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AFRICA'S NEW MEGACITIES

Sustainable urbanism, climate urbanism or megalopolises of exclusionary enclaves

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Introduction

Urbanization has changed the global ecological space, having an impact on the lives of the people. However, urbanization has also come with wicked policy problems ranging from climate change, insecurity, urban poverty and socio-economic inequalities. In this chapter, the current megacity phenomenon and policy issues that surround it are explored. According to the current data, the world's population growth in urban areas between 2018 and 2050 is projected to be 2.5 billion, with most urban dwellers residing in Africa and Asia (Lerch 2017). It is predicted that until 2030, developing countries will continue to experience urban growth. Of all megacities, a larger percentage of megacities are situated in the world's less developed economies. The increasing population growth and rapid economic prosperity are envisaged to contribute massively to Africa's developmental expedition (Bafana 2016). The emergence of contemporary megacities in Africa is cogitated as a new phenomenon. Africa's emerging megacities are hubs of innovation and creativity for development. Megacities are known for talents, innovative thoughts and ideas that can be transformed into development (Nawrot et al. 2017). Based on the current urbanization trends, Africa is projected to experience the fastest urban growth in the world. By 2050, cities in Africa will accommodate an extra 950 million people (OECD 2020).

Although this projection has economic growth and development opportunities, the challenges associated with an agglomeration of economies in the cities cannot be jettisoned (OECD 2020). There are challenges in such agglomerations; these include connectivity with the suburbs and the international economic systems, infrastructural deficits and endemic poverty in the periphery areas of the cities, among others (Nawrot et al. 2017; Makinde 2012). Studies show no correlation between creating new cities and their objectives to address population growth and sustainable urbanization challenges. In Africa, the sporadic growth of new cities often necessitates the displacement of poor urban dwellers. The privatization of governance in these new cities has been blitzed with considerable criticism, especially whether to relate the phenomenon with sustainable urbanism or climate urbanism (Cirolia 2014; Grant 2015).

In Africa, new property investments are increasing, constructed in self-contained spaces championed by private entities. Arguably, the rationale behind such new enclaves, which

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sometimes appears as a gated community aimed to serve the interests of only a few elite, rich class citizens, addresses some of the wicked problems of urbanization. However, the governance model upon which such privately driven urbanism is founded is far from solving the wicked urban problems. For example, it also exacerbates the forceful expulsion of most poor class citizens in the cities besides worsening the socio-spatial fragmentation and segregation in African cities (Van Noorloos and Kloosterboer 2018).

More to this, land governance in Africa is considered within the context of dualism that creates an enabling environment for what Peter Ekeh (1975) considered "two publics", which explains the dialectical complexity and political apostasy of the wider inequality that are embedded in Africa's social structure. Such a theoretical reference provides adequate clarification regarding the co-existence and consistency of formalized land rights in the African metropolis that serves the few elite's interests and the informal land rights in the remote parts of the cities. The latter is primarily occupied by the poor segment of the society (Pieterse and Parnell 2014).

The complexity and pragmatism of such an arrangement aim to promote and maintain social hierarchy within the cities whereby a certain group of people form the composition of communities demarcated with walls while enjoying basic social amenities and private security (Van Noorloos and Kloosterboer 2018; Bénit-Gbaffou, et al.2012). In contrast, informal cohabitation in these cities is unsafe for human habitation, but the dwellers are often without the basic social services found in the formal spaces. The environment is characterized by insecure land tenure, which becomes an alternative for low-income citizens and migrants. The dwellers' adaptive capacity to cope with urbanization risk in such spaces is deficient (Resnick 2014). The social status that defines the informal settlers mostly results in exclusion from public decision-making, which has implications for risk mitigation (Dodman et al. 2017).

