



# Recycling networks. Grassroots resilience tackling climate, environmental and poverty challenges

- **Aim:** examining the challenges that innovative grassroots networks encounter and the livelihoods they generate, to improve recycling and household waste collection in informal settlements of global South cities.
- **Research questions:**
  1. Processes: How do these grassroots initiatives/networks operate to bring about socio-environmental and economic change?
  2. Challenges: What are the organizational, institutional, social, and material challenges encountered in the creation, development and stabilization of these initiatives and networks?
  3. Opportunities: How can such difficulties be overcome?
- **Methodology:**
  - a. A multiple case study on waste picker initiatives in Managua (Nicaragua), Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Buenos Aires (Argentina) São Paulo (Brazil) and Kisumu (Kenya)
  - b. Joint knowledge co-production with regional and global waste picker networks
  - c. An in-depth case study of the city of Kisumu, integrating the learnings from the multi-case studies
  - d. Research and waste picker seminars to co-produce knowledge to conceptualize solutions
- **Theories:** Socio-environmental (e.g. Mair & Marti 2006), institutional entrepreneurship (Hardy & MacGuire 2008) with resilience (e.g. Folke, 2006) and grassroots innovation theories (e.g. Smith et al, 2017).
- **Preliminary results:**
  - Recycling networks create green employment among low-income residents
  - Hybrid waste management and governance
  - Providing innovative solutions driven by economic, social and environmental rationality
  - Transforming institutional arrangements and challenging notions of public responsibility
  - South-to-South bottom-up networks can bring in local, innovative and flexible solutions