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INTRODUCTION

By Professor L. Chipungu and S. Medayese

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusivity challenges that are prevailing in African cities and beyond, require concerted multi-thronged efforts from all stakeholders to address them. This is so because inclusivity issues cannot just be viewed from a narrow periscope but a comprehensive spectrum of inputs and actions. On the strength of the aforesaid, it became expedient for the SARChI-Chair for Inclusive Cities to organise a critical symposium that interrogated the concept of inclusivity from a multi-disciplinary dimension. Such an enquiry into the nature and extent of urban inclusivity in an African city context, provides an appropriate platform to understand factors underpinning the need to establish desired inclusivity (Medayese et al., 2016).

The rapid growth of African cities is driven by rural-urban migration and considerable natural population growth, which is one of the highest in the world. Dar es Salaam, for example, is growing at an annual rate of 5.48% (UN DESA, 2015), with an annual growth rate of built-up areas of almost 8% (Gombe, 2017). Still, as Parnell and Walawege (2014) note, there is little consensus on what exactly drives people into cities. However, like McGregor et al. (2010) note, African cities are expanding through various forms of encroachment, primarily by integrating peri-urban or rural areas into the city's administrative area. Given the increasing urban population, sub-Saharan African cities face many challenges such as growing poverty, increased residence in informal settlements and unplanned expansion of the settlement area (Kessides, 2006).

These continuous uncoordinated increases in African cities (be they natural or artificial in nature) are however associated with a certain level of survival instinct amongst the population. This results in relatively large number of residents being excluded from primary infrastructures such as education, water, power, transport, and several other factors which were hitherto the essence of the rural-urban drift ab initio (Medayese et al., 2021). According to Barac (2016), most dynamic and unregulated growth occurs in informal settlements. Although the proportion of the urban population living in informal settlements and slums is lower today than decades ago, the absolute numbers continue to rise (Un-Habitat, 2016). Currently, 62% of African urban dwellers live in temporary shelters or informal settlements (Un-Habitat, 2016). On the premise of these developments, Pieterse concludes that the "shanty city is by and large the true African city" (Pieterse, 2013) (p. 21). Pieterse points out that informal practices can be seen as supplementary to the urban management role of the state. As the city seems to emerge from individual behaviour (bottom-up), based on micro strategies designed by underprivileged citizens in their daily lives, Pieterse (2013) concludes that African urbanism needs to be theorised from the angle of the ordinary people who live in these informal settlements.

The literature on inclusive development and inclusive growth is attracting growing attention and the term “inclusivity” has become a new mantra in national and regional policy. This has shifted the role cities play in economic and political development (Harrison, 2012, Storper, 2013 and Lee, 2019). This shift, unfortunately, has created enormous gaps in living standards between groups in society with different characteristics that could potentially lead to exclusionary practices (such as income, occupation, gender, race, and ethnicity), which come along with growing urban prosperity (Harrison, 2012, Benner & Pastor, 2015; Espino, 2015).

Researchers have already proposed various frameworks/models and indicators meant to evaluate progress in generating inclusive development. One of these is the Inclusive Growth Framework built by the International Monetary Fund, which outlines the key features of inclusive growth and focuses on the interaction between growth and poverty, and growth and inequality (Kireyev and Chen, 2017). Another one is the Inclusive Development Index developed by the World Economic Forum, which measures how countries perform on 11 dimensions of economic progress within three pillars viz - growth and development, inclusion, and inter-generational equity sustainable stewardship of natural and financial resources (Samans et al., 2018).

Yashaen Luckan, “*Towards a Humanistic Approach to Inclusive Public Transport: A Critical Case Study of Durban, South Africa.*” This paper argues that the core of the problem hinges on exclusive thinking and practice within disciplinary silos, disconnected from the multi-layered, subjective experience of urban places through movement in space and time. The problem was traced back to the conceptual approaches to urban mobility.

Brenda and Nthaduleni: “*An early warning system for malaria in Mopani District: Divergent or Convergent approaches.*” Malaria is a tropical disease that may, like any other hazard, lead to disaster and requires a multi-disciplinary divergent approach. This research was carried out in the Mopani District of South Africa. It sought to find out whether the existing early warning system in Mopani District adopts a convergent or divergent approach. Subsequently, this was to assist in developing a tool that covers the loopholes in the existing system to mitigate malaria transmissions further. The study took a mixed approach. The study applied constructivist grounded theory to analyse qualitative data and generate theory. Results of the study show that people in Mopani District predict the malaria season onset by forecasting rainfall using various indigenous knowledge-based indicators. The study recommends that key malaria management and control stakeholders adopt the developed early warning system to mitigate malaria transmission in Mopani District.

