



## Strengthening Urban Engagement of Universities in Africa and Asia

### Thematic Paper Series TPS105/19

# Socio-economic development indicators and University engagement in partner countries and city regions.

Muir Houston, Nematollah Azizi, Lamiah Hashemi, Kamal Aziz Ketuly, Sizar Abid Mohammad, Mpoki Mwaikokesya, Charles Nherera, Zenaida Reyes and Elene Swanepoel

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## An introduction to the thematic paper series and the SUEUAA project

Muir Houston<sup>1</sup>; Mike Osborne<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Glasgow, Scotland

The collection of papers in this series of Thematic Papers published by the SUEUAA (Strengthening the Urban Engagement of Universities in Africa and Asia) team focus on topics of relevance to project partners and the city regions and institutions they represent. Papers in this series cover: Migration, Gender, Sustainable Energy, the Environment, the Economy and Policy Rhetoric. Each paper is co-authored by a member of the University of Glasgow SUEUAA team, and at least two other partner Institutions from cities in the Global South. The following cities are represented in SUEUAA: Sanandaj, Islamic Republic of Iran; Duhok, Iraq; Manilla, Philippines; Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania; Johannesburg, South Africa; and, Harare, Zimbabwe.

The SUEUAA project was funded by the British Academy under the Cities and Infrastructures Programme part of the UK Government's £1.5 billion Global Challenges Research Fund 'to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries through:

- challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research
- strengthening capacity for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries
- providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need'<sup>i</sup>

The SUEUAA project addresses a core problem in emerging economies of strengthening the urban engagement role of universities, and ways they contribute to developing sustainable cities in the context of the major social, cultural, environmental and economic challenges facing the global south. It uses a set of well-proven benchmarking tools as its principal method, and seeks to strengthen the capacity of universities to contribute to city resilience towards natural and human-made disasters. Examples of urban engagement include supporting the development of physical infrastructure, ecological sustainability, and social inclusion (including of migrants). It calls upon contributions from science and engineering, the arts, environmental sciences, social sciences and business studies. It assesses the extent to which universities in 6 countries (Iran, Iraq, the Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe) respond to demands of society, and how through dialogue with city stakeholders this can be enhanced and impact on policy; it uses a collaborative team from the UK and emerging economies.<sup>ii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.britac.ac.uk/global-challenges-research-fund-resilient-cities-infrastructure>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/>

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## **Socio-economic development indicators and University engagement in partner countries and city regions.**

Muir Houston<sup>1</sup>, Nematollah Azizi<sup>2</sup>, Lamiah Hashemi<sup>2</sup>, Kamal Aziz Ketuly<sup>3</sup>, Sizar Abid Mohammad<sup>3</sup>, Mpoki Mwaikokesya<sup>4</sup>, Charles Nherera<sup>5</sup>, Zenaida Reyes<sup>6</sup> and Elene Swanepoel<sup>7</sup>

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to provide both a general overview of the socio-economic context of each of the partner countries and cities and to explore the role that universities can play and what they can contribute in supporting and enhancing socio-economic development in the pursuit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It also takes a critical approach to examine some of the global rankings and indicators used to measure or rank 'development'. This is followed by examples of some of challenges the SUEUAA cities and regions face and examples of engagement through research and other initiatives that universities are currently undertaking in collaboration or partnership with city stakeholders including those in local communities to address some of the identified challenges that face their cities and countries more generally.

Keywords: University, development, socio-economic, engagement, employment, HDI

<sup>1</sup>University of Glasgow, UK; <sup>2</sup>University of Kurdistan, Iran; <sup>3</sup>University of Duhok, Iraq; <sup>4</sup>University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; <sup>5</sup>University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe; <sup>6</sup>Phillippine Normal University, Philippines; and, <sup>7</sup>University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

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## **SUEUAA: University engagement and socio-economic development in partner countries and city regions**

### **1. Introduction**

This is one of a series of linked Thematic Papers published by SUEUAA (Strengthening the Urban Engagement of Universities in Africa and Asia) on selected topics of relevance to project partners and the city regions and institutions they represent. Other themes to be covered in this series are: Migration, Gender, the Environment and Policy Rhetoric. The Thematic papers cut across a range of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with some directly related; and, others indirectly or associated such that progress on one SDG is often linked with progress on others. For example developing sustainable cities and communities (SDG11) can be linked to environmental issues (SDG13), decent work (SDG 8) which impacts on reducing inequalities (SDG10 and SDG5) and poverty (SDG1).<sup>1</sup>

The SUEUAA project was funded by the British Academy under the Cities and Infrastructures Programme; part of the UK Government's £1.5 billion Global Challenges Research Fund 'to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries through:

- challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research
- strengthening capacity for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries
- providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need'<sup>2</sup>

The SUEUAA project addresses a core problem in emerging economies of strengthening the urban engagement role of universities, and ways they contribute to developing sustainable cities in the context of the major social, cultural, environmental and economic challenges facing the global south. It uses a set of well-proven benchmarking tools as its principal method, and seeks to strengthen the capacity of universities to contribute to city resilience towards natural and human-made disasters. Examples of urban engagement include supporting the development of physical infrastructure, ecological sustainability, and social inclusion (including of migrants). It calls upon contributions from science and engineering, the arts, environmental sciences, social sciences and business studies. It assesses the extent to which universities in 6 countries and more specifically in six cities within those countries (University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Islamic Republic of Iran; University of Duhok, Duhok, Iraq; Philippine Normal University, Manilla, Philippines; University of Dar-es-Salaam, Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania; University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa; and, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, Zimbabwe) respond to socio-economic challenges; and, how through dialogue with various city stakeholders this can be enhanced and impact not only on policy but also to effect real change in local communities. It involves a collaborative team from the UK and the six partners.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britac.ac.uk/global-challenges-research-fund-resilient-cities-infrastructure>

<sup>3</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/>

## 2. Structure

The purpose of this paper is to provide both a general overview of the economic context of each of the partner countries and cities and to explore the role that universities can play and what they can contribute in supporting and enhancing socio-economic development in the pursuit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and, to present some specific examples of some of the research and other initiatives that universities are currently undertaking to address some of the specific socio-economic challenges that face their cities and countries more generally.

This will involve: examining current indicators on levels of, or progress to, social and economic development; and, a brief examination of the particular historical context within which the recent economic development of each of the partner countries took place. An examination of the major factors in this development will allow us to provide some macro level context and historical background for what is a key objective of this paper; an examination and analysis of the economic context at a more micro level by presenting an overview of particular context at the level of the city region or province. In the process some of the socio-economic challenges will be identified, some of the major factors that have given rise to such challenges noted; and, some examples provided of how universities in the city region are working with local communities and other relevant stakeholders to attempt to address some of these challenges.

The paper is structured as follow. Firstly, current indicators on development will be presented for each of the countries represented in the project and identified above. A range of global indices will be critically examined as it is suggested that flaws in the composition and methodologies are important as these indices are accessed and presumably influence perspectives and attitudes to countries; dependent upon the rankings or commentary that accompanies such indices, this could then have a potentially negative effect on the countries under discussion.<sup>4</sup> This will be followed by brief overviews of each country's recent socio-economic development trajectory in order to highlight the specific and concrete economic challenges each of them faces; and, the barriers and constraints which may have hindered more sustained economic development. This will be followed by a brief overview of some of the models of university engagement with external actors and agencies including national and local level government and industry that have been developed over recent years with a focus on the various 'helix' models. Finally, for each of the selected countries a brief overview of the city region which is the main object of analysis of the project will be presented accompanied by some of the concrete research and practice undertaken by universities which are directly related to instances of community engagement with other stakeholders to address the socio-economic challenges and their impact on the UN SDGs.

## 3. The measurement of progress

While this is not a comparative project in any sense of the word, it does, as stated aim to strengthen the capacity of university engagement with external partners and stakeholders at all levels of the community to deal with the societal challenges that they face. However, as will be seen, many of the indicators and terminology applied in the field relies on a hierarchical structure and composition; and this can in part be traced back to developments in the global economy in the aftermath of World

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<sup>4</sup> It is suggested country rankings could influence decisions by industry in terms of investment and location, charities in terms of aid and development programmes and even individuals in terms of travel and tourism.

War II. Then the terminology applied was the First (the West), Second (Soviet) and Third world (the rest) and had an implicit ranking in terms of various indicators of social, economic and cultural development and compared with a supposed 'ideal type' of development trajectory towards free – market capitalism.<sup>5</sup> In this period there was a substantial shift in the former colonial empires of the European nations and the rise of both the United States and the Soviet Union and the beginning of what came to be known as the Cold War. In the former colonies of principally the British Empire and to a lesser extent those of France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands there were increasing calls for self-determination and independence from their former colonial masters. In Iraq and Iran the resource curse of oil has had a major impact on social, political and economic development as the US sought to extend its dominance over the strategic control of oil.

The post war period also saw the development of the United Nations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. More recently these global organisations have tended to move away from neoliberal policies such as the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) as a condition of financial support and the granting of development loans; to a system which saw development in far broader terms than the laissez-faire pursuit of economic development as measured by GDP and the recognition that in many respects the recipients of their policies often ended up worse off than they were before the imposition. (see for example: Tsikata, 1995; Benerai, 2001; Karedemir, 2016)

These shifts can be recognised through the language used in literature and reports which shift from deficit models and focus more on talk about advanced or developed economies compared to less or under developed economies; or, it talks about high or low income countries and those in between. There was also arguably less of a focus on laissez-faire economics and more on sustainability and debt relief.

