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INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDERED AND JUST URBAN FUTURES IN AFRICA

REPORT 2023

1

List of Figures

2

List of Tables

3

Summary of WorkShop

4

Acknowledgements

4.1. Introductions

4.2. Summary of institutional representation (pie chart or bar-graph of institutions that attended)

4.3. Aim and objectives of the workshop

4.4. Activities and outputs from the workshop

5

Activities and Outputs from the Workshp

5.1. Proceedings from day 1

5.2. Major outcomes from day 1

5.3. Key insights and messages from day 1

5.4. Proceedings from day 2

5.5. Key messages from site visit

5.6. Major outcomes from day 2

5.7. Key insights and messages from day 2

6

Analysis

6.1. Key insights from the workshop

7

Conclusions and Next Steps

8

References

Figure 1.

Projected Population Growth Proportions in the next 25 years



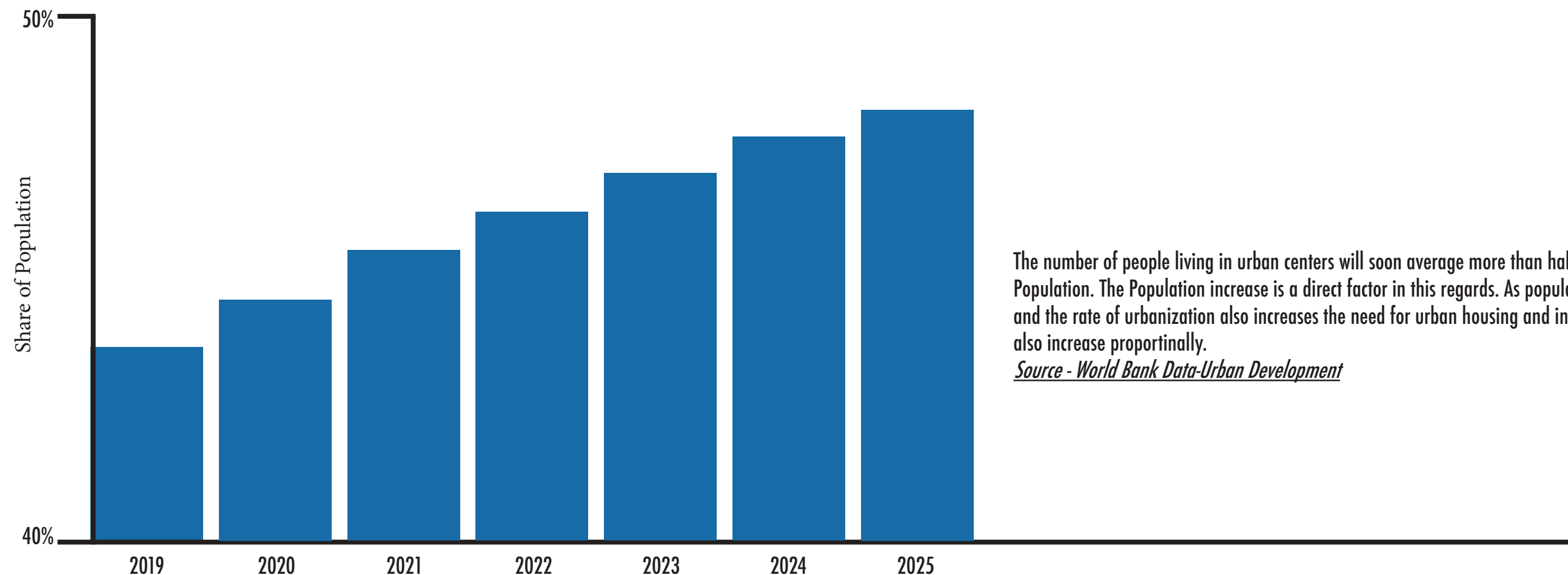
In the coming 25 years, the global population is projected to increase by 1.6 billion people. Africa is expected to have lions share of this growth with just under 1 Billion new souls.

Source - The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development 2023 HandBook

TOTAL PROJECTED GLOBAL POPULATION GROWTH
1.6 BILLION

Figure 2.

Urbanisation Rate in Africa 2020 - 2025



The number of people living in urban centers will soon average more than half the total Population. The Population increase is a direct factor in this regards. As populations increase and the rate of urbanization also increases the need for urban housing and infrastructure will also increase proportionally.

