

# Land: An Empowerment Asset for Africa

The Human Factor Perspective



Edited by  
**Claude G. Mararike**

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The Human Factor Perspective

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University of  
Zimbabwe



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ISBN 978-1-77920-110-2

First published in 2014 by  
University of Zimbabwe Publications  
P. O. Box MP 203  
Mount Pleasant  
Harare  
Zimbabwe

Typeset by D. Masala, University of Zimbabwe Publications

Printed by Printforce Productions

**Chapter Seven**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Land as the Nexus in Youth, Female Unemployment and Poverty Reduction ..... | 96 |
| <i>Zororo Muranda, Rangarirai Frank and Fanny Saruchera</i>                 |    |

**Chapter Eight**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Land as the Game-changer: Utilising Local Community Talent and Resources in Development Initiatives ..... | 118 |
| <i>Mcdonald Matika</i>  |     |

~~Chapter Nine~~

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Urban Land Development in Africa .....                         | 127 |
| <i>Innocent Chirisa, Elmond Bandauko and Godfrey Chikowore</i> |     |

**Chapter Ten**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Were It Not for the Land Revolution: Cases of Empowerment in Marondera District ..... | 150 |
| <i>Charity Manyeruke and Ashton Murwira</i>   |     |

**Part Three**

**Indigenous Knowledge and the Human Factor**

**Chapter Eleven**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Language, Indigenous Knowledge and Survival Strategies ..... | 166 |
| <i>J. Mapara and N. Mpofu-Hamadziripi</i>                    |     |

**Chapter Twelve**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Climate Change and Indigenous Knowledge in Zimbabwe: A Human Factor Approach ..... | 182 |
| <i>Sandra Bhatasara and Enock, J.R. Mandizadza</i>                                 |     |

**Chapter Thirteen**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Land Reform Programme and Rural Tourism in Zimbabwe ..... | 203 |
| <i>E. J. R. Mandizadza, S. Bhatasara and O. Nyamwanza</i> |     |

**Chapter Fourteen**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Land and Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Some Salient Issues .... | 223 |
| <i>Blessing Makunike</i>  |     |

**Part Four**

**Land, Wildlife and Environment**

**Chapter Fifteen**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Agro-forestry Resources Management, Transformation and Challenges in Southern Africa: The Case of Post-land Resettlement in Zimbabwe, 2000-2013 ..... | 232 |
| <i>Godfrey Chikowore, Innocent Chirisa, Harold Annegarn, Tafadzwa Makonese, Chihiro Ito, Verengai Mabika and Sam Ruturi</i>                           |     |

## Chapter Nine

# Urban Land Development in Africa

Innocent Chirisa, Elmond Bandaiko and Godfrey Chikowore

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### Introduction

Africa, with the most recent urban tradition and experience of city life, is currently urbanising at more than 4 per cent annually (UNHABITAT, 2010). In 1995, only 28 cities on the continent had populations exceeding one million. By 2005, this had grown to 43 cities, and it is expected that by 2015, there will be 59 African cities with populations exceeding One million. In the region, the urban population of 413 million (40 per cent) in 2010 is expected to rise to 569 million (45 per cent) in 2020 (Taipale, 2012). The high rate of rural to urban migration in African cities places central and local governments under pressure of providing housing for the ballooning urban populace. Largely, the housing demand is greater than the supply. Africa has been witnessing an unprecedented rate of urbanisation, which has resulted in rapid urban expansion beyond the control of local authorities and central governments alike. The outcomes are not always desirable. Many African countries have experienced increasing inequality, rising informality and mushrooming urban slums and informal settlements as well as low levels of quality of life. At the same time, the continent is experiencing vigorous and sustained economic growth. Much of this economic growth is riding on the back of the urbanisation process, as cities are engines of growth and development in the continent (UNHABITAT, 2010). We argue that the human factor is usually the main outstanding missing link in urban land development initiatives in Africa, a trend that then explains increasing urban poverty and inequalities among the local populations. The Solidarity Centre (2013) has described African industrialisation as a very important process in the region, arguing that without industrialisation, Africa will continue to be under dependence, instability and poverty. Nevertheless, while this observation has some element of truth in terms of industrialisation being a necessary measure for the emancipation of the African population from poverty, where the experiment has been done, there are still deep challenges of the poverty. The biggest question is what really explains that and why does this panacea seem not to be working? We argue that

any development in urban centres (which sometimes adds value to urban land) that leaves out the human factor is in vain. The same applies to policies that spell out empowerment of the poor yet lack the 'social engineering' aspect of making it happen smoothly and purposively. Urban planning is critical in urban development and, in contemporary times, one concept found useful is that of new urbanism which is about creating environments in which the interaction of people and the environment takes centre stage. Cabrera and Najarian (2013:439) argue that, "as new urbanism grows in popularity, developers need to consider more fully how their designs may be affecting the social interactions of their residents, and ultimately, the cohesiveness of their communities".

Specifically, this chapter seeks to advance the debate that the conversion of land for urban development in Africa is an inevitable reality given the rapidity of urbanisation and its demands in the region, relative to the rest of the world at this stage. Scholars and policy-makers alike have paid little attention to the implications of the current urban development and policy in Africa in the unfolding of competing and contrasting realities calling for further modernisation of cities as technopoles (centres of technology) when, in fact, social and developmental issues remain unresolved (rural-urban migration, industrialisation, investment, employment and informality). The presence and/or absence of these important hallmarks for or against urban development in Africa point to a messy urban future, which could see the anticipated goals of empowerment and sanity not only distorted, but also shattered. This chapter demonstrates the centrality of five critical themes, namely, rural-urban migration trends and implications on urban land management, industrialisation and empowerment of social groups, investment and social empowerment, and employment and informality.

