing projects, with less regard for alternative housing options that may offer a more comprehensive inclusion in the city. This is not only with the aim of providing shelter, but also targets other dimensions of urban life such transport, location, education, access to culture and others.

Gender relations, on the other hand, operate in a mostly machista and marianista environment. This was examined through the main policies and social programmes that affect women, as showed in Table 13: Gender Maldistribution and Gender Misrecognition. Although some policies have changed, until recently women have lived in a constrained legal landscape (i.e. laws on domestic violence, abortion, divorce, and property). In the settlements, low-income women are expected to maintain the home, with fewer opportunities to develop outside of the private sphere. This expectation comes from men as well as from women themselves, and in a context in which low-income women effectively have fewer economic and work opportunities. The high self-sacrifice of the mother (in Chile reinforced by the idea of the huacho), puts low-income women in a position of emotional and economic strain, as many women bear sole responsibility for raising children, in the absence of both the father and the state. However, men’s accounts showed that the static distinction of gender roles, emphasised by the machismo/marianismo divide, could be changing, particularly in households with younger men. As the researched showed, some of the participants saw women’s access to paid work and the more equal division of housework as a natural and predictable change. This gave an indication of greater shared distribution of tasks and recognition of women’s effort.
Research sub-question 2

In which ways do the home-making practices of informal dwellers in Viña del Mar open space for the advancement of social justice for women in struggles for housing?

The agency exerted by dwellers is shown in their home-making practices. While some are mostly survival strategies, such as childcare in solidarity, others such as female organisation and planning by dwellers defy established norms, structures and ideologies. The agency in these practices in challenging or navigating certain situations, is initially triggered by the need to mitigate and offset the consequences of urban and gender inequality, such as need for housing or the threat and consequences of domestic violence. However, it is followed by a more empowered position, challenging established ideas about the provision of housing and of gender relations. See the framework in Table 15, which shows the findings per dimension.
### Table 15| Analytical Framework: Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIMENSIONS OF HOME-MAKING</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAINTENANCE OF THE HOME</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The strategies of maintaining the home shows the unequal distribution of childcare and housework between women and men. Childcare, emerged as a survival strategy to care for children and young people collectively, in the private and public space, in a challenging environment. The maintenance of the home aims to preserve the home and its members, trying to provide a habitable space. In the long term, it challenges the notion of where can home be established, as life is preserved in a place considered uninhabitable in the city. The effort put into the maintenance has forged a specific identity of women, which I have called Feisty Motherhood, in which women create a new narrative of their identity, putting themselves in a more empowered position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **CONSTRUCTION OF THE HOME** |
| The creation of a permanent home through land invasion and self-help is a strategy used by dwellers to access housing in an affordable way and, most importantly, on their own terms. This is in opposition to the Chilean logic of the housing market and housing policy. What distinguishes this practice from informal housing practices in other parts of the country, is the final aim of transforming self-help into a permanent house. The evidence showed construction with cement and new financing mechanisms. Safer spaces emerged as a strategy used by women to provide an alternative space to the violent home, either temporarily or long-term. Is a way to escape violence, isolation, fear or any threat to the body and mind. As such it relates to the creation of a new private safe space in the settlement, caused by the lack of accessible and suitable accommodation for women, in a context of widespread machismo. |

| **PLANNING OF THE HOME** |
| The practices of planning the home, include the informal planning and production of the territory, including the distribution and use of land, communal infrastructure, and the provision of services. Counter-planning challenges the normative and regulatory characteristics of the city and country, as well as the specific vision for Viña del Mar. The planning principles that emerged, are both those of inclusion and of commodification of housing and land. The co-existence of principles, shows the difficulties that dwellers have in articulating counter-planning strategies that ultimately challenge the mode of production of the city. 

*Dirigentes* display a range of skills and experience which have allowed them to improve the resources of their communities, be recognised by their skills and open new spaces of representation in the city and country. Their role is initially encouraged by women’s role as mothers and the solidarity that exists between women. |

**Source:** Author
The set of practices raised material claims of redistribution, symbolic claims of recognition, and claims of representation.