Source - World Bank Data-Urban Development

Table 1.

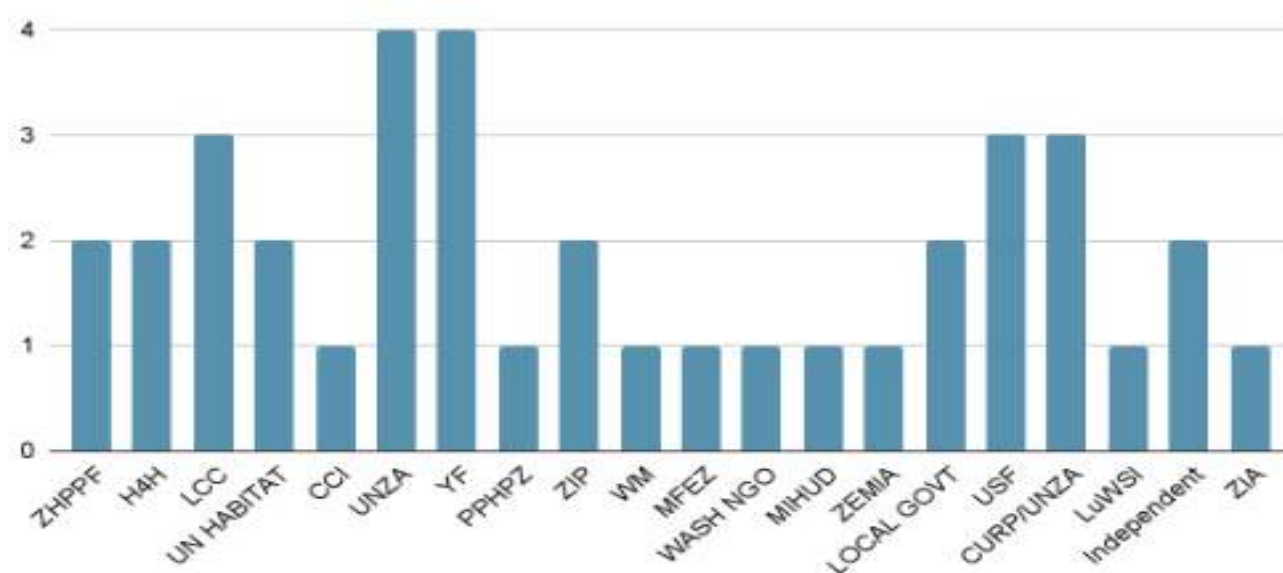
Projected Urban Population Growth Rate

Group of economies	Urban population			Share in total population		
	(Millions)			(Percentage)		
	2017	2022	2050	2017	2022	2050
World	4 162	4 540	6 605	54.8	56.9	68.0
Developed economies	1 050	1 070	1 153	78.7	79.7	86.6
Developing economies	3 112	3 470	5 451	49.7	52.3	65.1
Developing economies: Africa	532	634	1 463	42.1	44.5	58.9
Developing economies: Americas	507	535	654	80.3	81.5	87.7
Developing economies: Asia and Oceania	2 074	2 301	3 334	47.4	50.6	64.8
Selected groups						
Developing economies excluding China	2 295	2 563	4 400	47.3	49.2	62.3
Developing economies excluding LDCs	2 781	3 067	4 438	52.8	55.7	68.8
LDCs	331	403	1 013	33.1	35.8	52.5
LLDCs	153	180	435	30.5	32.0	45.6
SIDS (UN-OHRLLS)	40	43	56	59.6	60.7	67.4
BRICS	1 598	1 753	2 316	50.3	53.7	67.7
G20	2 840	3 045	3 814	59.1	61.7	73.6

Source - The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development 2023 Handbook

Table 2.

Workshop Attendees



Summary of Workshop



The International workshop on gendered and just urban futures in Africa was held on December 15, 2023, in Lusaka, Zambia. The workshop aimed to raise awareness and foster dialogue on the opportunities and challenges of urbanisation in Africa and beyond. The workshop was attended by over 50 participants from various sectors, including government, civil society, academia, media, private sector and importantly - community members comprising women and the youth.