## **Setting the Debate**

Within many cities of the developed and developing world, social inequality is generally associated with spatial segregation, poverty, unemployment and lack of skills, rendering many individuals marginal to the workforce and thus to the necessary income to secure them a place in the mainstream of society. Unemployment and underemployment have been identified as some of the major causes of the urban crisis. The crisis is seen to manifest itself in the deterioration of living standards, lack of adequate social and physical infrastructure, crime, violence, drug addiction, homelessness and overcrowding. Under the political and economic changes of the 1990s, unemployment has remained a significant feature of the economies of the developing and developed countries.

The cause of unemployment, and thus of social exclusion, has been identified as lying in the individual's deficiencies and failures of education, training and lack of work experiences (Thornes, 2002). Castells (2000:73) defines social exclusion as "the process by which certain individuals and groups are systematically barred from access to positions which would enable them to have an autonomous livelihood within the social standards framed by institutions and values in a given context". Social exclusion can take place at a number of levels. It can be about individual access to work, training, buildings and facilities and public and private spaces or it can be about the exclusion of particular neighbourhoods, cities and regions from access to economic and social development (Thornes, 2002).

The African landscape is fast changing. According to Simon, McGregor and Nsiah-Gyabaah (2004:235), and with particular reference to sub-Saharan Africa, "because rapid urban population growth and an expansion of the built-up area, technological change, global economic restructuring and the impact of externally-driven macroeconomic adjustment policies have combined to alter the interface between 'urban' and 'rural' quite profoundly in many places". The situation on the ground is critical as a realisation for re-examining land policies and their beneficitation (or lack of it) to the citizens who must benefit from it.

Urban land policy accompanies various strategies, tools and instruments deployed to manage sustainably a critical development resource, land. It has significant impact on housing provision, ability of urban areas to expand into rural areas and the management of land in a more efficient and effective way (Taylor, 1988; Riddell, 2004). The implementation of urban land policy is usually done through master plans, zoning, subdivision regulations, building codes and other public policies to shape development. These regulations are usually adopted to help protect the urban and natural environment, steer infrastructure investments with development and maintain and enhance property values (Dowall and Clark, 1996). There are important worldwide recognised and flexible land policy instruments; for example, improving legal security, land administration, fiscal instruments, rural land development and land tenure, urban land development, the implementation of agrarian reforms, and conflict resolution (Kirk, *et al*, 1998). The rationale for urban land policy include the need to ensure economic equity, where the poor are given an opportunity to partake in land development activities, the need to regulate private sector activities which can create negative externalities and for better land governance. Land policy is a means to achieve political ends (equity), economic ends (efficiency) and environmental ends (sustainability) (Riddell, 2004). Good land policies are required to achieve these goals.

The need to address land issues through comprehensive policies has gained an additional impetus in Africa with the adoption of the Land Policy Initiative (LPI): A Framework to Strengthen Land Rights, Enhance Productivity and Secure Livelihoods - a joint initiative of the African Union, African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The LPI was adopted by African Heads of State in July 2009 in Libya and shows the commitment of African Heads of State to the achievement of sustainable development through land policy development and implementation (UNHABITAT, 2010).

As already highlighted, scholars and policy-makers alike have paid little attention to the implications of the current urban development and policy in Africa in the unfolding of competing and contrasting realities calling for further modernisation of cities as technopoles (centres of technology) when, in fact, social and developmental issues remain unresolved (rural-urban migration, industrialisation, investment, employment and informality). In African cities, significant transformation is taking place. The processes of urban development are marked by the thrust to economically empower the marginalised groups of society. However, the various sectors have seen other players, such as foreign investors, taking part in these sectors. This raises questions as to how the Africans are benefiting from such initiatives. What is happening in Africa is more of contestation in the utilisation of public spaces, where the elite have taken a lead and even benefiting more from empowerment initiatives. It is, therefore, critical to focus more on pro-poor economic empowerment programmes and the process of urban development and land development needs to respond to the needs of the urban poor. Urban sectors such as housing, employment and transport, have resulted in the marginalisation of the poor even during periods of economic prosperity. With reference to South Africa, Turok (2012:1) has lamented, "The post-1994 government recognises the problems of a distorted urban form, but its policies have been too short term and sector-specific to bring about significant settlement restructuring. Indeed, some of the pro-poor policies have reinforced people's exclusion by subsidising the cost of living on the periphery, rather than supporting better location decisions."

The African landscape is marked by rampant growth of informal settlements and the ever-growing informal sector as well as the rise of agriculture in cities. These are often the options for the poor who might have been excluded from the urban development agenda due to unrealistic planning standards. In all these activities, there are often clashes between city authorities and the actors, often marked by eviction and militaristic problem-solving. The question that begs for an answer is: How is this



scenario linked to the black empowerment agenda? Probably, such measures are working against the spirit and purpose of empowerment where social justice is the centrepiece of such a move. The informal sector has become part of the urban development system and, therefore, needs to be properly synchronised with the on-going empowerment initiatives. Of importance to note is that women have also become increasingly involved in informal sector activities and other developments that are deemed illegal in urban development discourse. The needs of women, therefore, have to be lifted to the urban development priority hierarchy through some of the following initiatives of policy options: economic empowerment of women through practical measures, which include capacity building at all levels, gender mainstreaming in the public sector, sustainable awareness creation on gender issues, fighting harmful traditional practices through legal amendments and awareness campaigns.