### 3.1. Development and growth indices

There are a range of indicators which purport to assess and rank a country's relative level of socio-economic development both regionally and globally. With the increasing availability of country level data there are now a plethora of Indices which purport to offer relative measures of various indicators which are supposed to represent different factors and their supposed influence on socio-economic development and progress over time on these measures.<sup>6</sup> Probably the most well-known of the indicators generally employed to examine relative levels of development is the annual Human Development Index (HDI) and the associated Human Development Report (HDR) developed and published by the United Nations.<sup>7</sup> The HDI indicators are collated, weighted and aggregated to produce a ranking of countries from highest to lowest and produces a number of indices with which to measure or quantify movement or progress towards increased scores or higher stages of development and increased gains in terms of health, welfare, income, education, gender, inequality, employment, poverty, infrastructure and environmental sustainability.

*The human development approach shifted the development discourse from pursuing material opulence to enhancing human well-being, from maximizing income to expanding capabilities, from optimizing growth to*

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<sup>5</sup> Rostow's stages of growth models (1960)

<sup>6</sup> However, as will be noted the quality, robustness and comparability of the indices and their individual elements have been subject to critique

<sup>7</sup> For an history of the development of the UN HDI see Stanton, 2007



*enlarging freedoms. It focused on the richness of human lives rather than on simply the richness of economies, and doing so changed the lens for viewing development results. (UNHDR, 2016: 2)<sup>8</sup>*

The Human Development Report Office releases five indices each year: the Human Development Index (HDI), a summary measure of average achievement in what the UN terms the key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and a decent standard of living; the Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI), which combines a country's average achievements in health, education and income with how those achievements are distributed among the country's population; the Gender Development Index (GDI), that measures gender gaps in human development achievements by accounting for disparities between women and men in three basic dimensions of human development — health, knowledge and living standards using the same component indicators as in the HDI; the Gender Inequality Index (GII), a composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market participation; and, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).<sup>9</sup> The MPI was specifically developed to identify multiple deprivations at the household and individual level in health, education and standard of living. The 2018 revision was undertaken specifically to contribute to the implementation and monitoring of SDG 1 – the eradication of poverty. The indicators in the 2019 MPI and their respective weightings are shown in Figure 1 below.

Dimensions of Poverty	Indicator	Deprived if living in the household where...	Weight
Health	Nutrition	An adult under 70 years of age or a child is undernourished.	1/6
	Child mortality	Any child has died in the family in the five-year period preceding the survey.	1/6
Education	Years of schooling	No household member aged 10 years or older has completed six years of schooling.	1/6
	School attendance	Any school-aged child is not attending school up to the age at which he/she would complete class 8.	1/6
Standard of living	Cooking Fuel	The household cooks with dung, wood, charcoal or coal.	1/18
	Sanitation	The household's sanitation facility is not improved (according to SDG guidelines) or it is improved but shared with other households.	1/18
	Drinking Water	The household does not have access to improved drinking water (according to SDG guidelines) or safe drinking water is at least a 30-minute walk from home, round trip.	1/18
	Electricity	The household has no electricity.	1/18
	Housing	Housing materials for at least one of roof, walls and floor are inadequate: the floor is of natural materials and/or the roof and/or walls are of natural or rudimentary materials.	1/18
	Assets	The household does not own more than one of these assets: radio, TV, telephone, computer, animal cart, bicycle, motorbike or refrigerator, and does not own a car or truck.	1/18

Figure 1: Components and weightings MPI 2019 (Source: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2019-MPI> )

The table below presents the five indices noted above alongside a number of other headline indicators used in the calculation of the HDI. They cover a range of domains that are often cited in relation to socioeconomic development and include education, communications, trade, income, labour market participation, education and health indicators. The country level data reported below is accompanied by individual country reports which add some context to the relatively complex indicators that are presented.

<sup>8</sup> [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016\\_human\\_development\\_report.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries>

	IR	IQ	PH	ZA	TZ	ZW
Life expectancy at birth (years)	76.2	70.0	69.2	63.4	66.3	61.7
Expected years of schooling (years)	14.9	11.0	12.6	13.3	8.9	10.3
Gross national income (GNI) per capita (2011 PPP\$) <sup>10</sup>	19130	17789	9154	11923	2683	1900
Inequality-adjusted HDI (IHDI) <sup>11</sup>	0.707	0.546	0.574	0.467	0.404	0.408
Gender Development Index (GDI) <sup>12</sup>	0.871	0.823	1.000	0.984	0.928	0.924
Gender Inequality Index (GII) <sup>13</sup>	0.461	0.506	0.427	0.389	0.537	0.534
Human Development Index (HDI), female	0.726	0.603	0.699	0.692	0.517	0.513
Human Development Index (HDI), male	0.834	0.733	0.69881	0.704	0.557	0.555
Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), HDRO specifications <sup>14</sup>	n.a.	0.059	0.038	0.032	0.275	0.149
Homicide rate (per 100,000 people)	2.5	9.9	11.0	34.0	7.0	6.7
Concentration index (exports) <sup>15</sup>	0.560	0.937	0.287	0.121	0.322	0.366
Internet users (% of population)	53.2	21.2	55.5	54.0	13.0	23.1
Carbon dioxide emissions per capita (tonnes)	8.3	4.8	1.1	9.0	0.2	0.8
Population, total (millions)	81.2	38.3	104.9	56.7	53.5	16.5
Population, urban (%)	74.4	70.3	46.7	65.8	31.6	32.4
Labour force 15+ Female	16.8	18.7	49.6	47.9	79.5	78.5
Labour force 15+ Male	71.4	74.1	75.1	62.0	87.4	89.1
HDI <sup>16</sup>	0.798	0.685	0.699	0.699	0.538	0.535
Ranking	60	120	113	113	154	156

Table 1: Selected indicators for partner countries. (Source: adapted from 2017 data available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI>)

<sup>10</sup> Aggregate income of an economy generated by its production and its ownership of factors of production, less the incomes paid for the use of factors of production owned by the rest of the world, converted to international dollars using PPP rates, divided by midyear population. Source: World Bank (2016a), IMF (2016) and United Nations Statistical Division (2016a).

<sup>11</sup> Technical note 2. at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016\\_technical\\_notes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016_technical_notes.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> See Technical note 3 for details on how the Gender Development Index is calculated at:

[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016\\_technical\\_notes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016_technical_notes.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. See Technical note 4 at <http://hdr.undp.org> for details on how the Gender Inequality Index is calculated.

<sup>14</sup> Percentage of the population that is multidimensionally poor adjusted by the intensity of the deprivations. See Technical note 5 at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016\\_technical\\_notes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016_technical_notes.pdf) for details on how the Multidimensional Poverty Index is calculated.

<sup>15</sup> A measure of the degree of product concentration in exports from a country (also referred to as Herfindahl-Hirschmann Index). A value closer to 0 indicates that a country's exports are more homogeneously distributed among a series of products (reflecting a well-diversified economy); a value closer to 1 indicates that a country's exports are concentrated highly among a few products. Source: UNCTAD (2016). Data Centre. <http://unctadstat.unctad.org/EN/>

<sup>16</sup> See Technical note 1 at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016\\_technical\\_notes.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2016_technical_notes.pdf) for details on how the HDI is calculated.

#### 4. Indicators for SUEUAA countries

In the case of the *Islamic Republic of Iran*, the report notes that between 1990 and 2017 Iran's HDI rose from 0.572 to 0.798 (+38.3%) and that progress was made on all indicators that comprise the HDI (UNDP, 2016) placing Iran in the High human development category and ranking it 6 out of 189 countries. Given the context within which it operated during this period the increase in HDI is impressive.<sup>17</sup> However, the report also notes that when this is discounted for inequality (IHDI = the 'loss' in human development due to inequality) its score falls to 0.707 (-11.1 %;) lower than in other high HDI countries (-16.0%), and regional comparators in South Asia (-26.1%) This is to some extent reflected in the difference between Male and Female HDI scores at 0.834 and 0.726 respectively resulting in a GDI<sup>18</sup> of 0.871 placing it in Group 5 (low equality in HDI achievements) indicating a gender imbalance in favour of males; reflected in its GII which at 0.461 places it 109 out of 160 countries.<sup>19</sup>

In *Iraq*, country reports also note an increase in HDI over the same period, moving from 0.572 to 0.685 (+19.8%), and its ranking of 120 places it in the Medium human development category. In relation to IHDI however, the resultant reduction of 20.4% to 0.546, is less than the average 'loss' to inequality for medium HDI countries (25.1%,) and also for regional comparators (25.1%) indicating progress is being made. The relative gender inequality between males and female HDI (0.603 and 0.733 respectively); results in a GDI of 0.823 placing it in Group 5. Gender inequity in development indices are again reflected in its GII which at 0.506 places it 123 out of 160 countries.<sup>20</sup> The relatively high HDI ranking for Iraq, when compared to some of our other partner countries might seem strange to readers given that over the last decade Iraq has been the focus of serious and prolonged armed conflict and occupation by external forces with considerable damage inflicted on its infrastructure and quality of life.<sup>21</sup>

In the case of the *Philippines* the country report notes the country's HDI rating of 0.699 places it in the Medium human development category ranked at 113 out of 189; and, in the period 1990-2015 it rose by 19.3%. When inequality is taken into account the reduction of 17.9%, resulting in an IHDI of 0.574, is like both Iran and Iraq lower than the average loss for all Medium HDI countries (15.6%); but, slightly higher than the average loss of regional comparators in East Asia and the Pacific (19.4%). In relation to gender inequality male and female HDI scores are 0.699 and 0.699 respectively which places them in Group 1 with a GDI of 1.00 indicating high levels of equality in HDI. However, the Philippines GII value of 0.427, which ranks it 97 out of 160 countries in 2017, suggests there is still room for improvement on a number of indicators in relation to gender inequities.