The workshop featured presentations from experts on urban planning, governance, environment, and social inclusion, followed by interactive group discussions and question and answer sessions. The workshop also showcased some innovative experiences on urban development from other countries and regions. The workshop concluded with a visit to a community led green space in the informal settlement of Kanyama in Lusaka where the value of community buy-in and effective collaboration was observed.

A set of recommendations and action points for enhancing urbanisation policies and practices in Zambia and beyond were made.

The workshop was organised by the Centre for Urban Research and Planning at the University of Zambia with funding from [Urban Studies Foundation](#), in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity and Lusaka City Council.





Acknowledgements

The challenges to achieving equitable urbanisation and gender justice is evidently a global challenge. Rapid population growth and movement to urban centers is putting a greater strain on the livelihoods of those especially marginalised. Statistics show that by 2030 60% of the worlds population will be concentrated in urban cities with many of these cities already struggling to contend with their present numbers.

In light of these challenges it is vitally important for us to not only prepare for these changes but to take into consideration past phenomena in order to help create a future that is inclusive and breeds justice for all.

This workshop was designed to bring leading voices together in order to learn from each other, pool resources, create effective partnerships and come up with lasting solutions that will build cities that are sustainable, inclusive and resilient. The passion and commitment from all participants and attendees was noteworthy. The exchange of ideas and experiences was invaluable and the hope is that these interactions will lead to actionable collaborations in the future.

Introduction

The Centre for Urban Research and Planning and a team of International Researchers based at several universities in the global South with support from the Urban Studies Foundation convened a workshop, under the theme:

‘Gendered and Just Urban Futures in Africa’

Between the 24th to 25th November, 2023 at Protea Hotel in Lusaka, Zambia. The topics of discussion was carefully chosen after several consultations from different levels of society on what could bring intellectuals, researchers, concerned members of society together and resonate with ‘Community Professors’ as referred to in the scholarly world. More than thirty were in participants from all backgrounds and experience were in attendance. The robustness and collaborative nature of the discussions were clearly observable. The shared experiences, presentations and valued contributions, especially those from the women and youth added to a thought provoking and intellectually stimulating experience.



Aims and Objectives

The workshop was billed as forum to spark a ‘science to policy to impact’ conversation with regards the future of urban cities in Africa. The workshop on urbanisation in Africa aimed to explore the challenges and opportunities of rapid urban growth on the continent. The idea was to bring together experts, policy makers, and stakeholders from various sectors and regions to share their insights and experiences on how to harness the potential of urbanisation for sustainable and inclusive development. The hope was for significant themes and questions to come out of it that would drive and inspire research pursuits, policy and change at local levels in terms of justice and inclusion especially in light of historical challenges such as colonialism and bad governance.

Specific Objectives

- => Identify best practices and innovative solutions for managing urbanisation and enhancing urban resilience.
- => Strengthen partnerships and collaboration among different actors and levels of governance for advancing the Africa Urban Agenda.
- => Provide recommendations and guidance for implementing the New Urban Agenda and achieving the targets of SDG 11 in Africa.

The focus was on three major thematic aspects as follows:



How we can we build Africa's urban future to truly be inclusive, gender sensitive and beneficial for all.



To explore innovative ways and questions that can help mobilize knowledge for an equitable urban action. We seek to ask, What role can research and universities play in mobilizing knowledge, methods, tools, innovations and skills that can support inclusive interventions in urban Africa.



Gender and Urban justice seen through the lens of Urbanization. Is there a way to ensure urbanisation is achieved in a just fashion that is inclusive for all. Often times, as is the case for everything under human experience marginalised communities such as women, the disabled and the youth are left out. Essentially creating an unjust and unbalanced society.

Activities and Outputs

-> Proceedings of Day 1

The workshop being of hybrid nature (online and physical participation) was opened with brief remarks by the host Dr. Gilbert Siame and three International USF Fellows, namely; Dr. Basirat Oyalowo, Dr Priscilla Izar and Dr Suraya Scheba.

This was followed by brief remarks by the USF Managing Director, Joe Shaw and the Deputy Vice of the University of Zambia, Professor Namangala. The workshop was officially opened by Councilor Madyenkuku, on behalf of the Mayor of Lusaka who unfortunately could not attend but sent word of Her Worships great desire to have been in attendance.