Thus, governing cities in Africa require multi-level and multi-sectoral actors. Numerous players often include governments, traditional authorities, civil societies, international organizations and donor institutions. Moreover, in terms of policy processes, the government at all levels has major responsibilities; however, the traditional rulers usually also possess much influence in land allocation, especially in the suburban areas where informality proliferates. Additionally, large private organizations invest in property development, shaping the topography of urbanization in the continent. The international organizations participate in governing urban areas by providing aid, loans and donations to promote sustainable urbanism in Africa. Civil society organizations' role in urban governance cannot be overlooked, especially by articulating demands on behalf of the people.

Considering the ecology of urban governance in Africa, the collective responsibility of both the formal and informal institutions is acknowledged. This involves the general management of infrastructural facilities, economic development, environmental management, mobility, security, disaster risk management and promotion of socio-cultural capitals, just to mention a few (Smit 2018; Hoffman 2007). In the following sections, the positionality of contemporary megacities in Africa is discussed. This begins with the conceptualization of megacities, followed by the history of urban governance in Africa and corresponding urbanization trends. I specifically demonstrate that Africa's proliferation of megacities cannot be situated within the two contemporary urbanisms. The existing structure disregards the actual representation of sustainable urbanism and climate urbanism. Therefore, the current wave of megacities is assumed to be a new elite stratagem to promote further social dualism and environmental fragmentation that denies the poor masses from enjoying basic infrastructural opportunities.

Understanding megacities

Megacities have received the immense attention of intellectual figures and policymakers worldwide (Agergaard et al. 2019). Towards the end of the 20th century, the global community has witnessed the emergence and facsimile megacities tendencies (Yeung 1997). Conceptually, megacities are different from global cities or world cities due to their population requirement in defining them. Megacities are measured by their population attainments. Empirical evidence of their huge infrastructural potential, technological capacities, social and economic investments isconstantly available in megacities (Yeung et al. 2020). Thus, a megacity can be hypothesized as a geographical entity with a population greater than 10 million (United Nations 2013). From the United Nations (2016) estimation, from the current 31 existing global megacities, 24 are located in the Global South. From the United Nations (2016) records, China has six megacities, and India has five. It is projected that there will be ten cities that can become megacities, and these are situated in less developed nations (UN-Habitat 2008; United Nations 2016).

There are several reasons for the proliferation of megacities in the Global South. Some of the reasons have been considered within the purview of dependent development and capitalism penetration. The cultural capital of cities that promote talents, educational values and other services fascinates the exodus of outsiders who continuously generate megacities' growing propensities (Gilbert 1993). Megacities are nuclei of information technologies, knowledge and innovation. Notably, innovations can be employed to foster sustainable development. Numerous interlocking dimensions have been identified that determine the structural standing for innovation capabilities. These include the environment, entrepreneurship, connectivity and education. The pool of talent aided by the existing educational system and assemblage of the corporation and technological constellations can promote innovativeness within the megacities. Such an environment becomes a point of attraction to talented individuals worldwide; this has been helped due to connectivity, networking, air quality, business environment, education and cultural values, which has helped transform megacities into innovative ecosystems (Nawrot et al. 2017).

Many large cities have experienced massive growth due to economies of scale, often beyond normal radii, which economists regard as negative externalities. Such negative externalities often cause the following issues:

- Environmental pollution
- Megalopolization (reduction in urban space per capita)
- Slums
- Squatters
- Social disorder
- High crime rates
- Traffic congestions, etc. (Gilbert 1990).

From an economic perspective, megacities are prosperous geographical entities, and as such, they encourage the influx of migrants searching for economic fortune. In 2010, megacities generated 14.6% of the global GDP (Boyd n.d.). Such figures are growing with an intensification of urbanization across the world and Africa in particular. However, despite the fascinating taxonomy of megacities, there are complex issues such as infrastructural infirmity, the transportation conundrum, health and sustainability threats that offer a susceptible landscape for the smooth running of the urban ecosystem. These quagmires are generally worsening

due to the excessive population growth that hoodwinks megacities' infrastructural capacity (Boyd n.d.; Yeung 1997). Thus, megacities can be observed from an opportunistic proclivity, including numerous risks (Heinrichs 2012). On the character of megacities in Africa, two fundamental components are critical to the discourse of the phenomenon: the fulfilment of population obligation and the territorial confinement of the urban agglomeration, accommodating both the urban slum dwellers and the wealthy elite (Csomós 2014).