### **Social-based Land Issues in Africa: Implications for Socio-economic Empowerment**

In Africa (whether rural or urban), land constitutes the cornerstone of people's livelihoods and survival. Obioha (2013:208) has made the following observation:

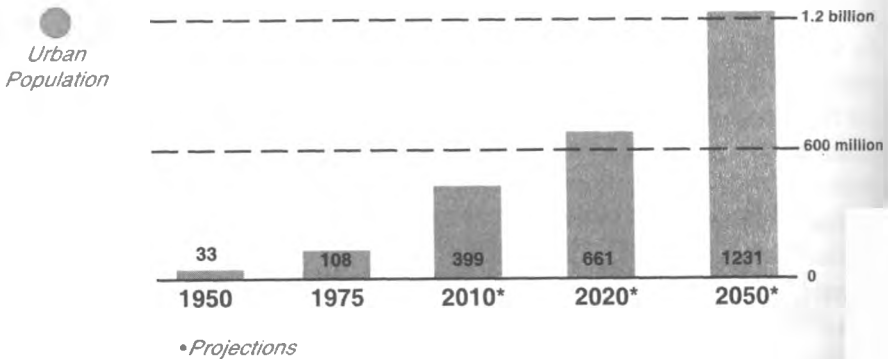
The importance of land, irrespective of various competing conditions, is not proportionately reduced because land still provides a portion of livelihoods that may be the difference between survival or not. Indirectly, land offers the base structure, and sometimes the only basis for social security throughout life among Africans. The question then is: What could be more basic to people's livelihoods and survival than land? In a practical sense, what is usually seen as relationship of a people or household to a small plot of land, usually has a complexity that poses a great intellectual challenge for the outsider to comprehend.

Despite the fact that Africa's cities and investment in the cities are growing, there is a critical perspective that observes that such development will not cascade down to benefit everyone. As argued by Kermeliotis (2013:4), "...many of these new developments will only serve a tiny elite, exacerbating an already deep divide between the haves and have-nots". The other view, though, is that the urban infrastructure development serves as a pedestal upon which the future of the region's cities will catapult to begin to bring some 'trickle down effects' to the citizens, the poor included (*ibid.*). Thus, and quite patently, the missing link in urban land development in most African cities, is the human factor, which links to aspects of migration, industrialisation, empowerment and increasing urban informality as explained in the following paragraphs.

### Rural-urban Migration Trends and Implications on Urban Land Management

Africa's urban population is growing fast (see Figure 1). Africa depicts a high rate of rural to urban migration. With the most recent urban tradition and experience of city life, Africa is currently urbanising at more than 4 per cent annually. Rapid rural-to-urban migration creates several contestations regarding how land in urban areas is to be used. For example, some degree of contestation and conflict around land use might be expected in many contexts. The example of Johannesburg, however, suggests that contestation is substantial and ongoing. Rubin concludes from the CUBES-Planact land management study of five sub-areas across the city that "a large proportion of Johannesburg's population live in situations of incessant tensions and conflict over space and over resources" (Rubin 2008: 24). Contestations take a wide range of formulations. These include conflict between the formal regulation of an area and the actual activity that is taking place (Rubin 2008).

Figure 1: African Urban Population Trend 1950-2050



Source: Kermeliotis (2013:3)

### Industrialisation and Empowerment of Social Groups

The industrialisation of Africa is usually driven by foreign investment. For example, in recent times, companies from China have made significant strides in investment in various sectors. Ever since the Chinese government announced, in 2006, that it would support the establishment of "economic and trade cooperation zones" (ETCZ) abroad as part of its "Going Global" policy, Africa has hoped to attract a fair share of the 50-or-so proposed special economic zones (SEZs) to the continent. Presently, five zones are at different stages of construction – one each in Ethiopia and Mauritius,

and two in Nigeria; the Chambishi zone in Zambia is operational while the proposed Algerian zone has been suspended. Only Egypt's Suez ETCZ is operational. The African countries that competed to host the Chinese SEZs saw in these zones long-term prospects for industrial development or upgrading value chains in addition to the much-needed jobs that they would create. It may be too early to assess the real impacts of the zones. Nevertheless, we can put together some elements – based on experiences on the ground, theoretical insights, prospective analysis and even hypotheses about underlying motivations of China – in our attempt to determine whether these zones could be a springboard for industrialisation on a continent where several previous attempts by governments with similar zones have failed (Meléndez-Ortiz, 2013).

The involvement of the Chinese government in African industrialisation raises questions regarding its effectiveness and how Africans are benefiting from it (Sandrey and Edinger, 2011). Meléndez-Ortiz (2013) analyses the state of African industrialisation. Africa's poor state of industrialisation is well known and widely documented, as are the reasons for it. At 11.2 per cent in 2011, Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) share of manufacturing value added in GDP – a commonly used measure of industrial development – is the second lowest among all regions of the world, only slightly behind the Middle East and North Africa (whose low share is due to the region's historical dependence on oil) (*ibid*). Moreover, the SSA share would be 3 percentage points lower if South Africa was excluded, making the region the least industrialised in the world. SSA's export structure tells the same story: the manufacturing share of total exports (about 25 per cent in 2011) is low, because SSA produces few industrial products of export quality. Moreover, both indicators have shown a declining trend in recent years, suggesting that the African industrialisation effort has waned. On the whole, the region (barring South Africa and a few other middle-income countries) remains globally uncompetitive; SSA ranks lowest on the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) competitive industrial performance (CIP) index. China has dented Africa's efforts at industrialisation in several ways. First, it has perpetuated Africa's dependence on natural resources. China's share of Africa's fuel and mineral exports, which increased from 1.8 per cent in 2000 to 19 per cent in 2012, was a factor in deepening Africa's concentration in natural resource extraction. The share of fuels and minerals in Africa's exports went up from 54 per cent in 2000 to 64 per cent in 2012. While China's share of Africa's commodity exports is small, relative to traditional partners, like the United States (US) and Europe, China is absorbing an increasing share of these exports. In recent years, over 60 per cent of Africa's exports to

China have consisted of oil and minerals. Second, the influx of cheap Chinese imports into Africa has caused significant injury to local industry, with the impact varying in intensity across countries. Trade unions in Zambia have blamed Chinese imports for undermining the clothing and electrical sectors.