Dr Gilbert Siame

Opened the meeting with welcoming remarks to all attendees and participants. Dr Siame made reference of the importance of the workshop with regards learning from each other in order to create lasting solutions to the creation of just Africities in light of historical prejudicial factors. An atmosphere of learning from the past to create ethnocentric solutions to the problems we face was the idea behind this conference. Additionally, all were encouraged to participate - whether in person or online so as to learn from each other.



Dr Basirat Oyalowo

Dr Oyalowo speaking from Lagos, Nigeria made mention that the rapid urbanization of Africa has been characterised by a lack of or insufficient planning for infrastructure, human services and other essential elements. These urbanization processes and dynamics continue to create very unequal environments especially among the women and the youth. It was, therefore important for workshops such as these to bring professionals from across various sectors in order to both learn and share for a brighter tomorrow.



Dr Priscilla Izar

Participants were reminded that the sense of urgency around the pace at which Urbanization in Africa is taking place and the deep inequalities rising with climate change, urban poverty, housing deficits and a large population of the unemployed cannot be ignored. Now more than ever there continues to be real need for collaborative platforms to be created that bring different stakeholders together in order to build a more just urban future.

As the discussions kicked off Dr. Suraya Scheba challenged participants to ask 6 main questions over the duration of the workshop.



Dr Suraya Scheba

1.
How do we think about the past in shaping the future, recognising that unjust and colonial pasts as the beginning to undo and consequently make alternative futures.

2.
In the context of data mobilization, how can we as researcher's think about the ethics of our practice?

3.
How do we think about the question of who is the producer of the knowledge behind the research we undertake?

4.
How do we produce the very knowledge that key for the implementation interventions of others?

5.
What types of materials are produced beyond the spaces of Universities that can be understood and implemented by all members of society.



6.
The question of comparative conversation

How to think from our context, from our situated understandings, but actually thread these understandings together to build concepts and understandings that are not the universal narratives that come from the West, but actually knowledge that we produce from here to explain our own local realities

Key Note Presentations



Getrude Ngenda

In order to build these housing units Habitat for Humanity approached the local government authority for land and partnered with the planning authority to ensure the units where of acceptable standards. It was also important to engage the beneficiaries and community members to get their 'buy-in' of the project. These folks where given practical tasks such as construction, waste management and drainage clearing so as to build an emotional and practical connection with the project.

This holistic approach of partnering with government and engaging of the target communities could form a blueprint for the development of urban cities in Africa. And because of the inclusion of the marginalised it has the added advantage of not leaving anyone behind. The buy in from the community ensures sustainability for future cities.

The challenge is the practicality of resource mobilisation to build these units at a rate (or faster) of urbanisation in Zambia and Africa as a whole.



Habitat for Humanity Zambia has been working to provide adequate housing for the underprivileged communities with a focus on informal settlements in Zambia. In an effort to address the challenges of urbanisation Habitat for Humanity has piloted the construction of 168 housing units in the outskirts of Kabwe which have been built with acceptable Living space, privacy, safety as well as security of tenure, free from environmental and other hazards, and with basic social and economic infrastructure and services.

This approach was necessitated by the fact that Zambia has the third highest urbanisation rate in Africa with the majority of inhabitants setting up homesteads in informal settlements typically located outside of the urban towns and cities. One of the possible ways of combating urbanisation is the construction of humane living units in the very informal settlements that have thus far contributed to the challenges of building Africities.



Alexander Chileshe

Mr Chileshe noted 'Urbanization is one of the most profound transformations that the African continent in the 21 st century has experienced. Since 1990, the number of cities in Africa has doubled in number- from 3300 to 7600- their cumulative population has increased by 500 million people.' [ADB, 2022.](#)

"The rapid urbanization presents a fantastic opportunity for economic growth and social transformation and added to it, a great opportunity for Africans to craft out a context responsive and just urban future."

In other words, rather than viewing urbanisation as a challenge we may do better to view it as an opportunity to create afro-centric cities that are relevant to the development aspirations of the general citizenry. The 'challenge' of urbanisation has given the opportunity to build cities, towns and livelihoods that are suited to the African context.



Some of the Major issues that Urban Africa has been facing in its transformation as given by Mr Chileshe were listed as:

1. Socio-Economic

This category is characterised by Informality, Unequal Access to Employment and Spatial Segregation. Spacial segregation is seen through Limited land management and administration as well Poor road Connectivity

2. Political Governance

It is no secret that African leadership historically have had major challenges with regards the establishment of governance systems and institutions that limit corruption and uphold the rights for all, especially the marginalised. Even after the demise of colonialism African leaders still score low when it comes to the development of cities and structures that uphold the fair and just rule of law.

