Negotiated planning: Diverse trajectories of implementation in Nairobi, Addis Ababa, and Harare

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ABSTRACT
This paper unpacks how plans are implemented in three African cities: Nairobi, Addis Ababa, and Harare. Three planning implementation instruments form the basis of the comparison across cities. These instruments aim to give effect to plans and include development regulation, infrastructure investment, and land allocation. In contrast to reading African planning efforts as a catalogue of failures, this analysis allows us to see the many actors and complex alliances and dissonances which play out through implementation. Here we propose the concept of ‘negotiated planning’ as a useful conceptual tool. We argue that the concept is useful for: its departure from normative assumptions about good or proper planning; unpacking the everyday nature of implementation; grounding and contextualising practices; and depathologizing the African city.

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1. Introduction

Spatial planning is seen as central to fixing the challenges which rapidly urbanising cities face. Emerging consensus over the necessity and centrality of planning has been solidified through the UN Habitat ‘New Urban Agenda Debates’, which form part of the Habitat III preparations, and will likely feature heavily in the final commitments (Turok, 2016). Never has it been a better time to question if our understanding of planning, particularly in African cities, is sufficient.

In African cities, planning is often seen as a failure. Most of the planning literature focusses on the departures from ‘good practice’ (Myers & Murray, 2006; Pieterse, 2010). Centralised plan-making, rigid regulations, lack of implementation capacity, abuses of human rights, corruption and many more negative traits are associated with planning and planners in African cities. It would be irresponsible to suggest that these critiques are wholly incorrect. However, as Goodfellow (2013) points out, the implementation of plans across and between cities varies considerably. Variation is even more obvious when implementation is disaggregated into specific planning implementation tools, as we do in this paper.

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In line with this thinking, Watson (2013) calls for a shift in planning theory, away from normative frameworks and assessments and towards a study of planning contexts and practices. Understanding context requires unpacking particularities of places and focussing on what is actually happening. In response to these calls, we have explored the actual practices of plan implementation in Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Harare across three planning implementation tools — investment in infrastructure, regulation of development, and land allocation. These three tools are important ways in which states work to materially shape urban outcomes and implement urban plans.

We argue that planning implementation and outcomes in African cities can best be described as ‘negotiated’. This negotiation is not a product of discursive and collaborative decision-making towards a shared vision, but rather built on persistent and power-laden compromises, contests, and deals among various arms of the state, civil society, and the local and international private sector (in particular developers and lenders). It reflects the actions and agendas of a whole range of stakeholders who together work to configure a fragile system which is constituted through and co-constitutive of each urban context.

This paper contributes to the refinement of a comparative approach in urban studies (McFarlane, 2010; Myers, 2011, 2014; Roy, 2009; Watson, 2009a). Within the growing debate on comparing cities (particularly in the global south), there is growing
emphasis on exploring difference, rather than searching for sameness (Robinson, 2014). To this end, the research utilised the multi-case method, a critical mode of inquiry within the study of cities (Duminy et al., 2014; Yin, 2003). The purpose is both to compare cases, recognising the incredible difference among African cities, as well as use the cases to jointly speak into existing planning theory.

Interviews with local and national officials, developers, para-

trasts, academics, and NGOs aimed to understand the nature of planning implementation, paying particular attention to the actors and practices involved. The interviews and a detailed policy review were conducted between December 2014 and June 2015. The structure of the paper includes a selective review of the literature on planning in African cities. Following this, the paper unpacks the planning implementation practices in the three cities, focussing on the explicit and tacit negotiations among actors implicated in urban spatial outcomes. Finally, there is a discussion on the implications of the case findings for planning theory and practice, in particular the value of the concept of ‘negotiated planning’.

2. Spatial planning in African cities: a review of key concepts

2.1. Spatial planning

There has been much debate about what planning is and how it happens. Peter Hall (1992) describes planning as “the making of an orderly sequence of action that will lead to the achievement of a stated goal or goals” (3). Cities, Healey (2006) argues, have been planned, using various instruments and to differing extents, since their inception.

Spatial planning (also called physical planning) is a particular type of planning, focused on the making of spatial order. The core scale of the town or city is of particular signifi-

ance as it is usually at this scale that the urban spatial planning apparatus is constructed (Hall, 2014). Healey (2006) identifies spatial planning as unique from other forms of planning (such as economic or operational) in its focus on spatial plans and their implementation. Spatial plans are forward looking and two dimensional visions of how a town, city, or region should look. Historically, master plans were the core tool of spatial planning. Master plans are a complete spatial picture of the future of an area (Goodfellow, 2013). Academics have criti-

cized the rationalist tendencies of master planning, advocating for more strategic and less prescriptive planning instruments (Fainstein, 2000; Healey, 1992; Winkler & Duminy, 2016). This has led to a move towards spatial development frameworks, strategic plans and other new tools.