The country report for the *Republic of South Africa* also notes some progress in the HDI rating during the period 1990 – 2017 when it increased from 0.621 to 0.699 (+7.3%) placing it in the Medium human development category and 113 out of 189 countries and territories.<sup>22,23</sup> As might be expected given that the period covers the transition from Apartheid the reduction due to overall

<sup>17</sup> Moret, E.S. (2015) Humanitarian impacts of economic sanctions on Iran and Syria, *European Security*, 24:1, 120-140,

<sup>18</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GDI>

<sup>19</sup> [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/IRN.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/IRN.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/IRQ.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/IRQ.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Iraq was also subject to sanctions during the relevant period see: Alnasrawi (2001) Iraq: economic sanctions and consequences, 1990–2000, *Third World Quarterly*, 22:2, 205-218,

<sup>22</sup> It is worth noting that during the period life expectancy actually experienced a 7 per cent overall reduction although the trend seems to be indicate a slow recovery.

<sup>23</sup> The same rank as the Philippines

inequality is relatively large (-33.2%); and, greater than the average reduction for Medium developed countries (-25.1%) but slightly better than the reduction for regional comparators in Sub-Saharan Africa (-30.8%) resulting in an IHDI of 0.467. In relation to gender, male and female HDI is 0.692 and 0.704 respectively, giving a GDI of 0.984 which places it in Group 2; and its GII of 0.389 and ranking of 90 out of 160, positions it favourably in terms of regional comparators on a number of indicators.

The penultimate country report relevant to the project is for the *United Republic of Tanzania* which notes significant progress in the period 1990 – 2017 with the HDI increasing from 0.370 to 0.538 an increase of 45.3% and currently ranked 154 out of 189 countries and with major improvements in Life Expectancy from 50 in 1990 to 66.3 in 2017. In addition, given the period covers major refugee movements from the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo this would seem impressive. However, the IHDI falls to 0.404 (-24.8%) indicating the ‘loss’ to development from general inequality; and, this is better than its regional comparators in Sub-Saharan Africa (-30.8%) and the average loss for all Low HDI countries (31.13%). Gender differences in HDI indicators place it in Group 3 with male and female scores of 0.517 and 0.557 respectively resulting in a GDI of 0.932; more specifically the GII of 0.537 ranks it 130 out of 160 countries indicating losses in development due to gender inequality in for example empowerment and economic activity relative to comparators.

*Zimbabwe* is the lowest ranked of our selected countries with an HDI of 0.535 placing it in the Low human development category and as the report notes is ranked 158 of 189; and, during the period of interest only increased its HDI score by 8.9%. Specifically, there was a relatively large reduction in GNI per capita<sup>24</sup> of 29.3%; although an increase in mean years of schooling of 3.2 years. Once inequality is factored in, this falls to 0.408, a reduction of 24.2%; and, as with Tanzania better than that of both its comparators and other Low Income countries. In relation to gender, the GDI for females is 0.513 and 0.555 for males and as with Tanzania places it in Group 4 but is still better than for regional comparators and other Low income countries while its GII of 0.534 ranks it 128 out of 160 countries.

#### 4.1. SUEUAA trends over time

Figure 1 provides trend data on the HDI for each of the SUEUAA countries in the period 1990-2017. In general and as noted above each has made some progress in increasing its HDI, with the Philippines, Iran and Iraq registering almost linear growth. Tanzania seems to plateau during most of the 1990s and then grows linearly, while South Africa and Zimbabwe although at different magnitudes both reflect a shallow ‘u’ shape trend in terms of progress on HDI.

In the case of *Iraq*, we can see the possible impact of both Gulf wars in 1990 and 2003 with a period of progress after each – again as noted above given wholesale destruction of infrastructure this seems remarkable but also perhaps indicates that oil and hence income kept flowing. In *Iran* we see amidst the linear growth a quite sharp increase between 2005 and 2006 and this might be related to current account surpluses which reached a then record \$20.65 billion in 2006<sup>25</sup> and increasing oil

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<sup>24</sup> As will be explored in later sections it is suggested that the fall in GNI per capita is directly related to the increasing scale of the informal sector in Zimbabwe which has been estimated at around \$7 billion with a resultant reduction in tax receipts and capital circulation in the formal economy. (Medina and Schneider, 2018)

<sup>25</sup> Current account surplus reached \$58.5 billion in 2012 but have since declined to around \$16 billion in 2018.  
<https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/iran/current-account-balance>

revenues which reached \$81 billion in 2007 (Habibi, 2008); and, its HDI continues to rise despite evidence of the impact of sanctions on the health of the population (Kokabisaghi, 2018).

The **Philippines** exhibits a clear linear trajectory since 1990. However this should be seen against a backdrop of sometimes challenging circumstances in terms of political uncertainty, the re-emergence of corruption, natural disasters in the form of typhoons, internal insurgencies and terrorism and increasing inequality. It has also been suggested that remittances from Filipino workers across the globe are an important contributor to the economy contributing 10.2% to national GDP<sup>26</sup> and totalling almost \$33 billion in 2018.<sup>27</sup>

In the case of **Tanzania**, we can see that it started the period at a far lower level than the other SUEUAA countries and for much of that decade there is little if any movement in the HDI until towards the end of the 1990s it starts to climb. It is suggested that the plateau in the 1990 was the result of the restructuring of the economy from the socialist or *Ujamaa* model of Julius Nyerere in the mid 1980s and the imposition of SAPs in the shift to a free market economy in the first phase (1985-95) and the mass privatisation of state assets and economic and fiscal reforms in the second (1995-2005).<sup>28</sup> However, while recognising that economic growth has taken place, Mandalu *et al.*, (2018: p67) caution that 'the majority rural people continue to be poor or even poorer'.

In **South Africa** during the period we can see a slight increase in the early 1990s perhaps as a result of dismantling of the apartheid system and the introduction of majority rule. However, this is not sustained and starts to decrease in the late 90s through the early 2000s. Despite great hopes of social and economic transformation for the majority, according to Mosala *et al.* (2017) rather than following the policy rhetoric of radical transformation the economy was largely subject to neo-liberal policies of privatisation and liberalisation which did little to improve the lives of many South Africans. However, Mosala *et al.*, (Ibid.) do recognise that there were some gains in improving healthcare, social security and welfare systems which might account for the ongoing increases in HDI since the mid to late 2000s.

Finally for **Zimbabwe** we see an inverted *U* shape trend with development indicators declining from the early 1990s when the country was undergoing a series of crises linked to a number of causes including knock-on effects of the East Asian financial crisis which significantly lowered commodity prices and as such impacted on the returns from agricultural exports which were themselves impacted by successive years of drought. In addition a Structural Adjustment Programme was implemented with further negative effects on the economy. As can be seen it was only in the mid-2000s that development indicators began to recover. While much of the blame for poor economic performance has been focused on the Mugabe regime, according to Makina (2010) the roots of the problem can be traced back long before independence to the 1960s which have resulted in 'five lost decades' of economic growth.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/04/23/record-high-remittances-to-low-and-middle-income-countries-in-2017>

<sup>28</sup> For a useful overview see Mandalu *et al.*, 2018 and Magoti, 2015

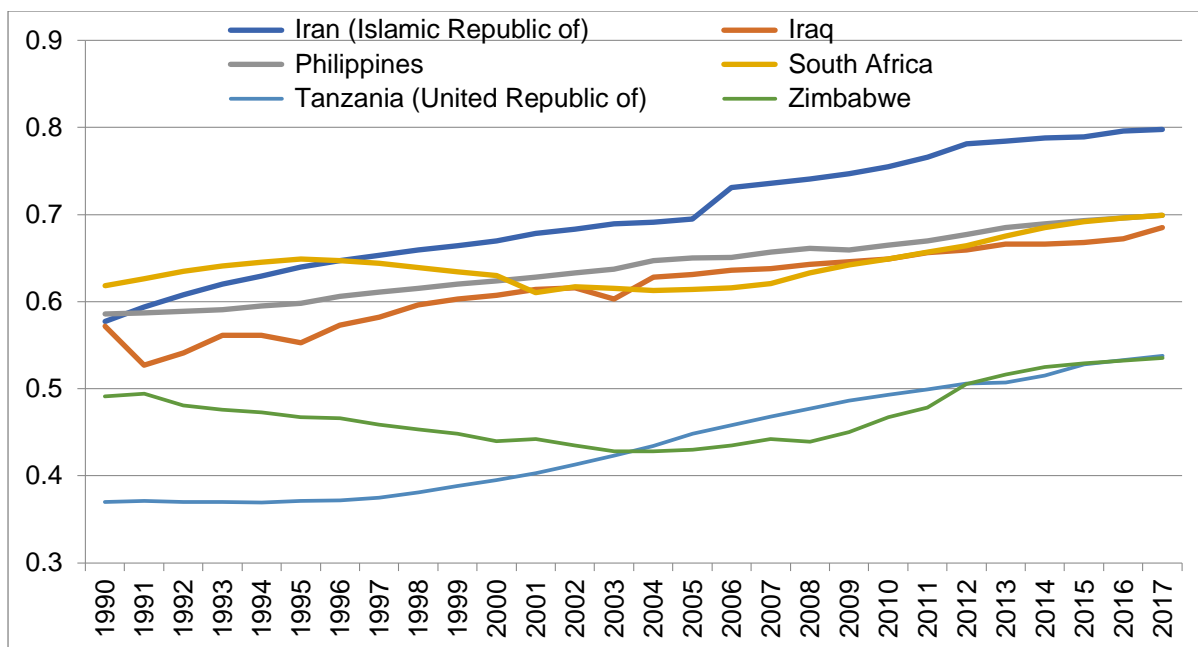


Figure 2: HDI 1990-2017 for SUEUAA countries (Source: adapted from UN HDR 2018)

The data in Table 1 and Figure 2 and the brief country overviews presented above provide some indication of variations in individual indicators, how these have changed over time, and, also allows some comparison between both regional and ranking groups. Some general points can be made in relation to specific indicators.