Tolulope Osayomi, in the paper titled “*Can Inclusive cities prevent the next pandemic? (Re) Emerging diseases in the context of rural-urban linkages*” History has shown the mutual relationship between cities and disease outbreaks; how one reshape or redefine the other and vice versa. The pandemic has amplified many existing and persistent developmental challenges humanity has been contending with at different scales and magnitude in different parts of the world. Putting into context the disease burden across space (as in the recent pandemic), this study suggests that cities do not exist in isolation; they mutually interact with rural areas for sustenance and livelihoods. This reciprocal relationship is critical to the growth and survival of cities and disease transmission. Therefore, the paper attempts to address how pandemics create inclusive cities and how inclusive cities make or break pandemics?

Innocent Chirisa and Patience Mazanhi in a paper titled: “*Systems Connectivity for Sound Urban Policy Creation and Enhancement: Exploring Rural-Urban Interdependencies and Linkages for Inclusive Cities.*” This article is based on a study that investigated the relevance of rural-urban linkages towards sustainable and inclusive development for both cities and rural areas. It argues that rural-urban linkages have great potential in facilitating sustainable development when harnessed and supported. The old notion of rural and urban areas separated the two as distinct and independent regions. This led to biased policy initiatives towards urban development without considering the interdependencies between the two regions. The article is based on a desktop study involving the interrogation of literature and documents extracted from Google scholar, Ebsco and websites with news and policies and related material for data analysis. Emerging from the study are three main observations that rural-urban linkages have enormous potential that can help improve development. It concludes that an in-depth understanding of these linkages can help harness the potential benefits of the rural-urban relationship.

Bolanle Wahab and Olusegun Falola, co-authored a paper titled “*Vulnerable Households in Flood-prone Communities in Ibadan: Measures to improve their status within the Inclusive Ibadan City Framework*”. The number of people affected by climate-related hazards is on the rise, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where rapid urbanisation is taking place. The frequency/intensity of flooding is a risk multiplier for the vulnerable groups in many cities. This paper assesses a range of vulnerabilities, focusing on households living in flood-prone areas. The study also assesses the impact of the last major flood disaster in Ibadan on the vulnerable groups (the poor, elderly, children and physically challenged). It investigates how vulnerable households have responded to post-disaster events. The study finds that some affected households suffered temporary displacement although some permanently abandoned their properties. The study further reveals disparities in access to relief and recovery items among

the flood-affected population. Urban dwellers had better access to relief packages than rural dwellers. The paper concludes by recommending a shift in policy thrusts from the mere provision of relief items to more inclusive and empowering programmes for the vulnerable groups to mitigate and adapt to flood disasters.

Rosemary Awuor Hayangah's paper is titled "*The Planning Dilemma in Upgrading of Informal Settlements in South African Cities: A Practitioners Perspective on the Inclusivity Paradox*". This article examines the inclusivity paradox and the interplay of power and influence that has led to planning dilemmas observed in the upgrading of informal settlements in South Africa. It is based on the perspectives of a practising planner that recognises that inclusivity can facilitate the development of socially cohesive and sustainable settlements. However, planning dilemmas are apparent at all levels of the planning process, from conceptualisation, design, preparation and implementation - when voices of planners can be subsumed or lost given the dynamic working environments in local authorities. There is also a strong correlation between the historical exposition to colonialism and the apartheid legacy that was oppressive and racially discriminatory. This has led to the adoption of an empathetic approach in development control in cities and towns. The consequences of post-democratic freedom and mobility are increasingly contributing towards the growth and expansion of many municipalities in varying degrees. The author concludes by noting that inclusivity, though being an elusive concept, is necessary for upgrading informal settlements occupied by some of the most vulnerable members of the society.