Historiographical analysis of urban governance

The current social, political and economic trajectories of urbanization have roots in the age-long superstructure instituted by colonialism (Förster and Ammann 2018; Mamdani 1996). The pre-colonial social historicity is considered a fundamental starting point that shaped Africa's social structure (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). The subjugation of traditional indigenous systems and their replacement with the colonial political structure led to the modern caste system's imposition over the primordial indigenous social stratifications. This came with importing the colonial capitalist system that alternatively instrumentalized the restructuring of the age-long African socio-political order (Chodak 1973).

The colonial system's Western socio-cultural values, mentality and political institution were employed to reorganize African social norms. The hierarchy of the modern social stratification system constructed by the colonial regime constitutes a small upper caste of colonial administrators and colonial superintendents. This modern colonial structure provided a solid foundation for the emergence of class formation and a new socio-political order in most African countries (Chodak 1973). For example, the introduction of Government Reserved Areas (GRA) in well-developed areas or cities with basic social infrastructure for colonialist citizens (e.g. Mamdani 1996). Conversely, most indigenous Black Africans lived in the suburbs (informal settlements) with no essential infrastructural services and necessary social services. Notably, informality is attributed to poverty (Rauch 1991), an unregulated environment and an unofficial social environment (Collier 1993). Formal spaces are characterized by a well-organized land tenure system that is officially regulated by the state. This narrative demonstrates the new colonial-driven socio-ecological phenomenon referred to by Peter Ekeh as the "Two Publics" (Ekeh 1975) and Mahmood Mamdani as a bifurcated society.

Following this event, establishing formal cities within informal cities was accepted, depending on the context and whether or not their growth could perturb the colonial system (Mamdani 1996). Informal settlements grow faster compared to any other areas of the cities. During the colonial administration, the informal environments and dominant populace are difficult to manage and control due to their lopsided and unstructured planning (Drakakis-Smith 2000). The dichotomy created by a colonial state's circumstances continued to influence urban governance tradition in post-colonial Africa, hence the modern trajectories and inequalities. The situation, therefore, unremittingly reinforced the struggle between formal and informal urban governance that shapes development policy in Africa today.

Urbanization trends: the emergence and growth of megacities in Africa

Since urbanization and population growth in Africa tend to correlate, it is important to provide a general overview of African population growth to understand urbanization trends. In the 1950s, the African population was estimated at 228.9 million. It was projected by the United Nations (2015) that Africa would increase to 2.4 billion in 2050 (UNDESA

2015). Countries like Nigeria, The Gambia, Mali, Zambia, Angola, Burundi, Somalia and Tanzania have the highest population growth rate. By 2050, countries such as Nigeria will have 440 million population, Ethiopia 188 million, the Democratic Republic of the Congo 155 million, Tanzania 129 million, Egypt 122 million and Uganda 104 million (UNDESA 2012). Africa's urban population growth is the fastest growing population globally. Therefore, it is believed that in the next 20 years, most people will be domiciled in the cities.

Moreover, by 2030, it is estimated that Africa will accommodate 6 of the 41 world's megacities. The existing three megacities in Lagos, Kinshasa and Cairo will be added to Dar es Salaam, Luanda and Johannesburg. These megacities are the economic hubs in their respective countries and link Africa to the global economy. Also, it is assumed that by 2030, Kinshasa, Lagos and Cairo will accommodate over 20 million people, while cities like Johannesburg and Dar es Salaam will have exceeded the threshold of 10 million (UN 2019). By 2035, Lagos may reach close to 30 million people, transforming Nigeria into the largest megacity in Africa (Bello-Schünemann and Aucoin 2016).