The most evident claims made by women are in terms of the redistribution of resources, reflected in better infrastructure, housing and living conditions. However, although most of their more overt claims are related to issues of redistribution, gender plays a predominant role not only in how pobladoras define themselves, but also how and why the practices take place. Female solidarity was an important element in the organisation of the practices, as was seen, with community leaders and childcare practices. The aim of most practices also has a gender element, related to their role as mothers. Motherhood reinforces the desire to provide housing (and a stable future) for their children. As such, women see a significant distance between their responsibility of accessing permanent housing, and that of men.

The case shows the importance women put on the recognition of their skills and their contribution to the acquisition of infrastructure and their community work. As such, they identify the unequal relationship they have with their partners (in the household), with men in the settlement (responsibilities in the housing struggle) and with the state (authorities and policies).

In terms of representation, this case has shown how women – through long negotiation processes and through direct action – have been able to bring housing struggles to the forefront once more. Over the years, urban social movements in Chile have become less important, as there is a dominant notion that the main housing problems have been solved. These contemporary claims differ from those of urban movements of the 1970s, as dwellers of Felipe Camiroaga are new informal dwellers, and have formed their claims around a wish to stay put. Manuel Bustos has managed to secure an upgrading project, which has opened the possibility for informal settlements to stay in the city. The project has the potential for starting a conversation around the approach to informality – not ‘moving informal settlements to social housing’ but upgrading them as part of the city.

More widely, the case shows a demand for universal social rights, linked to urban and gender issues. While they have not been fully articulated in overt claims, they are distinguishable through specific practices. As such, practices emerge as an initial step in the process of claim-making, as women become more aware of their social
condition, and their needs and aspirations in a reiterative process between being and doing. By performing some of their aspirations (e.g. creating safer spaces for their children and for themselves in cases of domestic violence), they are becoming aware of some of the inequalities in which they are embedded and possible solutions to overcome them. Most importantly, home-making practices represent a first step of awareness in a continuum of empowerment and collective action.

Finally, and in regard to the main research question – home-making practices have a political role in struggles for housing and gender equality. Women’s agency is expressed in various, but often constrained ways. In a limiting situation where there are fixed gender roles, few options of paid work, difficult living conditions, and an often non-existent or un-supportive partner, women find a source of consciousness and resistance in their home-making practices. They feel proud of their ability to maintain their homes, every day, under challenging conditions. This manifest itself in daily successes such as washing clothes with scarce water, keeping their children out of harm’s way and leading their communities. If we are to think that the personal is political, then nurturing a family, creating a safe and clean home, and negotiating with authorities, in a context of socioeconomic and urban precariousness, is a political act. Women insist on creating home, even under difficult conditions.

9.2 Contribution to theory and practice

This thesis calls for a broader understanding of low-income housing, particularly self-help housing, by including subjective and political aspects of the notion of home. It contributes by putting forward a new framework in which to examine housing from a post-modern and gender approach. It makes the case for the use of home-making practices as the object of analysis and an entry point to document women’s efforts, and map covert housing and gender claims.

The research has implications for the work of feminist urban planners, as home-making practices can be used as a way to categorise practices of low-income women in the struggle for housing through the maintenance, construction and planning of the home. In particular, it contributes to the work of Meth (2010) and Miraftab (2009) in analysing the insurgent planning practices of female informal dwellers.
It also has implications for work on development studies and gender, and how to think about women's agency in the advancement of social justice. The research builds on the work done by Moser (1987a; 1989; 1993) and Chant & McIlwaine (2016). Analysing gender relations in informal settlements, specifically on how women access and are affected by housing struggles.

The research developed a lens through which to interrogate the political role of home-making practices, called The Politics of Home-Making. The framework draws on Heidegger's (1971) work, which focuses on 'building as man's way of being in the world', emphasising the importance of the construction of housing, and Young's (2000) feminist critique, by stressing the role of women in the maintenance of the home. I adapted this discussion for its application to women's role in struggles for housing, in which I included the community organising at the settlement, drawing from Moser's (1993) framework on gender roles. The distinction between maintenance, construction and planning of the home proved to be a valuable way of categorising practices, especially as it incorporated the aspect of construction and planning, which are key when analysing processes of self-help housing, but often disregarding when examining women's efforts.