Joseph Kamuzhanje, authored a paper titled: "*Inclusive-Cities, Urban Housing and Disability: Unmasking the Political Economy of Urban Housing Provision for People with Disability in Urban Settlements in Zimbabwe*." Any discussion on urban development in general, and urban housing, is hedged against Sustainable Development Goal 11 - "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". However, the goal becomes even more poignant when issues of inclusivity and disability are considered. Housing, whether in rural or urban areas, is a fundamental right. The world over, governments have institutionalised and constitutionalised housing as a fundamental and human right. According to Habitat for Humanity, its vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. The reality, however, is that housing provision is a significant challenge. The growing waiting lists, the sprouting illegal settlements, the increasing number of housing estates on un-serviced land point to a social, economic and health ticking bomb. Urban housing issues become even more complicated and sophisticated when issues of people living with disability come into play. The mantra behind inclusive cities focuses on the "right to the city" for all. Whilst this is a noble idea, it is also apparent that the concept is not absolute. This is because the city and housing provision in particular, is still not designed for people with disability. The city's services, including housing, do not consider the challenges that people with disability face in accessing them. The paper focuses on the political economy of urban housing in Zimbabwe, focusing on people living with a disability. The main argument proffered is that urban development and urban design must accommodate the housing needs of people living with a disability. This is the only way the city can become "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".

Oluwayemi-Oniya Aderibigbe, authored the paper titled "*Adoption of Integrated Transport System for Sustainable Transport Planning and Development*". The focus of the paper is on the importance of addressing urban mobility problems in the Fourth Industrial Era. This shift towards creating an innovative and inclusive city represents a significant milestone in improving policies and urban mobility processes in developed and developing cities. One approach to tackle this is by opting for an integrated active public transport system for urban mobility. Building on this, the study reviewed the need for an integrated transport system and means to achieve a safe, efficient, accessible, and affordable transport system for all members of society. The study further revealed that good modal interchanges are central to creating a better transport network in order to improve the transportation system of a country. Well-planned and integrated transport infrastructure and services are needed and should be provided to facilitate and enhance smart mobility for all members of society irrespective of their status or spatial location. Without planning and investing in better interchanges, the absence of affordable and efficient alternatives will mean that those with access to private transport will continue to rely on them. In contrast, those without it will continue to be disadvantaged by the negative social and environmental impacts of over-reliance on private cars and poor public transport services. Thus, there is a clear and pressing need for integration of our transport systems if our networks are to become more efficient and easier to access.

Simon Bekker: In this paper titled "*African cities in the 2020s: Weaknesses and Strengths*", the author examined a series of case studies illustrating trends in migration and urbanisation in urban Africa. Weaknesses in the search for inclusivity – especially during and after COVID-19. The emphasis is on the continuing dominant roles of urban (as well as national and global) elites in these cities and the associated high levels of urban poverty and inequality. Strengths refer particularly to the roles of the better qualified urban youths, the spread of digital skills and means of communication, and the presence of both global and national positive influences in these cities.

Ayobami Abayomi Popoola in his paper "*Rural Setting: The Paradox of its Accessibility and Affordability in the Urban Planning and Political Actioning*"; argues that the perception that rural areas or rurality will disappear in the face of urbanisation remains vague and inconclusive. His arguments revolve around infrastructure poverty and poor service delivery characterising rural spaces which he believes will not disappear any time sooner. Using data from interviews and focus group discussion collected from sampled rural communities in Oyo State, Nigeria, the study questions if there is no confusion or rather a paradox in what planning and politics ought to be in rural areas. The study concludes by noting that planning and politics in the sampled community

were driving in the opposite direction of public rural infrastructure and service goods. The paper concludes by recommending that planning should be more rural-oriented in order to correct the urban bias (related to planning standards). Above all, there is need to shift towards more inclusive and responsive rural governance that promotes national agendas whose focus is to build inclusive environment as opposed to the urban bias.

Ali A. Alraouf, presented a paper titled “*Towards Holistic Approach to Inclusive Cities: Fiction, Myth or Attainable Reality?*”? The paper analysed the phenomenon of inclusive cities as a fundamental condition for contemporary cities. Analysing such a crucial phenomenon should be based on a multi-disciplinary approach.

Wendy Tsoriyo and Emaculate Ingwani, in their paper titled: “*Exploring the dynamics of street trading as street spatial (in) Justice in Musina Town*”; takes place on the most contested public spaces - streets. Street spaces are therefore sites of spatial justice and injustice and consequently inclusion and exclusion. This paper explores the dynamics of street trading as street spatial (in)justice in Musina Town. The study adopts a qualitative research approach. Data were collected in structured interviews with Musina Local Municipality officials and semi-structured interviews with street traders from Musina Town central business district. Key findings reveal that issuing trading licenses is a controlled form of spatial justice, limiting the expansion of street trade and confining traders to a particular space. The findings reveal that the “Right to the City” claims to depend on the users’ purpose for being in the street. Understanding street trading dynamics and the nature of space contestations and negotiations by street traders’ and other street users helps planners to delineate their implications on street spatial justice and stimulates the creation of new innovative approaches to co-create more inclusive and just spaces with street traders as co-producers of spatially (un)just street spaces.