## 5. A brief critical review

There have however been some criticisms of the way in which the HDI and other indicators that are intended to quantify various elements and their relative importance in economic and human development (for example see: Chowdhury, 1991 and Srinivasan, 1994) and while there was a major review of the HDI in 2010 (Klugman *et al.*, 2011) it has still been subject to critique. Bilbao-Ubillos (2013) assesses the HDI positively as a starting point for determining the relative degree of development of a country, but is also critical of its limitations). Specifically in relation to the HDI an examination of the data seems to present some anomalies. Mention has already been made of the growth in some indicators for Iraq despite a prolonged period of unrest and conflict and may in some way identify some marginal return to stability. However it is perhaps harder to explain some of the other rankings. It seems somehow counter intuitive that the failed state of Libya is ranked 108<sup>th</sup> and is in the High HDI category or that Palestine living in a state of virtual siege is ranked at 119. Or, that the bastion of women's rights that is Saudi Arabia is ranked at 39<sup>th</sup> for both GDI and GII.

The World Bank also produces an index which differs slightly in that it is designed to look at supply side factors and aims to influence increased investment in health and education and is specifically linked to SDG4. According to Edwards (2018) and Liu (2018), the Human Capital Index does mark a distinctive shift by the World Bank with calls for increased budget allocations for health and education. However, Edwards (*Ibid.*) and Liu (*Ibid.*) are also critical of the way in which it attempts to do this as noted below. The World Bank claims: 'The goal of the HCI is a world in which all children arrive at school ready to learn, the time spent in school translates into better learning, and they can

grow up to live and work as healthy, skilled, and productive adults.<sup>29</sup> Education is seen as a crucial element in adding value in production and supply chains in order to be able to develop high skill, high added value employment and economic and productivity growth. This is one of the few measures on which Zimbabwe scores relatively well against comparators and is perhaps reflective of the high levels of education in comparison with for example counterparts in South Africa and Tanzania.<sup>30</sup>

There are of course, as noted above, other indices and ranking scales used to reflect aspects of a country's development or transformation.

The Index of Economic Freedom Index (EFI) is another alternative indicator of the economic growth and prosperity of a country relative to others both regionally and globally. Economic freedom as viewed through their neo-liberal lens is measured by factors relating to the rule of law, limited government, regulatory efficiency, and open markets. Their vision of small state, unregulated capitalism 'unfettered by heavy-handed government regulation and taxation' is untroubled by minor blips like the global financial crash of 2008 and arguably has already been tried and failed in the era of the imposition of Structural Adjustment Programmes so beloved by the IMF and World Bank of the 1980s and 90s. In their index of 180 countries the Philippines is our highest ranked partner at 70<sup>th</sup>, Tanzania is ranked 94<sup>th</sup>, South Africa at 102<sup>nd</sup>, Iran ranked at 155<sup>th</sup> and Zimbabwe at 175<sup>th</sup>. There was insufficient data for Iraq to be included. Hong Kong tops the rankings. And as might be expected given their ideological positioning, Cuba, Venezuela and North Korea occupy the three bottom places. For a critical overview see Dolan (2018).

A similar ideological lens can be seen operating in relation to the Bertelsmann Stiftung's Transformation Index (BTI)<sup>31</sup> which purports to analyse and evaluate whether and how developing countries and countries in transition are steering social change toward democracy and a market economy. The BTI excludes Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries as presumably they have no problems with governance, failing democracy, or economic inequality. Two main indices are combined to produce the Transformation Index: the Status Index (itself subdivided into Political Transformation which ranges from Democracy in Consolidation to Hard-line Autocracy and Economic Transformation which ranges from a Developed Market Economy to a Rudimentary Market Economy) which ranges from Highly Advanced to Failed or Non-existent and the Governance Index which ranges from Very Good to Failed. SUEUAA country rankings can be seen in Table x. Specifically in relation to the EFI, BTI and other indices of state fragility or failure there have been a number of criticisms. Khan (2017) suggests that a number of these indices are inadequately conceptualised and operationalised. This resonates with the earlier critique of PSP (Poor State Performance) indices by Sanin (2011) of their structural deficiencies and also with that of Ferreira (2017: 1291) who suggested that 'existing approaches are undermined by a lack of solid theoretical foundations, which leads to confusion between causes, symptoms and outcomes of state fragility.'

However, there are indices that do not reify a neo-liberal version of capitalism allied with a fixation on economic growth. The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is a less well known index produced by the New

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital>

<sup>30</sup> Figures for SUEUAA are presented in Table 2

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.bti-project.org/en/home/>

Economics Foundation (NEF) and claims it ‘measures what matters: sustainable wellbeing for all. It tells us how well nations are doing at achieving long, happy, sustainable lives.’<sup>32</sup> It measures a range of indicators including wellbeing, life expectancy, inequality of outcomes and ecological footprint; and, is critical of measures that concentrate on economic growth and measures of GDP. Leading the rankings of the 142 countries in the 2016 HPI are Costa Rica, Mexico, Columbia, Vanuatu and Vietnam respectively. Our partner countries generally also tend to do slightly better than in more free market, GDP and growth oriented indices with the Philippines ranked 20<sup>th</sup>, Iraq 67<sup>th</sup>, Iran 84<sup>th</sup>, Tanzania 97<sup>th</sup>, Zimbabwe 99<sup>th</sup> and South Africa 128<sup>th</sup>.

The final index which is considered is the Social Progress Index<sup>33</sup> and again recognises that progress in terms of development requires certain foundational or structural elements which underpin the pursuit of economic development and growth. The SPI has been developed specifically with no economic indicators and designed to complement economic measures such as GDP. It has three main components: Basic Human Needs, Foundations of Wellbeing and Opportunity; each of which contains four subscales. As noted earlier and specifically recognised by the creators of the SPI, these indices can influence policy formation and the allocation of resources whether internally or as factors in deciding international donor aid priorities.<sup>34</sup> A look at the top ranked countries is instructive and it is suggested provides a possible glimpse into the ideological lens. All the top five countries are Nordic or Scandinavian and as such could be argued to represent a specific form of social democratic welfare capitalism and as such posits this as an ideal type much in the same way the other indices reify certain modes, structures and forms of socio-economic interaction and development. However as in the case of the HDI and HCI criticisms can be made in relation to how and why such indices are constructed, whether like for like is being measured, (in some cases time periods covered can differ by as much as five years for data being compared), what they purport to measure; and, in some cases the ideological perspective with which they view the world.

The following table presents the relative rankings or scores for each of the SUEUAA countries and the various indicators outlined above.

	Iran	Iraq	Philippines	South Africa	Tanzania	Zimbabwe
HDI ranking N=189	60 High	120 Medium	113 Medium	113 Medium	154 Low	156 Low
MPI score (0-1)	n.a.	0.059	0.038	0.032	0.275	0.149
EFI ranking N=180	155	n.a.	70	102	94	175
BTI ranking N=129	118	107	38	26	64	113
HPI ranking N=140	84	67	20	128	97	99
HCI Score (0-1) Ranking N=157	0.591 71	0.398 128	0.548 84	0.406 126	0.400 127	0.441 114
SPI Ranking N=146	88	n.a.	90	77	110	127

Table 2: SUEUAA rankings and scores on various indices

<sup>32</sup> <http://happyplanetindex.org/>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.socialprogress.org/>

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.ted.com/talks/michael\\_green\\_what\\_the\\_social\\_progress\\_index\\_can\\_reveal\\_about\\_your\\_country](https://www.ted.com/talks/michael_green_what_the_social_progress_index_can_reveal_about_your_country)



## 6. The SUEUAA Cities and Universities

While the SUEUAA countries may face similar challenges, identified through the focus of each of the Thematic Papers and outlined in the respective City Profiles,<sup>35</sup> the specifics of each are quite distinct and often with different underlying causes or antecedents, which can be seen from the regional profiles of the SUEUAA cities. There is no place here for a detailed analysis of the specific historical experience and political-economic formation of our SUEUAA partner countries. However, even a cursory overview of some of the most salient episodes in their development trajectories reflects and illustrates to some small extent the influence and impact of external factors including colonialism, geopolitics, oil imperialism, minority rule, conflict and the imposition of sanctions by external forces. In addition, it should be noted that two of the SUEUAA cities (Sanandaj in Iran and Duhok in Iraq) are Kurdish majority provinces and as such have suffered internal discrimination and conflict as a result of their minority status over the years in pursuit of self-determination and autonomy.<sup>36, 37</sup>

### 6.1. Duhok<sup>38</sup>

Duhok City is the capital city of Duhok Governorate in the autonomous region of Kurdistan in the north of Iraq bordered to the North East by Turkey. The Governorate occupies an area of just under 11,000 km<sup>2</sup> with an estimated population of around 1.25 million<sup>39</sup> and the city is about 45km<sup>2</sup>, with an estimated population of 340,900.<sup>40</sup> While the main religion is Islam the city is ethnically and religiously diverse with mainly native Kurdish people and minorities of Assyrians, Armenians, Turkman and Arabs. Architecturally it is known for its many mosques, monasteries and churches dating back to mediaeval times. It lies between two chains of mountains, which provide the main water supply of the city through dams and rivers for the diverse agricultural production in the area and human and industrial use. The city is connected to the region and beyond by two main highways, one linked to the Turkish border and other to the regional capital Erbil, and south through Baghdad to Basra. Its nearest airport is in Mosul although plans have been underway to construct an international airport at Duhok since 2012 although this has been in the recent uncertain climate put on hold. As a provincial and administrative capital it is host to a range of various governmental agencies, services and utility provision including water and power. It has two public universities including our partners in the University of Duhok which was created in 1992 specifically to address the growing demand for higher education provision in the region and to enhance and build capacity in both public and private sectors of the Governorate. It has around 22,000 undergraduates, 1000 postgraduates and around 1600 academic staff located in 18 colleges and 78 departments covering the full range of physical, life, health and social sciences and humanities. There are also, three private universities and several specialist higher education institutions with for example the Duhok Polytechnic University specialising in petroleum engineering and environmental protection with which coordinates with the Duhok department for public health protection in projects among the local communities which suffer from the pollution of the same oil and petroleum based industries that drive much of the local and indeed national economy.