3. Climate Change and Environment Preservation

Some factors tend to be beyond the scope of intervention for Africa itself but more can be done with regards environmental degradation, deforestation as well as waste management.

Mr Chileshe noted the things we know to attain Urban Justice.

1. Inclusive Urban Planning

It is imperative that future city planning and implementation be done with the input of all stakeholders. The current model favours politicians and the city planning authorities. There is much to be gained from a more inclusive approach that encompasses the input of civil society, academia, researchers and community members.

2. Community Engagement and Participation

It has proven to be useful and empowers local community members when city planning is done in matter that takes into consideration

the ideas of the community groups, especially the marginalised such as the women and youth. Community groups have an essential understanding of their own needs, which is vitally important when planning for cities that will include them. Additionally, their involvement has can lead to less instances of vandalism and greater chance of city infrastructure sustainability.

3. Affordable Housing

Housing that addresses the current deficit through innovative financial models can be the fastest way to address urbanisation.

4. Infrastructure Investments

These should not just serve those with power or financial means but cut across for all regardless of social economic status. Certain amenities such as transport infrastructure, health facilities, energy must be available for all.

The advancement of urban futures is also hindered by what we do not know and these include:

- 1. Data and Information - Lack of accurate and up-to-date information of many cities. For example, is it really true that 70% of Zambia’s residents are residing in informal settlements?
- 2. Policies - some may exist in some African countries but implementation is hindered by weak government structures, lack of decentralization and corruption.
- 3. Climate Change - Information related to climate resilience and adaptation and the true extent of these factors in mitigating our challenges.

What then is preventing Urban Justice from taking place? Some obvious factors include:

- 1. The Colonial Legacy - Injustices have remained the same post colonialism with

issues like segregated housing (high and low cost areas). Future cities must be developed without these legacies of the past.

- 2. Informality in Housing - Mushrooming of informal settlements and land tenure issues due to unaffordable housing, unclear property rights and a thriving informal land markets systems.

- 3. Weakened Urban Governance Systems and Corruption - Governance institutions and rule of law must be championed across the board.

What should Be Our Future Priorities. Our focus should be looking to the future, in terms of Just Urban Futures through:

- 1. Research- with a focus to develop models of inclusive governance that in the future involve marginalized communities in decision making.
- 2. Improving Data Collection Technologies for Africa- that is efficient with indicators that are developed to accurately measure urban inequalities and injustices.
- 3. Innovative Financing Mechanisms- Research focused on models to fund Urban Development Projects and Programs and developing more South-to-South cooperation/ funding capacity as nations that understand unjust urbanization problems.
- 4. Trans-disciplinary approaches - Collaboratively working on urban related issues as interconnected disciplines. That is urban researchers, planners, engineers all working together community members, each player viewed as a partner and not competitor.

In closing Mr. Chileshe shared some thought - provoking views about Urban Justice in Africa.

- 1. Decolonizing Urban Legacies - challenging colonial mentality with regard to urban spaces in city planning and governance. Creating something new to deal with the historical injustice deeply embedded in structures.
- 2. Urban Informality - This should be seen not as a problem but a solution. The development of policies which should recognize and integrate informal spaces into the urban systems ensuring residents have access to services.
- 3. Community-centric Approaches - these are well known already and in some cases been implemented before. The emphasis of community participation and empowerment as a critical step to making progress.
- 4. A Socialist Approach - There must be a drive for equitable resource allocation. One avenue is the redistributing of illegally obtained land to those that are in need.
- 5. Political-Economic Structures - all structures and methodologies that perpetuate urban injustices must be abolished if we are to see an end to urban injustice and inclusion for all.

Chris ‘the’ King

The speeches were followed by a brief interlude where a young upcoming artist called Chris; aka ‘Chris the King’ sang a song titled “Bossale.” It is about the desire of everyone to be a ‘boss’, to hold an influential position in society, but questions whether such are willing to put in the required effort to get to the top.



In reflecting on the on the song in relation to just Urban Futures, the facilitator raised a question of How can we create an enabling urban life environment that is responsive to the youths and is also non exploitative of the marginalised?