Within the literature on urban planning implementation, focus is generally on regulation (Goodfellow, 2013). This is largely because it tends to be the core implementation tool which the planning department itself has in its purview (Ennis, 1977). How-

ever, regulation is just one aspect of plan implementation. Infra-

structure investment and land allocation practices, when viewed in conjunction with regulatory efforts, in fact make up a fuller picture of the implementation toolbox.

This framework for thinking about urban spatial planning, in terms of land use regulation, guided infrastructure investment and land allocation, is particularly useful as it brings to the fore the many tools with which states work to influence the spatial direc-
tion of urban areas. These tools are discussed in more detail below:

- Regulatory controls: Land use regulations are the rules which indicate how land in particular areas can be used and developed (Goodfellow, 2013). Common land use regulations include: building codes pertaining to the development of physical structures and the standards of construction, minimum

standards or guidelines for the provision of infrastructures (e.g. road width, public space, service levels), zoning regulations and schemes, density regulations including minimum plot size and subdivision regulation and ‘floor area ratios’.

- Infrastructure investment: Infrastructure investment is the material development of systems which provide necessary urban services. Water, sanitation, electricity, and road development can be used to realise urban plans. Infrastructure works to ‘open up’ new areas for development or creates additional bulk capacity where intensification is desired.

- Land governance: Turok (2016) defines land governance as ‘the institutions and mechanisms that allocate land to appropriate uses within urban areas, including property rights, land valuation systems and rules that control property development’ (35). These systems have profound impacts on the spatial development of urban areas. Most economists argue that market-based systems are much more efficient at allocating land based on the principle of ‘best and highest use’ (Alexander, 2001).

The connected logic of these tools (and the systems which underpin them) requires explanation. Turok (2016) describes this as the ‘urban land-infrastructure-finance nexus’. This logic rests on a reinforcing cycle of activities. The urban land use regulations set out the criteria, indicators, standards and rules in terms of which the state regulates land use and development. The land use and forward planning frameworks guide the type and location of investment in different infrastructures. The nett effect of these two land use activities is the creation of better living and working conditions for society, through the promotion of a higher quality urban environment and the rationing of opportunities for land development by the public. This leads to more efficient and increased investment in urban land by the private and public sectors and rising land values, which in turn leads to increased revenue to government (and especially local government). Therein lies the inherent logic that drives planning-led urban management: land use regulation and planning creates land value, which translates into increased state revenues, which then enables the state to invest more in the human and other capabilities needed to manage and enhance the urban environment. Where the underlying land tenure, land market, and land governance conditions are weak or compromised, the cycle described above cannot even begin to move. Not surprisingly, this ideal falters when plans and regulations fail to trigger private and public investment or when tax and budget systems fail to capture and distribute rising values.

Spatial planning, since its inception, has embodied normative assumptions about what makes for a ‘good city’ (Healy, 2006). Plans, regulations, and land systems have been designed and pursued with the intention of realising these normative goals. In this case, ‘good’ takes clearly spatial and often aesthetic forms, and is premised on the revenue-generating value of planning. Within planning discourses, attention is not only given to what a good plan looks like, but also what good planning processes, to arrive at this plan, would be. Two important themes which continue to resonate in current debates are that planning should be based, firstly, on evidence and data and, secondly, on participatory or collaborative decision-making. These are discussed below:

- Data: In the lineage of the European Enlightenment movement, physical planning was seen as a scientific practice, the outcomes of which could be best achieved through rational, technological, and analytical reasoning (Healey, 2006). The logic was that data and the scientific method should be used to inform plan-making (Davoudi, 2006, 2012; Krizek, Forysth, & Slotterback, 2009). Even in cases where it is recognized that planning is contested
and political, ‘evidence based’ planning is still posited as a cornerstone of rigorous plan-making.

- Collaboration: In line with liberal democratic discourses, there has been the rejection of top-down planning processes. Ideal planning processes would source, rationalise, and finally incorporate the ideas and perspectives of all stakeholders. The language of participation permeates much of planning discourse. However, there is continued disagreement about methods, tools, and the extent to which more radical agendas are embraced or sanitised (Watson, 2013).

There are substantial critiques of both the rationalist basis of planning (Alexander, 2001; Kamete & Lindell, 2010; Winkler & Duniny, 2016) as well as the ‘Habermasian’ ideals underpinning collaborative planning (Tewdwr-Jones & Allmendinger, 1998). Watson (2013) writes that ‘planning debates on state-society engagement are now in a “post-collaborative” phase, with attention shifting to the difficulties of these processes as well as to the range of contexts and conditions within which participation takes place’ (2).