In Ethiopia, while competition from Chinese shoe imports has forced the local footwear industry to innovate and upgrade, a number of producers have been squeezed out while surviving firms have contracted. Similarly, survey evidence from Mauritius shows that small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the clothing, footwear and furniture sectors have borne the brunt of Chinese competition, being unable to match the price quality ratio offered by Chinese products. Third, African exporters of manufactured and processed goods have faced stiffer competition from China in their traditional export markets. In Mauritius, Swaziland and South Africa, the clothing industry suffered major setbacks in the run-up to January 1, 2005, marking the end of the apparel quotas and the beginning of Chinese dominance of the global apparel market. Specifically, more than 25 000 jobs (or 28 per cent of employment) were lost in the Mauritian garment sector between 2001 and 2005 as foreign firms closed shop to locate elsewhere. China's threat to African industry is significant, since China's comparative advantage lies in the same low-skill, labour-intensive and low-technology sectors, such as clothing, furniture and footwear, that offer the best chances for industrialisation in Africa.

Some scholars, such as Kaplinsky (2008), have argued that China's global ascendancy can permanently damage the future of manufacturing in Africa. With the notable exception of Mauritius, Africa's performance with industrial development schemes, such as EPZs, has been lacklustre. The fact that the schemes were government-led, marred with policy inconsistencies and failed to attract private investors – local or foreign – meant that they were bound to fail (Sandrey and Edinger, 2011). Against this background, the Chinese SEZs can be a harbinger of industrialisation in Africa – for at least two reasons. First, the SEZs propose investment in a wider range of sectors, spanning agro-industry, manufacturing and services. What is happening in Africa is more of exploitation by the Chinese companies rather than mutual interdependence. What is worrying is the long-term implication of this relationship to the empowerment of social groups in the African context. The future of African industrialisation is not clear. If Indeginisation and Economic empowerment is meant to economically capacitate marginalised groups, how then does this scenario relate to the goals of empowerment? The involvement of the Chinese firms in the Industrialisation of Africa seems to work against the intentions

of governments, since most of the companies in the various sectors, such as mining, industry and service, are owned and run by foreigners.

The SEZs will be particularly beneficial to Zambia, Nigeria and Ethiopia, which currently have very low levels of industrialisation (Sandrey and Edinger, 2011). The SEZs are designed to be integrated into the domestic economy, as they are in China. The Chinese government has expressed its wish to transmit to Africa lessons from its own development experience as well as transfer through foreign direct investment (FDI) aid, much-needed knowledge and technology. The Chinese are also supporting African SMEs to develop their businesses in the zones through a US\$1 billion fund announced at the 2009 Forum on Africa China Cooperation (FOCAC *ibid*). The question then is: How much of an impact will the SEZs (assuming they are successful) have on industrialisation in Africa? We propose a two-tiered answer to this question. For the SEZs to have any long-term impact at all, they must first address the critical issues that have arisen in each country at the early stages of zone development. These relate to financing gaps and to policy incoherence. Construction works have often stalled owing to delays in the disbursement of loans, grants and subsidies promised by the Chinese government, and the zone developers' inability to raise funding of their own (Sandrey and Edinger, 2011). Similar problems may also constrain subsequent FDI into the zones. Host-country governments, on the other hand, have encountered financial difficulties in providing offsite infrastructure or in refunding zone developers the agreed share of infrastructure costs, as in Ethiopia. Perhaps an even more important challenge is the lack of political will and/or the absence of a coherent incentive framework in the host country to support the SEZs. If the zones are not integrated into the country's national development strategy, they will struggle to achieve the desired impacts. Beyond these constraints, the SEZs must attract a critical mass of investors, both domestic and foreign; develop linkages with the domestic economy; stimulate higher value-added manufacturing activities and generate significant productivity spillovers if they are to make a lasting impact on industrial development in Africa. However, significant challenges have emerged in each of these areas.

### **Investment and Social Empowerment**

Zone developers are struggling to attract Chinese firms in the industries proposed, and the economic crisis has made matters worse (Sandrey and Edinger, 2011). For example, the Mauritian zone has failed to attract a single Chinese investor two years after its completion, while the majority of companies operating in the Chambishi zone are merely subsidiaries of

the developers. On the other hand, local participation in the SEZs is likely to be restricted by the reluctance of Chinese firms to seek joint ventures. This is because of the fundamental differences in the business models of Chinese and local firms and certain negative experiences (as in Egypt, where Chinese developers have accused the local partners of embezzling funds). The negativity is explained by entry barriers such as excessively high investment thresholds for local investors; by the lack of a supportive incentive framework at home; and, in the case of Mauritius, an outright ban on local investors' access to the zone. Against this backdrop, it is interesting to note that a number of private Chinese industrial zones (in South Africa and Botswana, for example) are thriving. Even in the countries hosting SEZs, some Chinese investors are choosing to operate outside the zones (for example, Huajian Group, a Chinese footwear company, in Ethiopia) in an attempt to shun governmental control and to avoid high rent and utility costs in cases where the zones are under populated.