The findings on each of the dimensions of the framework make a specific contribution to theory.

On the **maintenance of the home**, with the practice of childcare in solidarity, the research provided evidence on informal arrangements of care. This contributes to a gap in knowledge in the literature in regards to the conditions in which care arrangement occurs and some of its possible positive aspects for low-income women (Dyck, 1996; England, 1996). The practice states the conditions under which such support systems between women in informal childcare arrangements develop, how it supports solidarities between women, and how it can encourage them to participate as community leaders. The practice provides evidence on how relationships are configured, stating the different types of exchanges for childcare, (i.e. water, salary, food), as well as how it manifests spatially.

The evidence on how it manifests in space, confirms the findings of Pino (2015) on the existence of family units, proving that they also exist in the city of Viña del Mar and in much bigger settlements than those researched by the author. The research
provides more specific data on how family units work and the specific conditions for informal arrangements of care. The research showed that 50% of the dwellers interviewed have a family member or friend living closely in the settlement, that all older dwellers have caring responsibilities, and that some social groups are excluded from supports networks, such as in the cases of some immigrants.

On the **construction of the home**, the research contributes two main findings. In Chile, there is a gap in current literature relating to the documentation of processes of self-help building, the wish to stay put of several informal settlements, and policy programmes that could support this type of building. So, although international literature on self-help has widely researched how housing is constructed (Ortega, 2016), the meanings of self-help for its dwellers (Turner, 1976) and housing programmes, such as in-situ upgrading (Fiori & Brandão, 2010; Gouverneur, 2015), the research provides fresh evidence of self-help housing in the Chilean context. The research provides evidence on three aspects of self-help: the decisions that households made based on family dynamics, decisions about materials used and financing mechanisms. The new phenomenon of self-help through monetary loans, and investing savings from the social housing account, has not been documented in Chilean academia before.

The second finding on constriction of the home, is the creation of safer spaces. The practiced evidenced the high rate of domestic violence experienced by the women interviewed. 40% of women interviewed suffered domestic violence and use the strategy of moving out and building a new house in the same settlement. This is a strategy that has not been documented in Chilean academia. The movement between territorial scales to deal with gender violence echoes Whitzman’s (2007) international findings on the strategies used by low-income women in contexts of violence, who find safety in communal spaces. However, the finding differentiates from Whitzman’s research, as women drew on resources and support at the settlement level, to effectively build a new ‘private space’ in which to feel safe. It also differentiates with Shalhoub-Kerorkian (2006), as the home is not build metaphorically by reproductive activities, but through the physical construction of a new house.

The **planning of the home** makes two contributions. Planning by dwellers emerges as a counter-planning strategy used to deal with lack of housing options and also as
a way of adjusting to their specific housing aspirations, which differ from those offered by social housing. Counter-planning, as defined by Miraftab (2009), needs to consider principles of inclusion. However, the evidence of this case shows that although ideas of inclusion are present in dwellers practices – such as the prioritization of use value over exchange value of land and housing - they co-exist with neoliberal principles. The principles used vary depending on the area, on the phase of the settlement, and on personal relationships. This finding reveals the complexity and dynamism of counter-planning, in a country which has propagated a neoliberal housing agenda, establishing the liberalisation and privatisation of urban planning.

Finally, female organisation emerges as a strategy for women to improve their access to resources, the recognition of their skills, and ultimately their representation at the city level. The evidence shows that women are able to put themselves in this position by a gradual process of awareness and self-confidence, which is built from their gender solidarity, in what I have called Feisty Motherhood.