Watson (2009a), referring to a growing body of literature on ‘seeing from the South’, argues for a much closer look at ‘context’ and ‘place’. Concerns, therefore, are less that normative ideologies are inherently bad, but that they fail to take into account the actual processes of places and contexts. Myers (2011), Pieterse (2008), Watson (2011) and others argue that this failure to look at context is of particular consequence to studies of African cities, where northern and western policy thinking and theorization have been adopted wholesale. Lemanski and Oldfield (2009) call for work which explores cities ‘as complex and contradictory sites in which diverse residents and urban processes function in the context of state (dis)engagement’ (pg 634). It is with this in mind that we turn to the literature on planning in African cities.

2.2. African cities

Planning has a long and complex history in Sub-Saharan Africa. Njoh (2004) points out that prior to the colonisation of Africa there were many functioning towns; these towns were a subject of fascination to and documentation by early explorers and colonialists. With the expansion of European colonialism in the late 19th century, what had been small, often coastal outposts functioning as fueling or slave trading stations, burgeoned into urban centres. Colonial centres were often geographically set apart from the villages of the indigenous people or designed with segregated quarters, and strictly adhered to European standards of construction and urban development (Bekker & Therbon, 2012; Njoh, 2009). European planning tools, including master plans, land use regulations, and the formation of legal land rights systems, were used to control where and how development could take place, often using pseudo-scientific or social rationales (Mabogunje, 1990).

Decolonisation of African countries between the 1950s and 1970s did not dismantle European planning. The majority of planning legislation and instruments remained intact and centralised within newly formed African states (Todes, Karam, Klag, & Malaza, 2010; Watson, 2011; Wekwete, 1995). In fact, at the behest of post-colonial governments, planning African cities (particular capital cities) became important sites for the exhibition of state power and governments sought to impose upon the built environment this quest for legitimacy (Abubakar & Doan, 2010; Adenawwi, 2012; Bekker & Therbon, 2012; Fourchard, 2012). This often took the form of impressive master plans and new master-planned capital cities.

Planning in African cities has been heavily critiqued (Goodfellow, 2013; Kamete & Lindell, 2010; Pieterse, 2008). Despite the overwhelming criticism of rigid, centralised, prescriptive planning dated master plans and often excessive regulations are being implemented, often at the behest of national governments (Kauzya, 2007, pp. 75–91; McAslan, 2013; Ndegwa & Levy, 2003; Suzuki, Dastur, Moffatt, Yabuki, & Maruyama, 2010; Watson, 2013).

These critiques have come to form an important narrative about planning in African cities, one which has penetrated both popular and academic discourses. Sub-Saharan Africa has become the poster child for urban planning gone wrong – a story of centralisation, rigid legislation and ad hoc enforcement. Oppressive city ‘clean ups’ (Huchzermeyer, 2011; Potts, 2006; Watson, 2009b), rampant peri-urban land speculation (Adam, 2014; Allen, 2003; Kombre, 2005; Mhiba & Huchzermeyer, 2002), collapsing infrastructure networks (Gandy, 2006; Pieterse, 2008), persisting informal settlements (Gulyani & Basset, 2007; UN Habitat, 2003), and elite enclaves (Lemanski, 2007; Murray, 2011; Watson, 2013) are read as signs of planning’s failures in African cities.

However, many authors challenge this reading of African cities, arguing for the need to depathologize the cities (Pieterse, 2008; Lemanski & Oldfield, 2009; Jaglin, 2014; Diouf, & Fredericks, 2014). Writing on African cities, Jaglin proposes ‘a radical change in perspective, taking as a starting point not the failure of urban services and the institutions responsible for their delivery, but the vitality and multiplicity of actual delivery systems which, despite policy announcements and reforms, and notwithstanding imported models, survive and contribute to the functioning of cities.’ (434)

Inspired by this line of thinking, this paper argues for a nuanced reading of planning in African cities. In charting three cases, we demonstrate the ‘negotiated’ nature of spatial decision making and outcomes. The following cases show that planning implementation reflects explicit and tacit power relationships rather than a process of explicit consensus building or data application.

The concept of ‘negotiated planning’ is useful for a number of reasons. First, it focusses less on normative expressions of how planning should be (i.e. informed by evidence and participation) and more on the actual practices evident in cities. The focus on actual practices falls in line with Southern Urban efforts to insert the ‘ordinary’ and ‘everyday’ into urban and planning theory, thus strengthening this debate (Harrison, 2006; Parnell & Oldfield, 2014; Pieterse, 2008; Robinson, 2008; Watson, 2011). Second, it seeks to explain these practices and outcomes with reference to social, economic, and political processes underway in specific cities. It allows for complex power dynamics among many stakeholders throughout the planning implementation process to be surfaced and the political nature of planning to be more rigorously understood. Finally, it combats simple and pathologizing narratives of African planning and plan implementation.