### **Employment and Informality**

In Africa, employment is a major challenge, especially in the urban areas. Youth unemployment is particularly high in the region. In North Africa, it played a role in instigating the "Arab Spring". However, the relatively lower youth employment rates in the rest of Africa mask high levels of informal sector employment, which is characterised by low wages and poor conditions of service. The absence of social insurance programmes in Africa, excluding the North, implies that the youth have no option but to work even in the most undesirable conditions (Economic Commission for Africa, 2013). Thus, while the employment challenge in North Africa is one of job availability, in the rest of Africa, the problem is job quality. The misalignment of the educational curricula with the needs of the labour market has been cited as an important reason for the employment challenge. Appropriately designed skills programmes and a re-orientation of the educational curricula to labour market priorities can play an important role in improving the employability of the youth, thus allowing governments to realise the demographic dividend (Sogunro, 2012). However, in addition to the skills mismatch challenge, it is important to emphasize, as discussed above, that the current structure of the economies of most African countries does not support the creation of adequate levels of job. There is rampant informality of the urban economy. Informality takes place in major urban sectors such as transport, housing, industry among others. For example, in South Africa, informalisation is a process by which the poor evade rules to produce outcomes that they need, but that are otherwise too regulated for them to reach. Informal housing

comes into being when there is a gap in the market and the poor are unable to afford the kind of housing that is available, or there is not enough affordable housing to go around (Cross, 2006 ).

Informal activities have challenged land use management conceptualisations. Informal trade and economic activity is a major source of conflict. In their study of Hillbrow and Berea, in Johannesburg south Africa Silverman and Zack, note that:

there is a general and quite pervasive idea that informal trading is the first step in a slippery slope from disorganization to anarchy. Government officials or private sector property owners have argued that the mess left behind by informal traders means “first grime and then crime (Silverman and Zack 2007 in Rubin 2008: 22).

Part of the problem relates to the existing dichotomy or binary between formal and informal:

whilst formality is privileged within policy circles as the best amongst a variety of options, then informality will always be seen as something that is wrong, second-best and which should be disposed of as soon as possible (Rubin 2008: 22).

Whilst the term “informal” is therefore not particularly helpful, as definitions vary and it sets up the formal/informal binary above, it is used here to denote a range of activities and practices which are perceived by officials to be outside officially designated activities and land uses. These activities elicit a range of responses from authorities. In their study of Diepkloof, Hoosen and Mafukidze (2007:4) have described some of the activities that are taking place within a predominantly residential area: “pre-schools, motor car repair shops, saloons, fast food outlets, phone shops, fruit and vegetable markets, spaza shops, beer outlets, night clubs, taverns and pap and meat outlets”. In her study of land use in KwaMashu, Godehart highlights the difficulties anticipated in applying a zoning proposal in the town planning scheme approved for KwaMashu in 2004. Harrison *et al* note that the terms “informal sector” and “informality” “have more or less disappeared from South African economic policy discourse in the last ten years” (Harrison *et al* 2008: 237), and have been replaced by “small business”, for example in defining what is legal and what is not. A failure to accommodate many small and often informal businesses in residential areas in the schemes for townships, she argues “reflects the principle tension between regulatory planning and informality” (Godehart nd 10). The tension between the formal and informal sector, in the case of South Africa, is a testimony of contestation in the utilisation of urban land. The growing nature of urban informality

is an indication that if African economic transformation is not spearheaded, the future lies in darkness. Godehart challenges an approach of using town planning mechanisms to police criminal activities. She argues that where there are “criminal economic activities” (defined as per Castells and Portes (1989) as when the products of the activity are illicit, such as drug trafficking and dealing in stolen cars), only “policing can respond”, whether these activities take place at formal or informal venues (Godehart nd 11). Others noted that for the applicant, legalising “anything” in township areas is expensive and attracts a variety of costs. It also requires an engagement with a sophisticated and complex legal and regulatory system in which there are many possible barriers such as language, accessing basic technical knowledge and, potentially, even issues such as accessing the physical location of the clusters of land-legal professionals and so on (Abrahams pers comm.). Harrison *et al* (2008: 233-234) have noted that

... [the] official attitude to the informal in South Africa has been highly ambiguous... there appears to be a failure to understand or accept the role that informality plays in the survival strategies of the poor, and a failure to accept that it has a form and logic which may not confirm to the norms of modernity, but is nonetheless a rational response to poverty and marginalization in its own terms.

Implicit in most approaches to informal practices is the assumption that these need to be brought under the control of “the system”. Silverman and Zack (2007: 107) have argued, with respect to Hillbrow/Berea in Johannesburg, that it is “precisely in the space created by the absence of enforcement, institutional flux and ambivalence of the council regarding its responsibilities to the poor, that the poor have managed to access the city”. However, the scholars do not take an anti-regulation stance. They note that the conditions they describe in Hillbrow/Berea are not unproblematic, especially in a high-density high rise living environment: problems include the physical living conditions, “the unstable relationships that have emerged between the actors involved in orchestrating these living conditions”, and the gradual erosion of irreplaceable building stock” (Silverman and Zack 2007: 10) The scholars note that “well-functioning high-rise environments are heavily reliant on sophisticated infrastructural systems, which in turn require stable, highly formalised systems of building management and uninterrupted supply of municipal services” (2007: 20). With regard to land use management, the zoning diagram does not capture “the significant land use changes that have taken place on the street and that have taken place within buildings” (Silverman and Zack 2007: 23). In contrast to criminal economic activities, informal activities are those where



the products are legal but the processes of production are not; and formal economic activities are those where both the process of production and the product are licit (Godehart, citing Castells and Portes 1989).

Informal activity in African cities is by no means confined to “less formal” areas, former township areas or areas of transition, but is also contesting for space in upmarket, ostensibly formal areas. In their study of Fourways, Klug and Naik (2007: 40) note that the area appears to be “an environment exclusively catering for the upper middle classes, an area where middle income and wealthy people, live, work and recreate” (2007: 40). However, a poorer cohort of supporting workers commute into the area or reside in the area at least some of the time, and a range of informal services and activities have sprung up in response. These include minibus taxi transportation and informal traders. Most of these activities are not catered for in official land use terms. By and large, they take place within the road reserves, and are a source of conflict with residents and authorities.