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<sup>35</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/about-us>

<sup>36</sup> [https://www.institutkurde.org/en/institute/who\\_are\\_the\\_kurds.php](https://www.institutkurde.org/en/institute/who_are_the_kurds.php)

<sup>37</sup> <https://thekurdishproject.org/history-and-culture/kurdish-history/>

<sup>38</sup> This section draws heavily on the City profile by Ketuly and Mohammad (2017) <http://sueuaa.org/cities/duhok>

<sup>39</sup> Population estimates for Duhok have varied widely over recent years due to the huge influx of refugees and displaced persons from the conflicts in the region, with Syrian refugees making up a substantial proportion in the refugee centres and camps.

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.citypopulation.de/Iraq-Cities.html>

The economy of the region depends heavily on crude oil and petroleum and natural gas production, refining and distribution including several crude petroleum pipelines which go to the border with Turkey; and, associated industrial sectors and supply chains. It also has a diverse agriculture sector cultivating a wide variety of fruits, grains and vegetables; and, a burgeoning tourism sector. However, due to the recent economic crisis and the low price of oil there a large number of the companies mainly working in the oil sector have closed down and this has had a major impact not only on the industries and companies depending on these oil companies but also in terms of the lack of government revenue impacting on the delivery of local services and infrastructural projects. For example construction of roads and highways, power generation, agriculture and tourism have been badly effected and this has resulted an increasing number of unemployed particularly among young people, and it has had a knock on effect on the employability prospects of recent university graduates.

A report in 2015 noted that 52% of employment was provided by the government or public sector and female participation in the labour market is low and those who are economically active suffer high rates of unemployment.<sup>41</sup> In addition droughts over the past decade have impacted on agricultural production and have exacerbated the problems of a poor water infrastructure with much lost due to leaks and poor maintenance. The influx of refugees and displaced persons has also had a significant negative impact on the economy with an estimated high point of around 2.5 million although this has decreased as around 1.7 million displaced people have returned to their area of origin as a result of decreasing conflict in the region although according to a recent report (OCHA, 2019) by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)<sup>42</sup> estimated over 400,000 people in need.

One of the major programmes that the University of Duhok initiated was designed to show solidarity to the huge number of students that had been displaced from their studies both regionally but also from Syria by opening its doors and its programmes to allow many hundreds of displaced students to continue with their studies. It also helped to train in conjunction with German colleagues from the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW) local students to become trained psychotherapy counsellors to deal with the large number of people severely traumatised by the psychological effects of conflict and displacement. There are also a range of initiatives led by the College of Economics and Administration.

In recognition of the high rates of unemployment amongst young people in general but also specifically among students a workshop with high level delegates including the President of the University, the Deputy Governor, other public officials academics and importantly the young people who were represented by the Union of West Kurdistan Youth and Students was held to discuss possible solutions and the development of potential solutions in terms of employment opportunities. In order to improve the skills of local and regional school teachers a range of professional development programmes were instigated by the Faculty of Management and Economics and supported by the European Research Council. In addition, academics are involved in a number of showcase events where they attempt to match students with employers from local companies.

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<sup>41</sup> [https://www.ncciraq.org/images/infobygov/NCCI\\_Dohuk\\_Governorate\\_Profile.pdf](https://www.ncciraq.org/images/infobygov/NCCI_Dohuk_Governorate_Profile.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.unocha.org/>

## 6.2. Sanandaj<sup>43</sup>

The city of Sanandaj is the capital of the Kurdistan province of the Islamic Republic of Iran covering 29,137km<sup>2</sup> and administratively has 10 counties and 31 districts. It is located in the north-west of the country and has over 200km of shared borders with the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan. Sanandaj is situated in the south of the province and Kurdistan is governed, like all Iranian provinces, by a Governor General appointed by the Ministry of the Interior subject to cabinet approval. Education is seen as being of particular importance in the province for the purposes of socio-economic development. There are 41 Higher Education Institutions in the province with a student population of 57,723. The SUEUAA partner organisation: the University of Kurdistan (in the city of Sanandaj), is the main state university in the province and is responsible for evaluating and monitoring all the other higher education institutions in the province.

According to the 2016 Census the total population of the province was just over 1.6 million with an almost equal gender balance of 50.7% males and 49.3% female and a relatively young population with 50.6% of males and 50.2% of females under the age of 30. Especially in rural areas there are significant numbers of young people in need of both education and training in order to try and improve the relatively low rates of employment amongst this age group. In terms of rural urban share just over 70% of the provinces population are urban and just under 30% are classified as rural and there have been considerable inflows from rural to urban areas increasing by over 25% between 2006 and 2011.

One of the main reasons that citizens migrate to cities in the province is to have better access to educational facilities and other basic services and consequently better employment opportunities. Most of the rural districts have primary level education only and higher education institutes in all forms are non-existent and thus to continue to a higher level, migration to urban centres is required. In Sanandaj, this rapid urbanisation has resulted in what Azami et al (2017) identify as a number of unsustainable informal settlements within the city.<sup>44</sup> Given the importance of agriculture and animal husbandry to the local economy this migration not only impacts of employment and production in the sector, but can also result in the phenomena of 'ghost villages' where the buildings and basic infrastructure may remain, all the inhabitants have left. In addition, Karimi and Boussaou (2018) who provide a useful and fairly comprehensive historical overview of the development of Sanandaj from its origins to the present day, note the rapid urbanisation, dramatic population increases resulting from rural migration has increased social segregation and growing regional inequality.

Thus, there is a great need for better access to educational facilities and technological training centres. Because of the physical geography of the region and the fact that the province is mountainous and in extreme climatic conditions (especially winter season), it is difficult for villagers and other rural dwellers to travel to bigger centres of education on a daily basis and financially cumbersome. In terms of gender, it is more difficult for young girls / females to travel from rural areas to cities due to conservative cultural values, so that the Kurdish region is suffering from an increasing proportion of uneducated girls (nearly 70% of girls in rural areas are unable to continue their education to secondary level). Indeed discriminatory state policy has prevented many children from accessing education and is a contributing factor to the extremely high levels of illiteracy in

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<sup>43</sup> This section draws heavily on the City profile by Azizi and Hasheni (2017) <http://sueuaa.org/cities/sanandaj>

<sup>44</sup> See also Azami, Mirzaee and Mohammadi (2015)

Kurdistan. Whereas Article 15 allows the use of minority languages in public, this is not implemented in practice making the government's actions illegal under Iran's Constitution.

The province faces a number of challenges in relation to socio-economic development. As noted with increasing numbers migrating to urban centres unemployment rates are high particularly among young people. Economic development is hampered by poor infrastructure and transportation links with other regions and internationally are weak and there has been a lack of investment in what remains a generally small scale the province is dependent upon metal and non-metal mining, food and drinks industry, car tyre production, petrochemical plant, cement factory, tile factory, cigarette and tobacco production and high-quality traditional handicrafts such as carpets, rugs and backgammon boards that are world-renowned.

Kurdistan province is rich in natural resources and provides a significant percentage of water to the rest of Iran. Nonetheless there has been little invested in Kurdish economic development, which is reflected in the wider system of discrimination. The province has 374,084 hectares of forestlands, 1,414,000 hectares of rangelands and 806,065 hectares of rich agricultural lands producing wheat, barley, potato, alfalfa, and a wide range of fruits and vegetables which make a significant contribution to the regional economy. The forests are home to many varieties of trees, animals and birds. Moreover, Kurdistan Province is home to over 2,200 species of plants. Hence, the University of Kurdistan has two Faculties that reflect the natural environment of the region and its potentialities: the Faculty of Agriculture and the Faculty of Natural Resources with many undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes focused on the environmental sustainability of the region and the training and development of students to enter employment in the sector.

The University of Kurdistan has also established various research centres to meet the needs of the region: in relation to the environment and agricultural production The Centre for the Development of Northern Zagros Forestry, The Strawberry Research Institute (Kurdistan Province is the biggest national producer of strawberries) and Medicinal Plants Research Institute have been created and work in collaboration with stakeholders to further develop these important sectors of the economy. This province also has substantial mineral resources with mines extracting gold, metals, granite and marble stones and the University of Kurdistan has a very active and vibrant Department of Mining at the Faculty of Engineering which both undertakes research in collaboration with stakeholders in the sector, but also importantly for the socio-economic development of the province it educates and trains further scientists and engineers for employment in the field. Alongside these initiatives the University is also developing a range of programmes and workshops to try and develop and strengthen a more entrepreneurial mind-set and relevant skills amongst graduates through the identification of opportunities to set up small businesses to sustainably develop for example eco-tourism and agriculture.