The research confirms the findings of previous feminist research work in Chile (and Latin America) about the key role that motherhood plays in women’s political participation. The thesis updates earlier research, mostly done in the 1980s in Chile’s informal settlements (Hardy, 1989; Valdés & Weinstein, 1989; 1993; Weinstein, 1996) by looking at contemporary female dwellers. By putting forward the concept of Feisty Motherhood (Chapter 5 & 7) which emerged from the findings, it builds on the theorisation of Latin American scholars – Supermadre (Chaney, 1979) and Militant Mothers (Álvarez, 1990) - but distinguishes itself from them, as it emphasises not only the role of motherhood, but of the sacrifice inherent in the physical construction of the home in a settlement. As such, the concept is developed specifically in the light of the built environment and refers specifically to the role of motherhood in the struggle for housing for informal dwellers.

In regards to the national context and the specific case study, the thesis makes a significant effort to expand research on informal dwellers and the perception of housing policy in cities outside of Santiago. Most of the information on informal settlements relates to housing, but less has been documented about gender relations and inequalities. It provides new insights about contemporary informal settlements and the wish to stay put. The thesis builds on a small group of local research
(Arellano, 2004; Pino 2015; Vildósola, 2011), and documents informal dwellers’ housing practices in Viña del Mar in more depth. It also sheds light on an intersection that has not been explored widely, how the built environment mediates gender relations. It distinguishes from Vildósola and Arellano’s accounts as it shows a new type of land invasion, through land brokers instead of aggregation, and it documents a “new informal dweller”, specifically those of FC, who have come from rented accommodation. This shows that invading land is not only a historical process, but responds to new factors which lead more people to project a future in an informal settlement. As such, housing struggles and informal dwellers as a movement have evolved from those characterised during 1980 and 1990s, but still represent a pressing issue for the country.

A key methodological contribution is the development of the Critical Visual Participatory Wheel, highlighting the use of participatory photography for the research of the built environment, specifically for the understanding of place-making and home-making. It builds on Manzo’s (2014) work on place, but develops a much more in-depth relationship with participants through visual engagement. A key methodological finding was that the use of participatory photography, complemented by language-based methods, opened the notion of home to a diverse set of places, practices and feelings, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of home. As a whole, this set of methods is a significant contribution to the way participatory research using feminist principles can be implemented, as it showed itself not only to be a way to collect data, but also as a transformational tool for participants. It allowed: (i) the visual representation of reality, (ii) a space to reflect on the self and place (developing awareness of the place), (iii) empowerment, (iv) and co-production of knowledge. These characteristics can strengthen dwellers’ awareness of social issues, and further support mobilisation and collective action.

9.3 Avenues for further research

As the case study is relatively new, the possibilities for further research are significant. The research has mapped home-making practices, understanding the conditions from which they emerge and what types of claims they relate to. Further research needs to be undertaken to understand how they can be strengthened into more organised claims, and how these emergent claims can (or have been) taken
forward. As Fraser proposes, by looking at spaces of representation and participation, one can examine both the spaces for decision-making and assess if there are governance structures in place to achieve those claims.

The research has made claims for two of the largest informal settlements in the city (and country). However, less is known about smaller informal settlements in the region (less than 50 households), which tend to be less organised and more based on kinship relationships (Pino, 2015). As such, more research is needed in other types of informal settlements in the region in order to develop a more nuanced understanding of housing and gender claims in this context.

Another gap with regards to initiatives of self-help is that of its history. The strong presence and narrative in Chile around the whole-housing system since 1980s has erased housing alternatives. In supporting informal dwellers’ claims of staying put, a key step is to map the history of self-help projects in the city and the trajectories of change. Thus, mapping the historical upgrading of settlements, the location of current social housing and new informal settlements, the resources mobilised and the political processes that have occurred who support or frustrate processes of self-help. This was suggested by policy makers, academics and dwellers themselves during the fieldwork. A longitudinal research on different self-help processes may give insights into what processes have been more successful and better attend to dwellers’ needs and aspirations.

This study has focussed on the efforts and agency of women in relation to men. Further research should be done to explore gender relations, and how men, in particular, are affected by the economic and political context. The lack of research in Chile about contemporary informal settlements, particularly with a gender approach, shows that significantly more work needs to be done in the country if we are to understand how the built environment mediates gender relations, and how it can provide men and women, and their children, with better housing opportunities.
REFERENCES


Davis, C. (2001). Gender and Housing. In M. Harrison & C. Davis (Eds.), *Housing, social policy and difference: Disability, ethnicity, gender and housing* (pp. 167–190). Bristol: Policy Press at the University of Bristol.


