

# The Mansueto Institute Lunch Colloquium Series

## OpenReblock and Decision-Making from the Middle: Leapfrogging Incremental Slums Upgrading through Data Technologies and Institutional innovations

**Anni Beukes**

Mansueto Institute Resident Fellow



In this talk, I will focus on the potential convening and co-ordination role of OpenReblock within the design, implementation and maintenance of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure as a basis for slums upgrading at scale, and sustainable and equitable human development. The nature and character of street-networks expand or limit access to basic services infrastructure for slum and informal settlement residents in a city. Improving solid waste management, sanitation and water provision and drainage infrastructure can have significant economies of scale in slums, with impacts for slum neighborhood health and safety.

Slum/informal settlement upgrading presents both a necessity and an opportunity for building resilience, civic capacity between populations and local governments and deliver the services at the basis of inclusive sustainable development. Worldwide, many fast-developing cities can benefit from updating their urban planning practices by using new knowledge and technology, with the possibility of leapfrogging prior models of development that have neither been equitable nor sustainable. OpenReblock is a data and mapping technology that builds upon natural processes of incremental neighborhood development and the Million Neighborhoods Map. It proposes expanding street networks in slums/informal settlements so that every structure gains public access. This approach quantifies infrastructure deficits and proposes a minimal street network as the foundational connective tissue within cities enabling human capabilities, socio-economic activities, information flows and other network effects. By creating a set of common facts and place-based scenarios, OpenReblock creates a co-ordination environment for dialogue and evidenced-based decision making between communities, local governments, academia and technologists.

**Wednesday, February 5th**

**Searle Chemical Laboratory**

**Suite 240B**

**12:30 - 1:30pm**

Lunch will be provided



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**CHICAGO**

**Mansueto Institute  
for Urban Innovation**