### **6.3. Manila<sup>45</sup>**

The city of Manila, capital of the Philippines, is situated at the mouth of Pasig River and Manila Bay and located in the Southwestern part of Luzon-the biggest island of the Philippine archipelago. It is one of most densely populated urban areas and the 4<sup>th</sup> largest mega-city in the world. In terms of total population, estimates vary dependent upon boundaries drawn, with distinctions being made for the City of Manila and the vast conurbation that comprises Metro Manila and the National City

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<sup>45</sup> This section draws heavily on the City profile by Reyes(2018) <http://sueuaa.org/cities/manila>

Region (NCR). The City of Manila has a total population of around 1.8 million covering an area of 42km<sup>2</sup> and a population density of 42,425/km<sup>2</sup>, while Metro Manila has a total population of over 23 million. The city of Manila has 50.8% females and 49.2% males and a relatively young population with almost 60% of the population being under the age of 30.<sup>46</sup>

Manila is the national centre for culture, politics, education and trade including transportation, electronics, business product outsourcing, tourism, and other service oriented activities with gaming and entertainment industries as newly developing sectors in the Philippines. It can trace its history back for more than 400 years; and, as such its infrastructure display its heritage and colonial past with an urban landscape that reflects both European and American traditions. The churches and cathedrals were designed by the Spaniards while government buildings were built by the Americans. However, much of that urban landscape has been significantly changed as a result of urban sprawl. Specifically in terms of trade, the Port of Manila is a major shipping harbour in terms of imports and exports and is the country's largest seaport and a major container hub although there have been recent reports of congestion forcing some delays.<sup>47</sup>

According to Morley (2018) the city is of major national economic importance with its per capita income three times higher than the national average, local property development a major contributor to national economic growth and the city contributes 37% to Philippines GDP. However, as he also notes (Ibid: p17) this growth has resulted in extremes where ....

..... in the business district of Makati luxury condominiums, gated communities, multi-floor luxury shopping malls, and skyscrapers accommodating international finance companies and banks define the cityscape. However, in contrast, within other localities are to be found abject living conditions and widespread poverty. With its countless slums an absence of adequate housing, sanitation, and clean water, plus a lack of access to education, public health provision, and skilled employment, accordingly defines the day-to-day life of millions of Manileños.

Rapid urbanisation and migration for employment opportunities has resulted in the growth of informal settlements and slum areas.<sup>48</sup> Informal settlers in Metro Manila grew from 5.3 to 9.6 percent in the period 2000-2006 and growth continues with some estimates suggesting that informal settlers make up between 20 and 35 per cent of the NCR population.<sup>49</sup> Suitable low-cost housing in Manila is limited and so those who migrate to the city tend to occupy whatever vacant space they can access with this often leading to the expansion of already existing slum areas. Many of these informal settlements are vulnerable to floods and fire with some located on culverts designed to allow flood overflows. With such a high population density and the lax implementation of housing regulations allowing sub-standard construction, this results in the increased vulnerability of population to flood, fire and earthquake which are common phenomena. In addition, Manila is in a low lying area that frequently experiences flooding every time there is a heavy rain and increasingly as a result of storms and typhoons which many link to global climate change.

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.citypopulation.de/search.html?q=Manila%20%22maps%22>

<sup>47</sup> [https://www.joc.com/port-news/international-ports/volume-holidays-delay-cargo-manila\\_20190125.html](https://www.joc.com/port-news/international-ports/volume-holidays-delay-cargo-manila_20190125.html)

<sup>48</sup> For details about some recent innovative approaches to address the challenges of housing provision see:

<https://nextcity.org/features/view/slum-lab-manilas-quest-to-build-a-better-informal-settlement>

<sup>49</sup> <https://nextcity.org/informalcity/city/manila>

In terms of education, there are more than 300 higher education institutions (HEIs) in the NCR and about 50 of them are in Manila.<sup>50</sup> These are a mix of public, private and not-for-profit with a large number of Catholic universities indicating the role the church has played in the Philippines. As an indication of the scale of private higher education the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) reported in 2017 that while there were 233 public HEIs, there were 1,710 private HEIs.<sup>51</sup> In the 70s and 80s students from the provinces still preferred to study in Manila. However, since the creation and development of a number of public HEIs in the provinces and other regions that are performing well in board examinations, enrolment in Manila HEIs from outside the area started to decrease.

The SUEUAA partner institution in Manila is the Philippine Normal University (PNU) which was the first institution of higher learning established during the American occupation of the Philippines and formally opened in 1901 and was granted full university status in 1992. In recognition of its leading role in teacher education it was designated the National Centre for Teacher Education in 2009. While it is hard to envisage how one institution can influence socio-economic development at the city level in a city on the scale of Manila, there are a number of activities which PNU undertakes to improve the socio-economic prospects of some of those marginalised communities who live in the informal settlements identified above. One example of how PNU sought to respond to issues of gender equality and women's empowerment was the subject of a SUEUAA case study (Reyes, 2018). This is a long-standing focus of community engagement by PNU dating back to the late 1980s and led to the creation of the University Centre for Gender and Development (UCGD).<sup>52</sup> It runs gender sensitivity training programmes and seminars for University staff, teachers, community leaders and citizens of the local community (barangay). The UCGD and students of the Women Studies programme also develop action research projects with the aim to empower women in the local community. These projects involve a focus on health and wellbeing, skills, child rearing, and nutrition. The second example by SUEUAA Associate Rebecca Marquez of St Scholastica's College (Marquez, 2019)<sup>53</sup> who reports on programme which engages with Manila street dwellers through the Tuluyan San Benito (Welcome House of St. Benedict) which in addition to providing a temporary shelter where street dwellers, especially women and their children, can gain some respite also provides self-help livelihood initiatives to simple financial management systems on small scale business ventures such as selling 'street food' or through loan arrangements with easy repayment schemes to purchase 'pedicabs'. These programmes operate alongside their education and literacy programmes, and their advocacy programmes, which help street dwellers gain official papers and thus access to government services including health and education provision and ultimately aim to provide a more stable and safe source of income for the street dwellers, moving away from scavenging.

#### 6.4. Dar es Salaam<sup>54</sup>

The city of Dar es Salaam is the capital city of the United Republic of Tanzania and according to projections by the UN is projected to become one of Africa's mega cities.<sup>55</sup> It is currently the fifth largest city in Africa and is projected to grow from its current population of around 6.3 million<sup>56</sup> to

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<sup>50</sup> <https://ched.gov.ph/>

<sup>51</sup> <https://ched.gov.ph/statistics/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.pnu.edu.ph/university-gender-and-development-office/>

<sup>53</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/blog/sueuaa-case-study-11-urban-engagement-manila-street-dwellers-and-women-deepened-through>

<sup>54</sup> This section draws heavily on the City Profile by Mwaikokesya and Moshi (2018) <http://sueuaa.org/cities/dar-es-salaam>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.citylab.com/design/2015/02/the-bright-future-of-dar-es-salaam-an-unlikely-african-megacity/385801/>

<sup>56</sup> <http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/dar-es-salaam-population/>

over 13 million by 2035 and is expected to reach mega city status of 10 million before 2030.<sup>57</sup> The city covers an area of around 1,400 km<sup>2</sup> and has a relatively high population density of over 3,600 per km<sup>2</sup>. In terms of gender balance males account for 51.3% and females 48.7%, and, as with a number of countries in the developing world, has a relatively young population with over 60% of the population under the age of 25.<sup>58</sup>

The increase in large youth populations can have consequences if not harnessed, and can have severe ramifications in such areas as delivery of (social) services, controlling environmental degradation, increased youth unemployment (which is already a crisis), infrastructure development, and ultimately economic growth and poverty reduction efforts. Unemployment averages about 15% and underemployment is widespread however these figures are likely to underestimate the true scale of unemployment and Dar es Salaam has like many African cities a high level of informal employment which in the case of Tanzania is said to contribute 34% of GDP (Aikaeli and Makenda, 2014). A survey by the non-governmental organization Restless Development found that out of more than 1,000 young people across Tanzania, only 14% reported working in formal, wage-earning jobs.<sup>59</sup> The low level of youths who find jobs in the formal sector is mainly said to be a result of the low employment content of the growth programme in all sectors of the economy, but also due to low levels of educational attainment.

Dar es Salaam also faces an urbanization problem, which has been one of the key dynamics in demographic processes due to rural urban migration and it is likely to remain so. One consequence of the high rate of urban population growth in the region, is the rise of unplanned settlements (squatters/ slums), characterized by pressure on available basic services including housing, safe and reliable water supply, sanitation, access roads, drainage and waste collection management (Agwanda and Amani, 2014). The region also faces the challenge of refugee influx from neighbouring countries with political and ethnic crises and conflict.

As one of the poorest countries of the world, Tanzania has about 50% of the population living below the poverty line. The country faces a number of challenges such as persistent poverty, failing education systems, environmental and health crises that will require ingenuity, resourcefulness and strong leadership to overcome. Leadership in Tanzania is seen as an important factor in policy formation to address the challenges and according to Ngowi (2009) three major epochs in the development of the Tanzanian economy can be traced to the specific policies identified with political leadership during three epochs: 1961-67; 1967 – mid 1980s; and, the mid 80s to the present day.<sup>60</sup>

Agriculture (which accounts for more than half of the country's gross domestic product) is the pillar of Tanzania's economy that employs almost two-thirds of the working-age population – most of whom are subsistence farmers however; this has been adversely affected by drought and also flooding as a result of changing global weather patterns (Osorio, Percic, and Di Battista, 2014). In recent years however, tourism has played an increasingly important role. Additionally, mining has also become an important sector. The country has an annual economic growth rate of about 7%.