Peake, L. (1997). From co-operative socialism to a social housing policy? Declines and revivals in housing policy in Guyana. In R. Potter & D. Conway (Eds.), Self-Help Housing, the Poor and the State in the Caribbean (pp.120-140). Kingston: University of the West Indies & University of Tennessee Press.


APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Information sheet and consent form, English and Spanish versions

Information sheet to participate in the research study | English Version

Information Sheet for participating in Research Study

You will be given a copy of this information sheet.

Title of Project: The politics of home-making practices: The case of informal settlements in Valparaíso, Chile

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number): 6162/001

Name of researcher & contact details: ______________________

We would like to invite you to participate in this research project.

Details of Study:

Objective: The study aims to understand the role of everyday practices, specifically homemaking practices of residents living in the settlement. This research will help understand what you value about your home and what are you, your family and community doing on a daily basis to realize your housing aspirations. The data collected will help to put together the different housing experiences in the settlements of Valparaíso Region. The results will be available for you and the community in case you think it can help to advocate or support activities related to housing in the settlement.

Participants: The research will recruit adult residents of informal settlements in between the age of 16 to 70. Residents will be invited to participate in a first phase that involves in-depth interviews and participatory photography workshop. These activities will require 2 hours a week for 2 months approx. Some participants will be invited to continue to a second phase that involves the same activities for a similar amount of time. The interviews and workshops will be in a place that you have easy access and feel comfortable, such as community centre in the settlement.
Risks & Benefits: You will be discussing personal experiences about your house and what it means for your family, this could cause distress. You will not be asked to reveal anything that you do not want and you can withdraw the research at any point without consequences.

The participation in this study is voluntary (no money will be given for participating). You will learn how to use a digital camera and will be able to keep 5 printed pictures of choice. You will be invited to a final presentation of preliminary results in the settlement and will be offered a copy of the short version of the final report. The results of the research can be use by community members to support your on-going housing activities.

Anonymity and confidentiality: If you decide to be anonymous you will be given a pseudonym and information will be recorded without personal identifiable data. You may withdraw your data from the project at any time up until it is transcribed for use in the final report (May 2015). Recorded interviews will be transcribed (written up) and the tape will then be wiped clear.

Please discuss the information above with others if you wish or ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

It is up to you to decide whether to take part or not; choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. This research is not linked to any other housing initiative in the settlement, thus not taking part of the study does not affect your housing situation. If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act 1998 and Chile Data Protection Law No. 19.628
Informed Consent Form for participating in research

Please complete this form after you have read the Information Sheet and/or listened to an explanation about the research.

Title of Project: The politics of home-making practices: The case of informal settlements in Valparaíso, Chile

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee (Project ID Number): 6162/001

Thank you for your interest in taking part in this research. Before you agree to take part, the person organising the research must explain the project to you.

If you have any questions arising from the Information Sheet or explanation already given to you, please ask the researcher before you to decide whether to join in. You will be given a copy of this Consent Form to keep and refer to at any time.

Participant’s Statement

I __________________________

• Have read the notes written above and the information sheet, and understand what the study involves.

• Understand that if I decide at any time that I no longer wish to take part in this project, I can notify the researchers involved and withdraw immediately.

• Consent to the processing of the recording for the purposes of this research study and understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and Chile Data Protection Law 19.628.

• Agree that the research project named above has been explained to me to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in this study.

• I agree to be contacted in the future by UCL researchers who would like to invite me to participate in follow-up studies.

• I understand that the information I have submitted will be published as a report and I will be sent a copy. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained if I decide to and it will not be possible to identify me from any publications.

Signed: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
Hoja de Información para Participación en Estudio

Se le entregará una copia de esta hoja.

Título del Proyecto: Prácticas para hacer hogar: El caso de las Tomas de Viña del Mar, Chile.

Este estudio ha sido aprobado por el Comité de Ética de UCL (Número del Proyecto): 6162/001

Nombre de la investigadora y datos de contacto

Nos gustaría invitar a ___________________________ a participar a este proyecto de investigación.