By 2040, cities like Nairobi in Kenya and Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire will also have more than 10 million people. Moreover, by 2050, other cities, including Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, Bamako in Mali, Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, Dakar in Senegal, Kano and Ibadan, will join the league of megacities, summing up the number of megacities to 14 in about 30 years. Among these several existing and projected megacities, Lagos will attain the world's largest city by 2100 (United Nations 2019). By 2042, Africa's urban dwellers will be doubled to more than 1 billion. Additionally, it is assumed that more than a third of Africa's urban dwellers will be residing in the West Africa *region* (Bello-Schünemann and Aucoin 2016; United Nations 2019).

However, despite these prosperous projections, can this population growth transform into sustainable urban development? Or can it have an improvement in the lives of the people? These are questions that African policymakers are grappling with and should find apposite answers to. Indeed, Africa's population growth has outstripped economic development due to the lack of manufacturing and job creation (Bello-Schünemann and Aucoin 2016). Besides the growth of megacities, cities, a crucial number of agglomerations have not been transformed into sustainable development. Cities are not providing adequate infrastructure to match the massive influx of people, thereby eroding the quality of life because of pollution and congestion (Nawrot et al. 2017).

Some of the fundamental challenges faced in many urban areas in Africa include increasing poverty and slums currently estimated at more than 60% (UN-Habitat 2012). Therefore, large cities should be measured based on a threshold of economic attainment. Many projected megacities, especially in Africa, have banked on the informal economy. In this context, policy forecasting for the largest cities by 2100 should be based on population benchmarking and predicting the world's largest economies (Satterthwaite 2017).

Furthermore, sub-Saharan Africa accommodates 199.5 million slum dwellers, which the UN-Habitat considered as a manifestation of a poorly managed and malfunctioning sector. For example, Monrovia hosts more than 75,000 populace, and Kenya has more than 2 million slum dwellers, which is considered the largest in Africa (Bafana 2016). Thus, despite the belief that the current wave of megacities can bridge the vacuum of the housing shortage, most of the luxurious enclaves disregard the socio-economic conditions of the poor local citizens. The majority of the citizens with housing challenges are excluded from such initiatives. The exponential expenditure on megacities does not go in tandem with addressing urban poverty and the growth of slums. For instance, although 80% of the urban populace live in slums, a home unit in Kigali's Vision City costs approximately $160,000. Also, Senegal's

$2 billion Diamniadio Lake City received public criticism for neglecting most citizenry (Kazeem 2018). Despite having economic potentials, the concern is that the megacity wave hardly promotes equal socio-economic development of the general urban dwellers in Africa. The preceding sections delve into this in detail.

From sustainable urbanism to climate urbanism: the changing facades of urbanization

Different approaches have been devised in pursuit of sustainable cities, notwithstanding the variations in definitional objectivities. Sustainable urbanism emanated from three movements that sought to harmonize human and natural systems. The emergence of smart growth, new urbanism and green building movements provided a solid foundation for sustainable urbanism. The three movements aimed to promote and sustain social, economic and environmental reforms. Sustainable urbanism, therefore, attempts to integrate and synergize the core values inherent in these three movements to promote a sustainable human environment (Farr 2011). The term also embodies urban design, management and development. It can also be contextualized within the field of real estate, engineering, policy and planning (Larco 2016).

Douglas Farr (2011, p. 3) provided a distinct explanation on the phenomenon by defining sustainable urbanism as: "walkable and transit-served urbanism integrated with high-performance buildings and high-performance infrastructure; where compactness and human access to nature are core values and where aspects of sustainability, functionality and interconnectivity are more important than design". He further equated the threshold with human access to nature (density and biophilia). Moreover, a broader explanation of the term is considered as: "the application of sustainability and resilient principles to the design, planning, and administration/operation of cities" (Roggema 2016, p. 1).