Panel Discussions

- Q and A Session

The panel discussion accorded the opportunity to listen to those on the ground and define pathways for an inclusive and gendered urban Africa.

The panelists included:

1. Youth Representative
2. Madam Veronica Katulushi - ZHPPF Representative, George Compound Community leader.
3. Professor Wilma Nchito- Independent Researcher
4. Mr. David Nonde- GIZ Representative
5. Mr. Joseph Zulu- Zambia Institute of Planners (ZIP) Representative



Q 1. What is the importance of involving grassroots women and the youth in urban development processes?

Madam Veronica Katulushi passionately began by saying, “You empower a woman, you empower a nation!” The grassroots women living in informal settlements are the best source of data as they are the one’s who know what they need best. Any developmental activities that are implemented as a result of their contributions would be treated as their own. Women are good at sensitization and any educative information taught would be used to educate her fellow women as they have the zeal and passion to work towards their communities’ development regardless of their ages. She further mentioned crowd mobilization, focus groups meetings as well as the collection of data from the community are tasks far more adept to women and the youth.

Echoing Madam Katulushi the youth representative added ‘without including the community, developmental implementations will not be utilized’. He gave the example of an unused basketball court that was built in his community minus the technocrats knowledge of what the people actually wanted. By implication city planners and project implementers tend to execute projects with considering the aspirations of the local community. To cement his point further, he gave an example of the mismatch between the Covid-19 guidelines given at the height of the pandemic. Everyone was required to wash hands constantly and maintain at least a meter apart from each other but it would be days before there was water in some communities and some homes were already overcrowded!

Q 2. What structures continue to deepen gender and social inequalities in African cities?

This question was directed to Mr. Nonde (GIZ) who began by stating the assumption that these structures are well known already is a false assumption. He responded with an analogy from the Politics of Reality (1983), which the author uses to explain why many people do not see oppression. “If you look at a bird in a cage with your eyes so close to it that you do not see the mesh, you wonder why the bird is not flying away and assume that it is just lazy or something is wrong with it or it is its own fault that is it trapped”. The state of the bird cannot be understood until we take a step back. The cage represents the powers that are at the center of injustices and the mesh represents structures are that are keeping people disadvantaged. “The ability of a solution to solve a problem depends on its conceptualization.” The structural disadvantages contributing to gender and urban injustices including social behavior, religion and built environment, are not static but evolving and adapting. It is not until it is discovered who is at play in these exclusions that we would begin to address them.



Q 3. Do we have afro-centric architectural identity unfolding in Zambian urban spaces?

In response to the impromptu question, Mr. Fidelis Kabwiri stated that most of the development in urban area cities is determined by the Government, which is the biggest entity that procures infrastructure development in any locality. The architecture we have seen over the years in Zambia has been determined by the Public-Private Partnerships and Grants borrowed or received. It is however, the desire of local architects to design cities that depict the livelihood of our communities. Hence, going forward there needs to be a platform or systems put in place that allow for the inclusion of local architects and contractors that have the know-how and ability to build afro-centric cities.



Q 4. With the problem of informality, how best can planners, working with other built-environment professionals, drive towards having inclusive city planning in contemporary cities?

Mr. Joseph Zulu (ZIP), in response to the question, started by stating, “As a planner, I believe in order.” The ideal would be for every piece of land to be planned for, prior to communities’ settling on them. However, informality cannot be escaped, formally planned areas are available to meet the demands of fast growing population. In the case of Zambia, among the many reasons for the high level of informality is the issue of planning for the two co-existing land systems, namely; Traditional Land Tenure Systems and Statutory Land Systems. In the ideal world there should only be one system and thus planning would be easier and more systematic.

It is easier to plan for and attempt to fight informality in statutory land areas than the traditional areas with the larger portion of informal settlements and no planning is occurring.

In his view, the solution would be tied to Urban Governance as the facilitator stated. Working with other professionals to advocate for the Government to work with the traditional leaders, thereby removing their mistrust for Government departments and involving them in the planning processes. This would put a halt to more settlements while planners work on solving problems created by informality.



Q 5. What destabilizing questions must researchers ask to generate information that can lead to radical transformation in African cities?

Professor Wilma Nchito, who was tasked with the question, came up with two destabilizing questions.