Detalles del Estudio:

Objetivo: Este estudio tiene por objetivo explorar el rol de las prácticas diarias de los pobladores, particularmente las que forman hogar. Esta investigación busca entender lo que ud., su familia y comunidad, valoran de su hogar y qué hacen a diario para lograrlo. Los datos recolectados ayudarán a sistematizar las distintas experiencias de hogar en las tomas de Valparaíso. Los resultados estará disponible para ud. y su comunidad en caso que ayude a las actividades que realizan actualmente con respecto a la vivienda.

Participantes: El estudio se hará con adultos, entre 16 y 70 años que vivan en la toma. Serán invitados a participar en una primera fase que consiste en entrevistas en profundidad y un taller de fotografía. Estas actividades van a requerir de aproximadamente 2 horas a la semana por 2 meses. Algunos participantes van a ser invitados a continuar en la segunda fase. El tiempo y tipo de actividades es similar a la primera fase. Las entrevistas y talleres van a ser en un lugar que los participantes acuerden, cerca de su casa y en el que se sientan cómodos. Por ejemplo, sede comunitaria.

Riesgos y beneficios: En las entrevistas se van a discutir experiencias personales sobre la vivienda y lo que significa para la familia. Esto puede causar estrés. No se
le pedirá que comente sobre nada que no quiera y se puede salir del estudio cuando ud. lo estime, sin ninguna consecuencia negativa.

La participación en el estudio es voluntaria (no recibirá dinero por participar). Va a poder aprender cómo usar una máquina de fotografía digital y se podrá quedar con 5 fotos que ud. escoga. Va a ser invitado a la presentación preliminar de los resultados y se le ofrecerá una copia del reporte final. Los resultados del estudio pueden ser usados por los miembros de la comunidad para apoyar las actividades de vivienda existente.

**Anonimidad y confidencialidad:** Si decide permanecer anónimo se le dará un nombre falso y no se guardará ningún dato personal con el que pueda ser identificado. Se puede salir del estudio en cualquier momento hasta que los datos sean transcritos para el reporte final (Mayo 2015). Entrevistas grabadas serán transcritas y después se borrará la grabación.

Por favor discuta la anterior información con otros si quiere o pregunte si tiene alguna duda o requiere más información.

Depende de ud. decidir si quiere participar o no, si no participa esto no tendrá consecuencias negativas y no está relacionado con ninguna otra iniciativa de vivienda que se esté llevando acabo en la toma.

Si decide ser parte del estudio se le dará esta hoja de información y se le pedirá que firme la hoja de consentimiento.

**Todos los datos serán recolectados y guardados según la Ley de Protección de datos Acta 1998 de UK y Ley de Protección de Datos No. 19.628 de Chile.**
Consentimiento informado sobre la participación en estudio de investigación

**Favor completar esta hoja después de haber leído la Hoja de Información y/o escuchado la explicación de la investigación.**

Título del Proyecto: Prácticas políticas para hacer hogar: El caso de las Tomas de Valparaíso, Chile.

Este estudio a sido aprobado por el Comité de Ética de UCL (Número del Proyecto): 6162/001

Gracias por su interés en participar de este estudio. Antes de aceptar ser parte, la persona que organiza la investigación debe explicarle la investigación.

Si tiene cualquier duda sobre la Hoja de Información o sobre la explicación, favor pregunte al investigador antes de decidir participar. Se le dará una copia de este hoja para que la guarde y pueda volver a ella en caso de duda.

**Afirmación del Participante**

Yo__________________________

- He leído las notas escritas al comienzo de esta hoja y la hoja de Información, y entiendo de qué trata el estudio.
- Entiendo que si decido en cualquier momento no ser parte del estudio puedo notificar al investigador y seré sacado inmediatamente del estudio.
- Consiento que se grabe para los propósitos del estudio y entiendo que la información será tratada en estricta confidencialidad y manejada de acuerdo a la Acta Proteccion de Data UK 1998 y la Ley Chilena de Protección de Data 19.628.
- Confiero que el proyecto de investigación ha sido explicado y que estoy de acuerdo con formar parte.
- Estoy de acuerdo con que se me contacte para futuras investigaciones de UCL relacionadas con el tema.
- Entiendo que la información que entregará será parte de un informe que será publicado y se me enviará una copia. Serán mantenido la confidencialidad y anonimato si así lo quiero, y no será posible identificarme en la publicación.