To the UN-Habitat (2012), sustainable urbanism refers to

> the spatial manifestation of urban development processes that creates a built environment with norms, institutions and governance systems enabling individuals, households and societies to maximize their potential, optimize a vast range of services so that homes and dynamic neighbourhoods, cities and towns are planned, built, renewed and consolidated restraining adverse impacts on the environment while safeguarding the quality of life, needs and livelihood of its present and future populations. (p.4)

Sustainability encourages "local collectivities" that promote local pathways in mitigating the negative global influence of urbanization. The welfare of the local population that promotes economic, material, social and cultural well-being and professional growth, sense of belonging and access to ecological space is associated with sustainable urbanism. Sustainable urbanism policies need to be included in a long-term policy connected with the prosperity of the cities. Thus, sustainable urbanism is a:

> process of synergetic integration and co-evolution among the great subsystems making up a city (economic, social, physical and environmental), which guarantees the local population a non-decreasing level of wellbeing in the long term, without compromising the possibilities of development of surrounding areas and contributing by this towards reducing the harmful effects of development on the biosphere.
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> *(Camagni 2017, p. 272)*

From this definition, sustainable urbanism is a continuous process that embraces a learning attitude towards strategic design and conflict resolution. The various components that serve as an embodiment of the city – physical, social, economic, environmental and cultural heritage – are holistically considered in combination with their connections. This can be achieved by integrating, optimizing and maximizing the diverse components that connect the different subsystems and include the stringent minimization of the risks inherent from such loops and negative external influences (Camagni 2017). Therefore, sustainability, as it applies to urbanization, should not only be defined in an isolative manner that recognizes "physical determinism" and "technological peculiarities" to address urban problems (Sharifi 2016), but pluralism that takes the cognizance of diverse actors within the decision and planning processes also needs to be taken into consideration (Bond et al. 2013).

However, concerning the current policy efforts towards climate change, climate mitigation and adaptation are highlighted as fundamental pillars of climate urbanism. Climate mitigation aims to prevent greenhouse emission, while adaptation is considered an adjustment to human and natural systems against the deleterious effects of climate change in the cities (Juhola 2020). Climate urbanism emphasizes the need to evaluate and monitor carbon footprints and several other greenhouse gases' emissions within the cities. It is important to note that cities serve as major economic growth drivers (Long and Rice 2019).

Climate urbanism assumes that cities and local municipalities are viable channels in addressing climate change policies. Climate urbanism like the Smart Cities (e.g. Konza City in Kenya and Cape Town in South Africa) offers and promotes a technological and infrastructural response to climate threats. It provides an investment landscape for climate finance and governance. Low carbon infrastructural development can be regarded as the key element in climate mitigation, adaption and resilience (Long and Rice 2019). Climate finance through the horizontal structure is pivotal to climate governance. It is channelled through international organizations to city partnership, charitable organizations, real estate institutions, IT companies and research institutes; these entities are instrumental in sustaining the global climate agenda by providing advisory services to policymakers. The channels have also promoted public-private partnership for urban climate-proofing and smart projects (Robin et al. 2020).

Urban governance and megacities in Africa: a megalopolization of exclusionary spaces

In general, African countries have multi-layered land administration systems. Different levels of government play a vital role in the governance processes of urban areas. However, the allocation of responsibility among the layers of government varies from country to country. From the early 1980s, the agenda to promote decentralization and grassroots democracy was encouraged by international organizations' policies, as discussed by different authors in this volume. The pursuit for decentralization, especially related to urban management, has been unstable (Smit and Pieterse 2014).

The contemporary models of urban and land governance in Africa are dualistic and trace back to colonialism, combining the formal system constructed to safeguard transcontinental invaders' interest in the central cities and the informal land governance in the periphery urban areas (Pieterse and Parnell 2014). Public policies on urbanization are analogous to the formal system that can be compared to a Western model. These policies are codified by the state's legal conditionality, including housing, land and environmental policies. However,

informal or customary systems are generally characterized by unregulated or extra-legal systems (Kombe 2005).

Local governments' capacity to manage such an informal system is restricted by the traditional leaders who often control land allocation (Gough 1999). Coupled with the intergovernmental relation conflicts, the co-existence of formal and informal modes of governance often causes overlaps in urban functions among the levels of government (Pieterse et al. 2018). Therefore, the multi-layered governance arrangements hinder the policy effectiveness of the urbanization processes needed to address the divergent issues experienced by urban dwellers (Dodman et al. 2017).