1. ‘As researchers, have the theoretical conceptual frameworks and methodologies we have been using all along helped us provide solutions to our African problems?’

Early in her career she noted that researchers use global-north theories and conceptualizations of what African cities. However, what are our own interpretations of what our African cities should be? What is our conceptualization of a city that works? A city that is livable, accessible, equitable, and can allow people to express themselves and make a living.

Looking at the United Arab Emirates, The Arabs have created Dubai with their own definitions and resources. What then is the best type of city we can have, with the available resources?

2. ‘As Researchers, which actors and stakeholders have failed the processes?’

The urban sphere involves everybody so we have all failed. However, there are certain actors whose mandate it is to improve livelihoods in the city and they must be called out. For one, the Zambian education does not help its citizens. Major Assumptions made as Researchers:

That we have all the answers- this is untrue because the communities know their needs best and have the answers. This calls for Transformational pathways- involving multiple stakeholders in the production of knowledge. Much as this is done at the University of Zambia, it is no longer enough for proposals to end up in reports but to move to tangible results, academic activism as well as studies that produce practical transformations.



Key Insights and Messages

-> from Day 1

1. When it comes to city planning and implementation there are a plethora of stakeholders. For example, the central government, local government, civil society, researchers, academia and the communities themselves. Often times each of these are working in isolation and more often either duplicate each others work or in the extreme negate the work of others. For instance, Habitat for Humanity may have a project in Kanyama and rather than work directly with the Lusaka City Council which may be undertaking a similar project in Kanyama each implements their individual projects without taking into consideration the work of the other. The ideal is the development of an open forum/platform that allows for all stakeholders to share their conceptual ideas, bring in other partners so that implementation is shared and thus a lasting impact can be better secured. Government and all partners are now encouraged to seek strategic partnerships before implementation of projects.



2. Historical factors such as colonialism are injustices whose legacies are still present within our housing and city planning methodology. However, they need not impede the future human development and housing needs of the marginalised. We must accept the past, provide a platform for the marginalised to speak and be heard and then build a future that is inclusive for all.

3. City planning, though a complex and labourious undertaking must be simplified, especially to the masses. Where possible there is a need to develop easy to understand modules and communications materials that will help bring about a more inclusive approach to the planning and implementation of city expansion projects.



4. Additionally, with regards partnerships it is vitally important to not only speak to the local communities but actively engage them through out the lifetime of a project. The top - down approach with regards city planning and project implementation was greatly discouraged. The best approach is to approach these communities and take them on as partners. Examples were given of project deliverables being vandalised because the buy-in of the community was not sought before implementation. It was further pointed out that just afriCities implies the empowerment of marginalised communities. Hence, if we seek to help we must see these people as partners rather than beggars.



Activities and Outputs

-> Proceedings of Day 2

Day 2 was reserved for a site visit in order to appreciate the practical challenges and opportunity that are there within the Zambian context of just afriCities.

The Kanyama Skills Development Center stands as a example model of how the 'buy-in' of the community can lead to sustainable and practical change on the ground.

This site was originally an unofficial dumping site. Over the years it had come to be seen as a dirty and undesirable location for this community attracting delinquents as well being a breeding ground for various criminal and nefarious activity. Through the initiative of local female leaders as well as the financial and practical support rendered by Peoples Process for Housing and Poverty in Zambia and various other partners this once unsightly location has been turned into a community green space offering empowerment and employment opportunity to the local community with the largest beneficiaries being the local women and youth.

Economic activities conducted on the site include trainings in bee keeping, eco-friendly farming practices as well as business skills and leadership trainings. Even with these great strides additional support is required for this project to have a lasting impact. Notwithstanding the space used is small and there is additional need for financial and practical help such as professional service trainings in agriculture, financial management and leadership.

But, it was evident that this approach stood a better chance of survival because it is a community led initiative. Moreover, it is managed by the very marginalised in the community - women and thus it provides a means for them to self actualize. This model approach could be the catalyst for inclusive and practical change in the development of afriCities for the future.