Firma: __________________________ Fecha: __________________________
Appendix 2: Consent form photographers and models in participatory photography workshop, Spanish Version

Consent participatory photography participants, based on Photovoice Manual (photovoice.org) | Spanish version, approved by UCL Ethics Committee

Formulario del Participante

1. Derecho de autor:
Yo __________________________ soy parte de la investigación -------- y entiendo que, como parte del proyecto voy a producir fotografías (mi ‘Trabajo’), y entiendo que tengo el derecho de autor de mi Trabajo y le doy permiso a Ignacia Ossul (la investigadora) para guardar copias de mi Trabajo para el uso expuesto abajo. Entiendo que mi Trabajo será citado de la siguiente manera: ´Nombre del participante/seudónimo, fecha´
Quiero que se use mi nombre:   si___ no___
Quiero que se use un seudónimo: ______________________________

2. Consentimiento:
Acuerdo que la Investigadora, podrá usar mi Trabajo para propósito de investigación y abogacía, en cualquier medio, en cualquier parte del mundo y sin límite de tiempo. Tales usos pueden ser:
• en páginas web, disponible para cualquiera con acceso a internet.
• en materiales impresos incluyendo folletos, reportes de libros y tesis de PhD
• en exhibiciones públicas;
• en la prensa escrita y on-line, nacional e internacional, incluyendo revistas y diarios
• en televisión
• en posters y vallas publicitarias

También doy mi permiso a la investigadora para combinar mi trabajo con otras imágenes, textos, cortar, alterar o modificar mi trabajo como la investigadora convenga

Fotógrafo: __________________________________________________________________________
Firma:_____________________________Fecha:__________________________
Teléfono:________________________
Formulario de Consentimiento del Modelo – 3era Parte

Yo permito a __________________________ (al ‘Fotógrafo’) hacer uso de fotos de mi (el ‘Modelo’) sacada el día (fecha) __________________ en (lugar) _____________________ (las ‘imágenes’) para cualquier propósito, en cualquier medio, en cualquier parte del mundo y sin límite de tiempo. Tales usos pueden ser:

• en páginas web, disponible para cualquiera con acceso a internet.
• en materiales impresos incluyendo folletos, reportes de libros y tesis de PhD
• en exhibiciones públicas;
• en la prensa escrita y on line, nacional e internacional, incluyendo revistas y diarios
• en televisión
• en posters y valla publicitaria

También doy mi permiso a la Investigadora para combinar mi Trabajo con otras imágenes, textos, cortar, alterar o modificar mi Trabajo como la Investigadora convenga

1. Entiendo que no seré pagado por el uso.
2. Acuerdo que no tengo derechos sobre las imágenes incluyendo los aspectos para aprobar el uso de imágenes, y que todos los derechos son del Fotógrafo.
3. Acuerdo que las imágenes se pueden combinar con otras imágenes, textos, cortas, alterar o modificar mi Trabajo como el Fotógrafo convenga.
4. Acuerdo que el Fotógrafo puede asignar este permiso a otra persona.

Nombre Modelo:
____________________________________________________________________________

En caso de ser menor de edad, nombre del Representante
____________________________________________________________________________

Firma:_________________________ Fecha:_________________________

Teléfono:_________________________
Appendix 3: Life stories: Information sheet and transcription per participation

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<th>Personal Details of participant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUT (ID Number)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single, married, partner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children and age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Characteristics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal settlement:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Committee:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Participation: Resident, founding member or community leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of house: Mostly wood or mostly cement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people living in the house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline made by participant</th>
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<td>[Insert picture of timeline]</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of interview by researcher:</th>
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<td>[1-2 pages summary]</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
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<tr>
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