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<sup>57</sup> <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/04/tanzanian-city-may-soon-be-one-of-the-worlds-most-populous/>

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5af954d340f0b622d7cc6e59/Tanzania\\_briefing\\_note\\_Regional\\_Analysis\\_of\\_Youth\\_Demographics\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5af954d340f0b622d7cc6e59/Tanzania_briefing_note_Regional_Analysis_of_Youth_Demographics_.pdf)

<sup>59</sup> <https://restlessdevelopment.org/file/res-tz-yp-attitude-survey-low-111012-pdf>

<sup>60</sup> See also the work of Mandalu and Hofisi (2017) and also (Mandalu, Thakhathi and Hafisi, 2018)

However, despite the nation's dependence on agriculture, the export performance of Tanzania's agriculture has been weak. The share of gross output of cash crops in GDP fell from 6.7% in 1996 to 2.8% in 2010. Coffee and tobacco are major export crops, but their production has declined in recent years and as noted earlier reliance on agricultural commodity exports can result in the economy suffering from external shocks depending on price fluctuations in these markets.<sup>61</sup>

Tanzania shares borders with eight countries namely Kenya and Uganda in the North, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the West, Zambia and Malawi in the South West and Mozambique in the South. Regional linkages are important and in Tanzania regional integration has been a stated priority agenda as a means to enhance and assure competitiveness through better leverage in the international arena and for tackling some of the county's development challenges. Tanzania is a member of a number regional economic communities including the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA); the East African Community (EAC); the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC); and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Regional integration has generally been viewed as a means to achieve sustained economic growth and socio-economic development and overcome structural challenges such as political fragmentation, small market size and the landlocked nature of some member states.

The role of HEIs in promoting development in Tanzania is generally viewed as that of contributing to scientific and technological innovation (research) and developing the high-level skills (teaching) needed to drive national and regional development in a knowledge-based economy. Through cross border exchanges and greater engagement with their social, political, cultural and economic contexts (community engagement), HEIs have the potential to nurture the creativity, innovation and robust engagement that are key to tackling the persistent challenges of development in the region.

The SUEUAA partner institution is the University of Dar es Salaam which began as a college of the University of London in 1963 and gained university status in 1970 as the National University. It admits around 12,000 students per year (2016-17) of which around 9,000 are undergraduates but over time an increase in both master and doctoral level students can be observed.<sup>62</sup> In the SUEUAA project a major focus was on the environmental challenges which face both Dar es Salaam specifically and also the country more generally. As noted climate change, in the form of both flooding and drought, can have an enormous impact given the scale of agriculture's contribution to the economy and also tends to impact the large scale informal settlements of Dar es Salaam which are often located in areas prone to drought. However, it is also suggested that some of these environmental initiatives can also indirectly impact socio-economic development. One case reported concerned the negative impact of plastics pollution and also its impact on the environment in terms of water and fisheries pollution and the livelihoods of those involved. It recognised that in addition to legislation to limit the use of single use plastic bags recycling rates were low and strategies for improving the proportion of recycled plastics needed to be developed and the nascent recycling sector requires greater awareness by the population at large although it has the potential to contribute to employment creation at the community level in a similar way to the Manila case

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<sup>61</sup> See the case study examining the nexus between climate change and poverty: [https://start.org/wp-content/uploads/dar-case-study\\_p1-65\\_compressed.pdf](https://start.org/wp-content/uploads/dar-case-study_p1-65_compressed.pdf)

<sup>62</sup> <https://udsm.ac.tz/web/index.php/facts-and-figures>



study presented above.<sup>63</sup> The second case study is more directly linked to employment and entrepreneurial activities and reports on an annual Research Exhibitions hosted by the University of Dar Es Salaam.<sup>64</sup> These are generally organised at two levels: departmental/faculty levels and cross university levels. The exhibitions serve as a means for researchers to contribute and communicate their findings directly to consumers. The activities in these exhibitions include presentations of research projects on numerous topics relevant to various sectors in the city such as new technology, agro-processing innovations, entrepreneurship, ICTs, social sciences research and research in humanities. The exhibitions also adopt a thematic focus on issues such as renewable energy, agriculture, environment, health, information technology, education, resource assessment, archaeology, mineral resources and mining, and oil and gas. During the exhibitions researchers get a chance to showcase their research-based solutions and contributions to different challenges in society and present their research outputs to the general public and to business people in the city with the aim of engaging with relevant stakeholders in the local community and business sectors.

## 6.2. Johannesburg<sup>65</sup>

Johannesburg is the largest city in South Africa and is one of the 50 largest urban areas in the world.<sup>66</sup> It is the provincial capital and largest city in [Gauteng](#), which is the wealthiest province in South Africa. While Johannesburg is not one of South Africa's three capital cities, it is the seat of the Constitutional Court. The city is located in the mineral-rich Witwatersrand range of hills and is the centre of the large-scale gold and diamond trade. It is also the financial centre for South Africa

The metropolis is an alpha global city as listed by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network. In 2011, the population of the city of Johannesburg was 4,434,827, making it the most populous city in South Africa. In the same year, the population of Johannesburg's urban agglomeration was put at 7,860,781. The land area of the municipal city at 1,645 km<sup>2</sup> is large in comparison with those of other major cities, resulting in a moderate population density of 2,364/km<sup>2</sup>. In terms of gender 50.4% are male and 49.6% female and as with a number of SUEUAA cities it has a relatively young population with just over 50% under the age of 30. In terms of employment official rates are 52.6% and it has a relatively large informal sector accounting for 77% of employment with particular issues in relation to youth under- and un-employment.

However, Johannesburg can also be seen as a divided city: the poor mostly live in the southern suburbs or on the peripheries of the far north, and the middle class live largely in the suburbs of the central and north. It is estimated that more than 25% of the city's population lives in abject poverty in informal settlements that lack proper infrastructure, roads, electricity, or any other kind of direct municipal service. Another 40% live in inadequate housing with insufficient municipal housing and infrastructure. South Africa remains a dual economy with one of the highest inequality rates in the world, perpetuating both inequality and exclusion. In South Africa, over half of the population (55%) live below the country's upper poverty line of R992 (£52) per person per month.

A separate city from the late 1970s until the 1990s, Soweto is now part of Johannesburg. Originally an acronym for "South-Western Townships", Soweto originated as a collection of settlements on the outskirts of Johannesburg, populated mostly by native African workers from the gold mining

<sup>63</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/blog/sueuaa-case-study-15-university-dar-es-salaams-contribution-historic-measures-combating>

<sup>64</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/blog/sueuaa-case-study-12-university-research-exhibition-avenue-enhancing-university-engagement>

<sup>65</sup> The following section draws upon the City Profile by Swanepoel and Venter <http://sueuaa.org/cities/johannesburg>

<sup>66</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_urban\\_areas\\_by\\_population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_urban_areas_by_population)

industry. Soweto, although eventually incorporated into Johannesburg, had been separated as a residential area for Blacks, who were not permitted to live in Johannesburg proper. These areas were designated as non-white areas in accordance with the segregationist policies of the South African government known as Apartheid.

In terms of socio-economic development The City of Johannesburg has followed a partnership approach – embracing multiple partnerships – both area based, and task driven to balance opportunity and demand, by enabling change through smart and inclusive growth. The city is however faced with the dichotomy of being a developed city but subject to urban migration from feeder townships in surrounding areas which follow the same historical divides of the apartheid era in South Africa. The term “township” refers to old, new, formal and informal human settlements that are characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and low incomes as well as distance from the main centres of economic activities. Johannesburg is estimated to have 157 informal settlement or township areas. These areas are characterised by extreme poverty and a lack of access to a range of basic services.

South Africa’s townships have always been a hive for entrepreneurial activity, but the main challenge has been unlocking the potential in order to generate broader economic benefits. Meeting the social and economic needs of township communities, based on co-operation and solidarity, has been one of the defining features of township enterprises. At a policy level it is believed that township enterprises have a vital role in the development of a vibrant socially inclusive, labour-absorbing and growing economy. Over the last 20 years, there has been a range of government support programmes aimed at micro, small and medium enterprises and co-operatives. These support measures are wide-ranging, combining both financial and non-financial support and aim to overcome some of the barriers common to all micro, small, and medium enterprises and cooperatives. These barriers include but are not limited to access to capital and financial exclusion, access to operating infrastructure, access to markets, skills development, and monopoly power, to name but a few.

The University of Johannesburg is the SUEUAA partner institution and was established in 2005 as the result of a merger between the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), the Technikon Witwatersrand (TWR) and the Soweto and East Rand campuses of Vista University. With a student population of over 50,000 students (of which more than 3000 are international students from 80 countries), it is one of the largest contact universities in South Africa (SA) from the 26 public universities that make up the higher education system. It is ranked 7th amongst Africa’s Universities, 5th in South Africa, and ranked within the top 2.3% of universities in the world (QS World University Rankings, 2017/18).

Supporting the vision of vibrant townships, local and provincial government in partnership with the University of Johannesburg and big business partners are developing a youth employment strategy focused on creating opportunities in local communities, specifically in the township areas. Successful township enterprises can play an important role in helping to contribute to radical transformation, modernisation and re-industrialisation of the Johannesburg City Region economy by transforming townships into sites for productive activities, contributing to socially inclusive wealth creation and helping to foster sustainable livelihoods through job creation, social cohesion and active citizenship. With a focus on the township economy as a means to support youth employment and sustainable development of the local township economy, the University of Johannesburg employ a

transformative research paradigm which supports data driven social innovation which supports the revitalisation of the township economy, food resilience strategies and appropriate technology innovation.

More specifically, a couple of case study examples highlight more directly the impact of engagement with local communities. The first reports on a project led Dr. Naudé Malan, a Senior Lecturer in Development Studies at the University of Johannesburg, who is the convener of the multi-stakeholder engagement project iZindaba Zokudla that aims to create opportunities for urban agriculture in a sustainable food system in Soweto.<sup>67</sup> The project engages with and links urban farmers, entrepreneurs, academics, civil servants and other stakeholders and aims at participatory technology and enterprise development. iZindaba Zokudla is a research project that draws on Multi-Stakeholder engagement and Action Research methods to create opportunities for urban agriculture in a sustainable food system. It links the university, researchers, students, communities, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders in the development of service-learning and applied research projects and enterprises that can contribute to a socially equitable, economically productive and ecologically sound food system. While the second focuses on the Research GO<sup>68</sup> project which features a team of University of Johannesburg researchers, academics and commercial partners that include behavioural economists, data scientists, engineers, social scientist and ICT specialists that specialize in developing smart tools to support data collection in difficult to reach areas, at scale. The project works with a youth employment accelerator to provide employment opportunities to local young people.<sup>69</sup> In one initiative, 28 Data collectors registered 697 gardens and conducted 509 baseline studies to connect and expand an urban food ecosystem to unlock opportunities and advance local economies. Over the past 8 months the project ran a pilot with 75 active farmers around Gauteng, North West, and Limpopo trading close to R300 000 worth of produce online. A second relevant example was undertaken in partnership with the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO)<sup>70</sup> to survey over 31,000 randomly selected Gauteng residents in their homes from August to December 2017. The Quality of Life Survey (QoL) is the largest survey of social attitudes and quality of life in Gauteng. The data collectors were contracted through Harambee, a youth employment accelerator. Through this initiative, 280 unemployed young Gauteng residents will not just gain work experience and an opportunity to earn an income, but will also receive extensive skills training.