A further dimension of the engagement with informal practices pertains to informal settlements. Although informal settlements have been features of South African cities for many years, cities struggle to relate to them. From a land use management perspective, many of these areas are simply ignored by authorities and activities within them are largely unregulated. Residents of these areas have diverse relationships with city authorities, but in general, they are unable to access a range of city services if they are not associated with it. It should be noted that there are major land use development and management concerns from formal residents of Fourways Klug and Naik (2007) comment that the formal residents of the area appear to be very unhappy with the local authorities in terms of problems of roads congestion, development application delays. The nature of development in the area is complex and difficult for the Metropolitan Council to respond to with respect to infrastructure, that is the conversion of smallholdings into medium density residential developments. The sporadic nature of these developments results in increased impacts such as traffic congestion. However, the city has to wait for an infrastructure threshold to be reached before it becomes cost effective for them to install the infrastructure (Klug and Naik 2007: 24). This is the subject of another chapter and so is only briefly referred to here. Ovens *et al* note that:

In terms of current arrangements, the only way in which the poor can receive the (city's) social package (and be visible to the CoJ) is once they appear on the municipal valuation roll. For poor households,

this means that they would need to have accessed subsidised housing (Ovens *et al* 2007: 37).

Nairobi has the highest growth rates per annum compared to the other growth rates in Africa. Seventy five per cent of the urban population growth is absorbed by informal settlements. The number of urban population living in slums will double in the next 15 years. Informal settlements cover only five percent of the total residential land area of the city, but at least half of the city's population inhabits them. The majority of Nairobi's population lives in slums with limited access to appropriate housing, electricity and sanitation. The informal sector employs two-thirds of the city's labour force and a considerable share of the city's income is produced and consumed in the slums. The precarious physical, social and legal conditions of these settlements affect residents' health and environment, in addition to severely constraining local economic development. NGOs and CBOs are active at the community level, but they operate on an ad hoc basis, with little coordination among them and with limited support from the government. Institutional planning and financial frameworks must be restructured at national and local levels if the council is to be empowered to respond to the challenge of slum upgrading in a holistic way. The conditions of women, children and the disabled are generally less alarming in Nairobi than in the rest of Kenya. However, the urbanisation of poverty in Nairobi runs the risk of reversing this trend as it affects men and women to different degrees. Women are the hardest hit by urban poverty: their access to land, credit and other productive resources are restricted, as are their capabilities (illiteracy, low educational levels). These factors result in feminisation of poverty, a phenomenon further exacerbated by traditional beliefs and practices.

China's recent moves to establish SEZs in several African countries can make a significant contribution to industrialisation in Africa (Brautigam, *et al*, 2010). China's initiative to develop SEZs in Africa is still in its very early days. Of the five zones, only the Chambishi Zone in Zambia is operating. The SEZs in Nigeria (Lekki Free Zone and Ogun Guangdong Free Trade Zone) and Mauritius are in relatively advanced stages of construction, and the Oriental Zone in Ethiopia remains in the planning stages. To date, some high-level knowledge sharing and training of local managers has taken place; but local employment, supply chain links and technology transfer remain limited. As of November 2009, the most advanced zone Chambishi in Zambia has attracted 11 companies and US\$760 million in investment, with additional companies expected. It employs about 4 000 workers (80 per cent of whom are local). However, most of the 11 companies invested thus far are subsidiaries of the

developer China Nonferrous Metal Mining Group (CNMC) and were already present in 2006. Moreover, of the 4 000 workers, only 600 are in the zone itself, with the majority in the mines.

With a population of four million, Addis Ababa is not only the primate city, but also a city where the greatest development challenges lie. Poverty aggravating factors, such as poor housing and unemployment, are becoming growing concerns. The unemployment rate in Addis Ababa has reached 31.4 per cent. (Simone, 2007) Even more worrisome is the continually growing population, outpacing by far job creation. Unemployment will, therefore, increase rather than decrease in the future. The monthly income of the majority of the employed households (60 per cent), does not exceed USD \$68. (*ibid.*) This low income is aggravated by a dependency ratio of 28 percent. This means that for every 10 employed, there are nearly three dependent persons of age less than 15 years or older than 65 years of age. Gender inequality is continuing to be structural in Ethiopia, contributing to the low level of socio-economic and political development of the country. Discriminatory laws, harmful traditional practices and stereotyped thinking are making life difficult (and often dangerous) for women, while disregarding the vast potential half of the population could contribute to the country's difficulties (Obiola, 2013). As a result, despite of the high number of women (52 per cent) in Addis Ababa, men take the major share of educational, economic, social and other opportunities. The participation of women in the formal sector is lower than men (41 per cent), but dominates in the more insecure and lower paid informal sector (87 per cent). Physical and social infrastructures are also reinforcing women's lower status. Women are barred in equal participation also on grounds of stereotypes. Household chores, collection of firewood and water are typically women's responsibilities and take up a lot of time (Obiola, 2013). Distant public water taps thus add to the burden of women in particular. In Addis Ababa, a reported 34 per cent of residents get water outside the home, though the actual percentage may be twice as high.