Nelson Chanza, in a paper titled “*Prospects of Twinning Climate Change and Urban Sustainability Issues through Transformative Adaptation: Lessons for African Cities*”; noted that in most African cities, existing approaches to tackle climate change and sustainability issues have mainly remained weak, piecemeal and fragmented. For example, current adaptation practices mainly focus on ‘adapting to’ climatic disturbances instead of ‘adapting with’ the vulnerable urban population. This approach views climate change as the primary source of vulnerability and focuses on protecting systems from weather and climatic events. It grossly ignores the social roots of vulnerability and misses out on opportunities that emerge when climatic risks are jointly treated with environmental sustainability concerns. This paper proposes a shift towards transformative adaptation to evade this problem, an approach that comprehensively attends to the entire urban socio-ecological system.

Inês M. Raimundo, in a paper titled “*African Migrants toward Inclusive Growth in Mozambique: A case study of the City of Maputo*”, argues that Africa is at the centre for immigration although historically, it was envisaged as the source for cheap labour. This is more so in the case of Mozambique which historically, has been sending labourers to work on South African mines and plantations in the past two centuries. On the other hand, Mozambique was also seen as the producer of refugees, whose population has over the years suffered from ravaging civil wars and natural disasters thereby forcing many households to seek comfort in neighbouring countries. Therefore, it was seen as a country not desirable for humans to settle. However, in the last two decades, there has been a gradual deconstruction of this stigma on Mozambique due to the emergence of business and job opportunities arising from the booming mines, including oil, gas, and coal. Mozambique is now becoming a recipient of immigrants as people seeking opportunities are flocking into the country. The current geography of immigration is made of multicultural people from all over the world. A chain of new shops for construction materials, automotive spare parts, barber shops, boutiques, groceries, and liquor shops are among the chain of new investments gracing the landscape in Maputo. However, the author observes that there are still mixed feelings among local people about immigrants where they seem to value European and Asian immigrants as opposed to African immigrants. They feel that African immigrants whose scale of operation is small, does not contribute anything to their economy as compared to European and Asian immigrants. Instead, they perceive African immigrants as social misfits who are “stealing their jobs”. However, this research argues that there is actually significant contribution to the economic made by African immigrants despite their scale of operation. The paper concludes by advocating for a need to conscientise local communities about the need to build inclusive communities based on tolerance.

Trynos Gumbo, Ockert Pretorius and Emmaculate Ingwani focused on “*Mixed housing development, inclusivity and urban sustainability nexus in the cities of the Global South*”. This paper focused on the need to create urban environments in the Global South that foster socio-economic development and upward mobility. Using the South African context, the authors argue that mixed housing can be used as an instrument to stimulate social, economic and environmental sustainability in a divided and fragmented environment. Such housing development is characterised by heterogeneous housing typologies, medium- to high-density residential layouts, public amenities, and unique neighbourhood designs. In a bid to interrogate further this phenomenon, the authors used a systematic bibliometric review of existing publications on mixed housing development. They observed that there is limited research on the direct link between mixed housing development, urban sustainability and inclusivity, especially in the context of the Global South. In addition, they noted that existing mixed housing development research has a transdisciplinary character with various research clusters, and that research on related themes have gained prominence in recent years. They concluded their paper by recommending that there is need to further investigate this phenomenon using the broad policy perspective in future research initiatives.

Conclusively, all papers presented at the symposium examined the subject of inclusivity and inclusion within the city setting as a multi-dimensional endeavour and which must be approached from a multi-disciplinary. While most authors envisaged that policy should be at the centre of this endeavour to achieve inclusivity, there is also acknowledgement that achieving inclusivity is not “an easy stroll in the park” given that there are many factors at play that directly and indirectly impact on it. Recent entrants such as climate change, have further complicated the equation as cities struggle to create inclusive models that respond to all. However, it is important to remember that achieving inclusivity is not an easy fit, nor is it an event, but a strenuous process that requires a holistic approach which acknowledges and embraces every single step that is taken by every stakeholder irrespective of status in society.

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