Despite several reforms aimed at promoting decentralization in many African countries, local governments are still incapacitated to implement sustainable urban interventions. The governance system in many urban areas in Africa is highly centralized, and the higher level of governments renders most public services. The African urbanization agenda is yet to be a technologically and innovatively driven development. The crucial role of innovation as a pivotal instrument for development in urban Africa has been jettisoned in many academic and policy debates. Such neglect has been associated with a popular narrative that Africa is a consumer space that lacks the capability for manufacturing (Nawrot et al. 2017).

Thus, despite efforts towards good governance like public participation in the decision-making processes and public-private partnerships, a genuine decentralization of powers and resources to the sub-national governments and participatory urban governance remains elusive in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Nigeria (Smit and Pieterse 2014; UN-Habitat 2008). In Nigeria, local authorities have been turned into mere appendages of the central government. As enshrined in the 1999 constitution, the statutory functions of grassroots governments have been hijacked by the higher levels of government (state government), transforming the local authorities into an extension of mere administrative entities.

There are several reasons why decentralization projects have been rendered ineffectual, and these are situated within the continuum of inter-governmental and bureaucratic politics, as well as inadequate capacity of local governments (Andrews and Schroeder 2003). Also, the constitutional inadequacy of the political system hinders the effective implementation of urbanization policies. In many cases, decentralization in Africa has perpetuated anti-masses policies, patronage politics, selfish interests, political tensions and political networking (Crook 2003).

The private sector has led chiefly the current unsustainable development agenda in promoting megacities in Africa. This includes the construction of gated communities directed more towards a few wealthy elites and the middle class. This private sector-driven arrangement, which is considered anti-poor perfectionism, promotes social segregation and fragmentation capable of exacerbating Africa's urban poverty (van Noorloos and Kloosterboer 2018).

Since the majority of poor urban dwellers are residing in slums, it is permissible to assume that a reasonable proportion of this population will continue to reside in slums due to inadequate institutional and financial capacities and political wills to address the system of dualistic urbanization in Africa (Smit and Pieterse 2014). Validating the above argument requires critical observation of the current urbanization trends in Africa. As seen in most East Africa countries, urban slums have revolved around the private sector driving urban construction. This is mainly beneficial to the rich and middle classes, promoting unrealistic standards and regulations, lack of strategic planning by the government, politicizing informal settlements and social housing schemes, and the lack of public infrastructure (UN-Habitat 2010).

Conclusion

Urbanization trends in Africa represent and prevail alongside a dual model or structures in urban and land governance analogous to the hybrid social structure (formal and informal governance systems). This dual model enables landscapes that exclude the poor from receiving infrastructural benefits besides complicating a proper design and implementation of related urban policies. The chapter shows that the existing dualized superstructures traverse the co-existence and congruence of the wealthy elite class and slum dwellers within the same urban spaces. This also demonstrates the shortcomings of the globalized policy processes and frameworks for integrating Africa into the international political economy. Indeed, urbanization in Africa, as most policy areas already handled in this volume, repudiates the current global standards for sustainable urbanism and climate urbanism. The current lopsided political structure in many African states has feeble decentralization systems that render many local authorities inept in promoting effective management of urban areas.

Therefore, this chapter suggests that urban governance in Africa should address the current challenge of dualism, bridging the gap of infrastructural debacles between the mushrooming mega enclaves of the minority wealthy class citizens and the growing slum dwellers. This may address the endemic challenge of inequalities and infrastructural deficits that characterize the growth of megacities in Africa. Informal urban spaces and slums should be integrated into the overall urban development plan of the cities rather than adopting an isolationist approach currently employed for profligacy. A holistic policy approach should promote equal access to infrastructural opportunities rather than promoting strategies and developments that further infrastructural divides. In particular, local government structures such as municipalities should be bolstered to design and implement sustainable urbanization policies in Africa.

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