Analysis

1. The need for just urbanisation and city planning is vital to the development agenda of many stakeholders. Regardless whether they be in governance at either local or central levels, the civil society with its many players and of-course the communities themselves with particular attention to be paid to the women and youth who historically are the hardest hit. However, by and large most stakeholders are not been working together or tend to work in isolation from others leading to a stagnation or lack of real and lasting practical change on the ground. If there is to be any real impact there must be a framework or platform that allows for all stakeholders to work together. To pitch ideas collectively, for research as well as resource mobilisation must be done as a collective exercise with the inclusive input of all players and partners.



2. Presently, it would seem that planning and project implementation with regards city planning is still rife with the attitude of top-down interventionism. There is little regard for the values, aspirations and even opinions of the targeted communities. An example was given of a basketball court built in one community in order to provide an extra curricular outlet for the youths as an alternative to self harming activities such as drug abuse and theft. Instead if consulting the community a basketball court was built to which virtually no youths were interested in as most preferred football. As a result the basketball court was vandalised and rendered obsolete. Too many current and future planning projects seem not to have the involvement of the local community. This attitude must change, going forward a platform for the targeted communities must be sought, community members and leadership structures as well as women and youth groups must be engaged at every step of the development process. They must be seen as partners above being beneficiaries.

3. Most, if not all city planning initiatives are modeled after western or foreign city structures. This begs the question, is there something to be said to build cities that are Afrocentric? Cities modeled and influenced by our own local indigenous influence. One of the reasons why planning and implementation is such a costly exercise in Africa is because our buildings and infrastructure are modeled after western modern cities. These are often times expensive endeavors that are usually out of reach of for the average African city planning authority. Let us begin to develop our own indigenous building models with materials that can be sourced locally and much more affordable.

4. A lack of communication between implementors and community groups continues to be a hindrance to the city planning agenda. There must be a system in place the allows for the free flow of communication between all stakeholders. The development of a communal platform that allows for access to information should be developed to counter the lack of communication and access to information.

Conclusions and Next Steps

1. Local Buy-In of Development Projects is Key

The most sustainable approach to any city planning and implementation exercise is the involvement of the local population. Key local stakeholders include community members, local leadership structures such as chiefs and headmen as well locally elected officials must be included throughout the development timeline. Added to this is deliberate involvement and engagement of women and the youth who tend to be left out or the last ones to benefit. These engagements must begin from the initial stages of planning and flow right up to implementation. The stakeholders must be seen as partners and their input as vital. Once their buy-in is secured the project has a far greater chance of sustainability as these partners can and should act as the owners of the development being implemented. That way they will protect the project deliverables beyond the point that funding or implementation is achieved.

collaborative platform can not only address these challenges but also lead to a faster pace of intervention strategies, a saving of resources as a result of pooling of resources as well as an expansion or broadening of project intervention sites.



2. Greater and more Effective Communication and Collaboration Between Stakeholders

City planning and justice have many partners and projects spread across various sectors such as the government(local and central), civil society, academia, researchers, the business community and of course the local population. There is need to develop a collaborative platform that allows for all these partners and stakeholders to come together in real time to plan and implement city projects. Evidently, working in isolation has led to miscommunication, duplication as well as negation of work. Difficulties in information gathering and hostilities between stakeholders are some of the other outcomes that come from misinformation. The development of a





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Figure 1. 2023 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Handbook

<https://hbs.unctad.org/total-and-urban-population/>

Figure 2. Urban Population (% of Total Population) - Sub-Saharan Africa

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Table 1. 2023 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development Handbook

<https://hbs.unctad.org/total-and-urban-population/>

Africa's Urbanisation Dynamics 2022 - The economic power of Africa's cities

<https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/africas-urbanisation-dynamics-2022-economic-power-africas-cities#:~:text=Urbanisation%20is%20one%20the%20most,increased%20by%20500%20million%20people>

3.Communications with Local Community Partners

There is a vital need to see local community members, especially the youth and women as partners and not mere beneficiaries. Hence, communication and dialogue with these groups must not be from an top-down perspective that tends to be seen as condescending but from an equals perspective. Community members are partner in research, development and implementation.



4. Build for the future that is Afro-Centric

Solutions for urban planning must be Afro-centric and relevant to the context of the local population. Too often city planning is dominated by structures and models that are heavily influenced by western standards. If we as African planners and implementers could only realign or models to mirror those of the African and local context we could find that our cities are more inclusive, affordable to build and sustainable and resilient for a brighter future for all.





INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDERED AND JUST URBAN FUTURES IN AFRICA

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