## 6.6. Harare<sup>71</sup>

The region of focus for SUEUAA is Harare which is both the capital city of Zimbabwe as well as one of the ten Provinces in the country. Zimbabwe is a Sub-Saharan landlocked country with a population of approximately 13.4 million, of whom 52% are female and as with other SUEUAA partners has a relatively young population with 45% of the population under the age of 15 (ZimStat, 2012). The city of Harare has an estimated total population of just around 2 million<sup>72</sup> and occupies around 872 Km<sup>2</sup> with a population density of around 2,250 per km<sup>2</sup> and as at the national level females comprise 48% of Harare's population .

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<sup>67</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/blog/case-study-eight-university-johannesburg-engagement-urban-farmers-izindaba-zokudla>

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/uiresearchGO/>

<sup>69</sup> <http://sueuaa.org/blog/sueuaa-case-study-three-sustainable-socio-technical-systems-activating-young-citizens-4th>

<sup>70</sup> <http://www.gcro.ac.za/>

<sup>71</sup> The following sections draws on the City Profile by Nherera (2018)

<sup>72</sup> Estimates for both the city and the province of Harare vary depending upon source

Zimbabwe's economy largely depends on the mining and agriculture sectors. It has five agro-ecological regions with climate being the dominant natural factor affecting agricultural production (Muir-Leresche, 2006) and as such is vulnerable to climate change in relation to both drought and flooding. The economy was on sharp decline for at least a decade reaching its lowest point in 2008.<sup>73</sup> The country then discarded its own currency and adopted a multi-currency system as one of the measures to salvage the situation. The economy responded positively to the interventions and recorded real growth of more than 10% in the period 2010-13, before slowing to approximately 3% in 2014. In spite of the improvements, the economic environment has continued to be harsh and most households have remained poor. This is largely attributed to economic sanctions or trade barriers imposed on the country by developed countries opposed to the Government Land Reform Programme. The disputed land policy entailed redistribution of the land from just over 4500 white farmers who occupied 75% of the best arable land in the country to also include over 300,000 black farmers. The sanctions have resulted in curtailment of direct foreign investment, closure and down-sizing of most companies in the country and therefore growing unemployment.<sup>74</sup>

Officially, unemployment is estimated to be 11.3% while the media estimates range between 85% and 90%. The huge discrepancy between the official and media unemployment rates is attributed to the fact that 94.5% of the 6.4 million people defined in official figures as employed are engaged in the informal sector.<sup>75</sup> The majority (4.6 million) of those working in the informal sector are small holder farmers, followed by 615,000 in trade and commerce, while 210,000 are said to be in the informal manufacturing sector, 118,000 in education, 92,000 in transport and 70,000 in mining. The challenges to urban governance of both the informal economy and the informal settlements where many urban informal workers are based is examined by Ndawana (2018) who concludes that attempts to formalise the sector<sup>76</sup> will be more productive in the long run than current attempts to limit activities particularly what is seen as illegal street trading.<sup>77</sup>

Established in 1955 through a Royal Charter from University College of London, the University of Zimbabwe is the oldest institution of higher education in the country. It is a State university and is therefore largely funded by Government, particularly for capital development. With the unfavourable economic climate that has prevailed for almost two decades, the institution is increasingly relying on its own revenue, largely from the fees paid by students as well as donations from well-wishers and strategic partners. According to its 2016-20 Strategic Plan, the University has prioritised Postgraduate Training, Innovative Research, Industrial Attachment and Entrepreneurship, Talent Management, and ICT Innovation and Integration as its top five Thrusts, in that order. It states its intension to, "... nurture and produce ethical Graduates with exceptional academic, citizenship and entrepreneurial skills ..." in line with its Vision. It strives to be ranked among the top 10 universities in Africa by 2020 (it is currently outside the top 30 according to the Times Education Supplement 2017). As the oldest and most resourced, the University of Zimbabwe has committed itself to a leadership role in responding to national developmental needs as expected by Government and the nation generally and research and teaching are expected to contribute to both local community and national developmental aspirations.

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<sup>73</sup> See for example Munangagwa (2009)

<sup>74</sup> For a detailed overview see Kanyenze et al. (2011)

<sup>75</sup> [http://www.zimstat.co.zw/sites/default/files/img/publications/Facts%20and%20Figures/Fact\\_Figures\\_2015.pdf](http://www.zimstat.co.zw/sites/default/files/img/publications/Facts%20and%20Figures/Fact_Figures_2015.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> See Uzhenyu (2015) on attempts to formalise the informal sector

<sup>77</sup> See Zhou and Pindirri (2015) on the urban informal metalworking sector

As might be expected given the details presented above on the scale and scope of the informal economy in Harare and Zimbabwe more generally this was a major focus in the SUEUAA project. In a context where many of the formal businesses and enterprises have closed or have downsized, the informal economy has gained a sizeable share of economic output although its very nature means figures are likely to be underestimated. Figures available from the Ministry of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises account for those who register to access loan facilities and serviced operating premises, but these seem to be the minority. Some of those operating in the informal sector have grown and earn more than some businesses in the formal sector, but they prefer to remain informal so that they do not pay taxes.

In terms of specific examples of engagement work relevant to socio-economic progress and development the University of Zimbabwe presented a number of case studies. The first had a similar focus on urban agriculture as reported above in connection with the University of Johannesburg and examined the increasing role of urban agriculture<sup>78</sup> not only to allow a degree of personal food security but also in terms of income generation. The scale of urban agriculture in Harare varies from very rudimentary, subsistence levels of production to large scale, highly sophisticated production of various crops or livestock such as poultry, goats or rabbits. Urban agriculture also serves to recycle and repurpose some waste elements from other agricultural sectors – with for example tobacco dust previously a waste product used as lawn fertiliser.<sup>79</sup> The second case study highlighted here had a focus on the informal sectors of the economy and which aimed to improve the capacity of the informal sector to facilitate more meaningful contributions to the national economy and was undertaken in collaboration with other key stakeholders, including Government Ministers, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations), and other developmental partners.<sup>80</sup> Participants in the programme will be trained in a number of ways, including tutorials, demonstrations, and coaching. They will be taught soft skills (dealing with basic social skills), academic skills (ensuring competences in science, technology, engineering), and mathematics, (STEM) as well as professional skills focusing on elements of their business, including finance, costing, management, and marketing. The training will be carried out through mobile teaching units, but also using University buildings and laboratories, formal sector workshop and laboratory space, and premises of informal sector peers. It is anticipated that participation in this scheme will encourage the “professionalization” of the informal sector, and an increase in the informal labour market contribution to the tax base.

## 7. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to provide a brief but critical overview of socio-economic development as measured by a range of indices and global rankings. It has also situated and provided a brief discussion in relation to the specific national context of each of the SUEUAA partners and their position, score or rank on some of these indicators. While in general, the SUEUAA partner countries could be seen to be making progress on a number of indicators it was also apparent that this tended to be accomplished with little overall impact on rates of inequality or relative poverty for those most marginalised in urban settings. It was also recognised that the scope and scale of the problems faced at city or regional levels can in the case of refugees and displaced persons in Duhok be overwhelming for the local economy and often require additional large scale interventions to try and

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<sup>78</sup> See Mugaba, 2019 <http://sueuaa.org/blog/sueuaa-case-study-17-engagement-universities-urban-agriculture-not-business-usual>

<sup>79</sup> See also in this context Krishnan et al. (2016)

<sup>80</sup> See Nherera (2019) <http://sueuaa.org/blog/sueuaa-case-study-one-enhancing-capacity-informal-sector-addressing-environmental-and-socio>

cope with the challenge. However, there were also cases (for example in the megacity of Manila and in Johannesburg) albeit on a smaller scale that could be seen to be having a real impact on the lives of those marginalised people and their communities that engaged with these programmes outlined above.

It was also apparent from the interview data (not reported here) obtained from academic and relevant stakeholders from local government, local communities and local business representatives that all universities are engaged in some form of entrepreneurial projects including incubators and events showcasing research to potential stakeholders. It was also apparent that in all the SEUAA partner contexts unemployment specifically youth and gender related unemployment were common across all locations and contexts. More specifically a number of institutions in our African cities aimed to address the scope and scale of the informal economy and attempting to devise strategies to incorporate some of these enterprises into the mainstream economy. In relation to this a number of projects and research activities are focused on the potential of the 'green economy' to create new jobs and develop new skills and services to support the sustainable development of the renewable sectors and to make progress on the relevant SDGs. All the partner cities also faced challenges in relation to rural to urban migration and this was especially relevant given the scale of conflict migration noted in the case of Duhok, but was also an issue in the creation and ongoing expansion of informal settlements with almost all our city partners confirming that this was a serious issue that also had 'knock-on' effects in areas of health and wellbeing, poverty and inequality and an ever increasing burden on already fragile infrastructures.

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## Strengthening Urban Engagement of Universities in Africa and Asia

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