### **Detailed Case Study of Zimbabwe with Special Reference to Harare**

In the context of Zimbabwe, foreign investments are dominant in mining, construction and manufacturing industries. The Chinese companies are also taking a lead in the establishment of modern hotel and restaurant facilities. The mining sector of Zimbabwe is largely dominated by multinational companies, with very few, if any, local players. After independence in 1980, Harare witnessed a remarkable increase in rural-

urban migration. There was a huge influx of people into towns in search of waged employment and not all could be absorbed within the formal sector. Urbanisation was not synonymous with economic prosperity or opportunities for the majority of these migrants. Most migrants failed to find employment in factories and industries. Some migrants were pushed into the informal economy to eke out a living within urban areas. These migrants started to engage in petty trading, vending and some chose urban agriculture to subsidise their subsistence (Taru and Basure, 2013). By the mid-1990s, the major cities of Zimbabwe began to witness rising unemployment. Government provided the impetus for the ascendance of the informal sector through a series of policies. These included reducing regulatory bottlenecks to allow new players to enter the production and distribution of goods and services, supporting indigenous business development and black empowerment and relaxing physical planning requirements. Statutory Instrument 216 of 1994 of the Regional Town and Country Planning Act effectively allowed for the development of non-residential activities in residential areas. Many activities such as hairdressing, tailoring, bookbinding, wood or stone carving were deregulated. Similarly, small and medium enterprises employing 5-10 people in such areas as welding, carpentry, tinsmithing, shoe repair and small-scale car repair, were accorded special consent. While these latter activities were subject to local planning permission, Statutory Instrument 216 sent a clear signal to local authorities of the government's desire to promote the informal economy in residential areas.

Statutory Instrument 216 was a centrally driven policy that was not espoused by all local authorities, as it was perceived as taking away part of their powers to regulate and control the development process within their respective jurisdictions. However, as the economic crisis continued unabated, Statutory Instrument 216 provided a pretext for many local authorities, including the City of Harare, to ignore what could best be described as an explosion of the informal economy. By 2004, the informal economy was estimated to have accounted for 40 per cent of all forms of employment. The informal economy had effectively become the mainstay for the majority of the urban population, 70 per cent of who are estimated to be officially unemployed, and 75 per cent living below the poverty datum line. Associations of informal traders, the biggest one of which has a membership of 1.8 million, provide another indicator of the importance of the informal economy. Besides flea markets, vending stalls and home-based service industries, cities and towns throughout Zimbabwe witnessed the growing phenomenon of street hawkers and makeshift stands, many of which were supplying the same range of goods sold by

stores in front of which they plied their business, clearly violating the rights of the formal sector, which continued to pay taxes. Many stakeholders have often described the Central Business District of Harare as an eyesore and as very chaotic. Many middle class persons blamed this situation on the government. At the other end of the spectrum, formal ties, including sub-contracting, were established between the formal and informal sectors in manufacturing such as furniture-making, wood and metalworking industries, building and construction and between the urban informal sector and the rural economy.

The combination of economic decline, rapid urbanisation and poverty growth was also evident in the housing sector. Serious shortfalls in housing delivery were recognised by the National Housing Delivery Policy of 2000, which acknowledged a cumulative backlog of over one million housing units. It further recognised the need to adopt a more flexible approach to housing delivery and the lack of security of tenure as a causal factor of the housing crisis in Zimbabwe. A subsequent policy document — the National Housing Programme of 2003 — further acknowledged the inability of Government to provide decent and affordable housing. It noted that government plans for housing fell far short of the annual target of 162 000 units between 1985 and 2000 with actual production ranging between 15 000 and 20 000 units per annum. It further noted that the formal sector housing production rate was decreasing and that by 2002, only 5 500 plots were serviced in eight major urban areas compared to an estimated annual demand of 250 000 units. Government reiterated the need for a broader response, including incremental housing production as a means of responding to demand which was not foreseen in the law. As in the case of the informal economy, local authorities ignored these developments. Neither their own resources nor those transferred from central government, enabled them to supply the requisite infrastructure and services to meet housing demand.

By 2004, backyard tenancy had become a dominant source of housing for low-income households living in urban areas. In Mutare, for example, the mission was informed that there were 34 000 backyard extensions compared to 27,000 legally recognised and approved dwellings. In Victoria Falls, they comprised 64 per cent of the housing stock. The sudden decision by central government to enforce laws and standards is clearly inconsistent with its own policy statements that had previously identified those same instruments as an obstacle to the provision of housing for low-income groups. The implementation of Operation Murambatsvina was effected without consultation with local authorities responsible for compliance and enforcement of the said standards and norms.

Furthermore, the operation was conducted, in the vast majority of cases, in contravention of many of the statutory procedures laid out by government's own Regional Town and Country Planning Act, regarding prior notice to households concerned and the possibility of ex-post regularisation. The operation unleashed a humanitarian crisis by destroying homes, assets and means of livelihood for hundreds of thousands of women, men and children at a time when the economy was already declining.

A study conducted by Taru and Basure (2013), focusing on conflicts, contestation and marginalisation in Kuwadzana Extension, reveal that one of the controversial urban development issues is urban agriculture. Urban agriculture emerged as one of the coping and livelihood strategies for the urban poor who could not find employment in the formal sector. One can view urban agriculture as a way of social and economic empowerment, particularly among the poor citizens of Harare. However, there are several conflicts arising in this area. Land conflicts are common and historical in Zimbabwe, and what obtains at national level can trickle down to the local level. Conflicts are an outcome of exclusion of some farmers from accessing scarce land and water. Various actors want access to resources, however, shortage of resources force actors to compete, struggle and fight over access to land and water. Not only access to resources, but unequal distribution of resources escalate struggles among actors already involved in urban agriculture (Taru and Basure, 2013).

