AFRICA’S INFORMAL CITIES
Urban Informality & Migrant Entrepreneurship in SAn Cities | 10-11 February 2014
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1. Urbanisation trends & pressures
2. Informalisation logics
3. Research & Policy Frames

[Diagram: Slum population in urban Africa]
First urbanisation wave in global North

Second urbanisation wave in global South

Note: The 2nd Urbanization wave must be managed whilst basic needs are satisfied at an unprecedented scale, economic foundations are built, and the low-carbon economic transition has to be effected!
Most of new urban growth will be in small settlements of 100,000-250,000
Slum Incidence by Region, 2010

- Sub-Saharan Africa: 69
- Southern Asia: 75
- South Eastern Asia: 69
- Eastern Asia: 77
- Western Asia: 77
- LAC: 87
- North America: 62
- Europe: 35
- Non-slums: 31
- Slums: 28

Total rural and urban population (millions) for Africa, 1950-2050

- Rural: 197, 37, 414, 854, 927
- Urban: 282, 632, 858, 1265

- 257k in slums (62%)

Urban Typology in Africa

Structural poverty, inequality & limited employment manifest in Slum Living as the norm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>% Slums</th>
<th>Moderated (1-2 deficiencies)</th>
<th>Severely (3-4 deficiencies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Carr</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Asia</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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[1. overcrowding; 2. informal housing; 3. lack of access to water and sanitation; 4. insecure tenure]

Access to infrastructure services

(Source: Ajulu & Motsamai 2008: 3)

Sustained economic growth over past decade
• Half of the population is 19 years old and younger
• The labour force is expected to triple between 2000-2040: rising from 400m to 1.2bn over the period
• But, presently, 63% are in vulnerable jobs and 28% in stable wage-earning positions
Urbanisation and economic development in Africa

Source: World Development Indicators

Note: The data correspond to changes between 1985 and 2012 for each country
“the informal sector contributes about 55 per cent of Sub-Saharan Africa’s GDP and 80 per cent of the labour force”
- Mthuli Ncube, African Development Bank, 2013

Implication: The inability to generate sufficient wage-earning jobs means that most households will be unable to afford living in a formal house, pay taxes or contest the “rules of the game” when it comes to formal politics...
INFORMALISATION LOGICS

Inverted economy: majority non-formal
Low & erratic HH incomes
Small tax base
Insufficient private & public investments
Skewed allocative systems
Demand for services outstrip supply
Reality Check

• Long-term under- and mal-investment in cities and urban infrastructures

• Immense pressure to address massive infrastructure backlogs through quick and dirty investments

• Turn-key projects driven by new investors often produce unsuitable outcomes: gated communities, malls, highways & other vanity projects to boost profile

• Net effect: dramatic sprawl, ecological degradation, increasing spatial and social divides & under-investment in slum areas…

"4% of Africa's GDP was invested in infrastructure over the past decade, compared to China's domestic investment ratio of 14%"

Predominant condition: extreme splintered urbanism—slum neglect combined with enclave elite urbanism

proposed: Cité du Fleuve, Kinshasa
All things being equal, if current trends continue into the future, we can expect most African cities to demonstrate the agglomeration of multiple negative trends

**Structural Obstacles:**

- Limited state understanding or appetite to address urbanisation
- Regulations that penalize informality
- Distorted identity politics of affiliation overdetermine service delivery
- Costs of large-scale dysfunction paid by ‘voiceless’ slum dwellers
- Small & skewed formal economies—limited tax base
- And, most African countries manifest very limited substantive decentralisation...
RESEARCH IMPERATIVES & POLICY FRAMES

Depth: Intimate ethnography

CASE STUDIES

POLICY GUIDELINES, MONITORING TOOLS, SUPPORT SERVICES, IMPROVED INTEGRATION INTO MAINSTREAM ECONOMY

Applied: Grounded ethical pragmatism

DATA STANDARDS, SURVEYS

Surface: Data, trends & materialities; Temporalities & Scales

Theoretical searching, aesthetics, art and poetic
Whole Economy Model

- STATE
- MARKET ECONOMY
- CIVIL SOCIETY
- HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY
- POLITICAL COMMUNITY

- FORMAL WORK
- INFORMAL WORK
- COMMUNAL WORK
- DOMESTIC WORK

- Economy of capital accumulation
- Subsistence economy

- Intra-family transfers
- Taxes

- Rands

Economic relations
Socio-cultural (moral) relations

FORMAL SECTOR:
- Producers:
  - International market

INFORMAL SECTOR:
- Producers:
  - i) Subcontracting
  - ii) Intermediate sector
  - iii) Small-scale service sector

Markets:
- Domestic market for goods
- Domestic market for services

Consumers:
- Domestic market for goods
- Domestic market for services

(Source: J. Friedmann 1992: 50)
“The informal is not just an image of precariousness; it is a compendium of practices, a set of functional urban operations that counter and transgress imposed political boundaries and hierarchic economic models. The hidden urban operations of the most compelling cases of informal urbanisation ... need to be translated into a new political language with particular spatial consequences. This will lead to new interpretations of housing, infrastructure, property and citizenship, and inspire new modes of intervention in the contemporary city”
- Teddy Cruz, 2012.