The need to redress the skewed ownership of the productive assets has given rise to the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Policy. This imbalance of ownerships construed to be a major obstacle to economic growth and development, wealth creation and, ultimately, to poverty alleviation. The rationale behind the promulgation of the Indigenisation Policy was to empower black populations, who were previously disadvantaged during the colonial era, to give them a chance to partake in the national economy through owning businesses and generally increasing their stake in the corporate sector. The strength of this policy is, therefore, premised on the nobility of the cause that gave impetus to its creation. The Government of Zimbabwe justified the Indigenisation Policy in terms of its endeavour to promote socio-economic justice and to eradicate poverty among Zimbabwean citizens. The Zimbabwean Government argues that black empowerment policies and programmes are aimed at correcting the imbalances created by the colonial regime, where the majority of the economic entities are under the control of multinational companies. The spirit behind the promulgation of the Policy was to allow the people of Zimbabwe to have equal opportunities and

access to resources and skills. In summary, the objectives of the policy were to:

- economically emancipate the previously marginalised Zimbabweans by increasing their participation in the mainstream economy in order to create wealth;
- create conditions to promote the economic status of disadvantaged Zimbabweans by facilitating their contribution to and benefit from the economic development of the nation;
- democratise ownership of the productive assets of the country;
- promote the development of a competitive domestic private sector to spearhead economic growth and development; and
- develop a self-sustaining economy in which there are opportunities for all to achieve better and satisfactory living standards.

In the empowerment drive, the key aspects of age and gender are very central. The term “gender” is used to discourse all the socially constructed attributes, roles, activities, and responsibility connected to being male or a female in a given society (Falola, 1996). This means that gender identity determines how we are perceived and how we are expected to think and act as women and men because of the way society is organised. Thus, although physical differences between the sexes are universal, gender is extremely variable between and within societies in other cultures. The term “youth” is not easily defined. It has a different meaning to different people. Munchie (2004) asserts that there is no neutral English noun, which can identify a period of youth with the same certainty and impersonality as child or adult. This statement echoes the difficulties that one can encounter when trying to define the youth cohort of any population. Thus, whereas people are aware who is a child and who is an adult, it becomes hard for them to know who is a youth. Chirisa and Muchini (2011) define youth according to age. An age-related definition of youth seems, from a first look, to be an easy task, but analysing how different societies and writers have approached this task will reveal how difficult it is to allocate a certain age group to the youth cohort of a population. A simplistic way is to divide the population into two groups: children and adults and then consider the term “youth” to be synonymous children.

The concept of “youth” has many meanings according to different people and organisations. Definitions range from those that are purely of a legal nature to those that are of a functional one. In all countries, the terms “adolescent”, “teenager” and “youth” all refer to young people undergoing

physical, mental and cultural transition from childhood to adulthood. The World Health Organization defines adolescents as people aged 10 to 19, and young people as aged 10-24. In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Health, and Child Care the Zimbabwe National Family Planning Council (ZNFPC) and the Zimbabwe Statistical (Zimstat) consider those in the age group 10-24 as youth. Similarly, the National Population Policy used the age group 10-24 to define the youth population. The 18 years definition of youth coincides with the age of majority for the constitutions of most countries, including that of Zimbabwe. The age of majority separates children from adults by giving voting and other rights to a person that has attained the age of majority. This has its own difficulties. For instance, such privileges are taken away by periods of training and education. It then becomes evident that the term "youth" cannot be restricted to children and should be used to mean people from both children and adults. The difficulty comes when considering how much of children and how much of adults should be taken to refer to youth (Chirisa and Muchini, 2011). From all the definitions, it is clear that there is a bias of defining the youths using age as the criteria.

## **Conclusion and Policy Direction**

Urban development and land management initiatives and policies under ideal conditions, should bring equitable development to cities with the greatest beneficiaries being the citizens. Urban policies are the instruments that help cities bring about equity, efficiency and sustainability. They assist cities in not only attracting investment, but also the corollary effects of such investment. The purpose of this chapter has been to try to demonstrate how Africa, though attracting investment in its urban centres, still fails to redistribute the wealth garnered to its urban residents in an equitable and sustainable manner. Indeed, the human factor is a neglected aspect of urban land policy. Scholars and policy-makers alike seem to acknowledge the critical importance of this idea. Nevertheless, little remains done to improve the situation. Urban land development in Africa is one that is characterised by contestation and conflict due to various actors involved in the process. African cities are characterised by rapid rural-to-urban migration. This has created problems ranging from urban informality to poor land management. In an effort to empower economically and socially the marginalised groups of the society, governments are faced with a problem of balancing between foreign investment and empowerment of social groups. From a policy perspective, there is a need to develop new land policies and overhaul land governance and administration systems. This can address issues of urban land



contestation and can help in building inclusive and sustainable cities. The valued ways of growing urban economies today also can expand urban informality.

Given existing global economic frameworks, African cities are most likely to pursue economic growth through a limited series of development trajectories. These include land and real estate speculation, discounted local labour, highly advantageous terms offered for inward investments, improvements in the services related to the management of mineral and agricultural resources, and subcontracting for large manufacturing and service industries. These trajectories tend to affect severe changes in African urban social economies that valued equity and social reciprocity. The bulk of growth takes place in sectors that can produce substantial increases in economic capacity for a small minority of the urban population. Such skewed pathways of economic viability can extend and deepen the importance of informal and illegal activities acting as the basis for economic livelihoods of larger numbers of urban residents. Dealing effectively with informality requires a long-term process of building and sharing political cultures between communities and municipal institutions. The conventional instruments of promoting security of tenure, housing and livelihood—such as primary and secondary titling, upgrading, subsidised service provisioning—have often served as a means for those with political and economic power to expand their capacities. As a result, the majority of urban residents continue to pursue a wide range of informal solutions to consolidate their position within the city. Most African cities are characterised by a substantial history of prohibitive measures and skewed advantages that force the urban majority to avoid fixed commitments to practices of livelihood formation transparent to government authorities. Therefore, a process of building engagement, mutual trust and accountability in incremental stages over the long run, must inform policies and interventions pursued by municipal government. Economic empowerment policy is one that should be prioritised by both central and local governments. Such initiatives may include streamlining the informal sector with the current indigenisation and economic empowerment policies and programmes in Africa.

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