3. Planning implementation: three cases

Here we move to a discussion of the three case study cities. Nairobi (Kenya), Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), and Harare (Zimbabwe) are capital cities and the largest in their respective countries. Nairobi and Addis Ababa are large cities, hosting more than 3.5 million people each. Harare, on the other hand, is smaller, home to less than 2 million. However, all three are growing, experiencing increases in the demand for urban space.

The first plans for Nairobi were created by British colonial planners in an effort to create a ‘settler capital’ out of a rail town. The 1948 Master Plan for a Colonial Capital consolidated this early vision. By the mid-1970s it became clear that the functional area of...
Nairobi was a metropolitan region, and not a single municipal area. A series of spatial plans and strategies attempted to give life to this concept, most of which remain partially implemented. The Nairobi City Council, with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), is currently drafting the Integrated Urban Development Master Plan (NIUPLAN), to replace the 1973 strategy. Under Kenya’s 2010 constitutional dispensation, the functions of forward planning and development control have been devolved to county governments (section 104 (1) of the County Government Act of 2012). Nairobi is both a city and a county. Within the newly formed Nairobi City County (NCC), the Department of Lands, Physical Planning and Housing is technically responsible for all planning functions. However, the national Urban Metropolitan Development Unit (UMDU) continues to play a central role (personal communication UMDU planner, Nairobi, April 2015).

The first plan for Addis Ababa was drafted by the Italians during a brief colonial stint in the 1930s (Fuller, 1996). Since then a succession of plans have shaped the development of the city, most of which were developed by European architecture and planning firms (Parker & Ghafur, 1991). The plans for Addis Ababa were shaped as well by the socialist military regime in power from 1974 to 1991. As per legislation, Addis has two types of plans: city-wide plans (a master plan for the city) and Local Development Plans (strategies for local areas). Addis Ababa recently drafted a new city-wide plan, the Integrated Regional Development Plan, to replace the plan for 2004 to 2014. It has been violently resisted by the peripheral communities which cited ‘fear of eviction’ and long standing tribal tensions as core concerns. The 1994 Constitution of Ethiopia granted Addis Ababa City Government powers of self-rule within a federal system (with implications for the fiscal arrangements in the country and city). The national frameworks for land and planning empower Addis Ababa to make and implement urban plans.

The city of Harare (previously Salisbury) was the subject of a series of city wide plans under the colonial and Rhodesian governments, as well as since independence. City planning in Zimbabwe continued to reflect the pre-independence Rhodesian government’s concern with controlling urban development and maintaining orderly spatial planning, a policy which effectively perpetuated the race and income segregation established under the previous regime (McAuslan, 1993). Harare continues to use the Harare Combination Master Plan. The plan covers the greater Harare area and provides a framework for local area plans. Dating back to the 1980s, but periodically amended since then, the Combination Master Plan is now scheduled for fundamental revision, together with a City Development Strategy (Harare City Council, 2012), Zimbabwe’s constitution, adopted in 2013, devolves planning decision-making to local governments. However, without supporting legislation, the central government remains heavily involved in local level planning. In Zimbabwe, the National Department of Physical Planning (DPP) remains in control of among other things, evaluating master plans, allocating land for state and parastatal activities, and medium to large scale development applications.

All three cities have urban plans (specifically master plans) and have, at least in principle, embraced principles of decentralisation. However, the implementation of these plans, as the following three sections discuss, reveals a much more negotiated and complex system. The following section unpacks three tools of implementation, development regulation, infrastructure investment and land allocation, demonstrating how planning is negotiated in each context.

3.1. Regulation and development control

Much of urban planning has to do with regulating urban development; many authors focus on this function as a core component of planning implementation (Goodfellow, 2013; Watson, 2009b). This section looks at the ways in which development regulations are actually implemented in the three cases.

In Nairobi, the function of development control, undertaken by NCC with some support from the UMDU, largely focuses on approvals or rejections of development in line with the zoning scheme. The last zoning review was carried out in 2004 and resulted in the approval of 20 key zones. Both the National and local departments claim to use the development control guidelines provided in terms of the Physical Planning Act, the Physical Planning Handbook (Kenya Ministry of Lands and Housing, 1991) and the Building Code of 1968.

In practice, however, officials in the local planning department and the UMDU noted that even when there is no infrastructure capacity or the project fails to align with the plan, rejections are very rare. This is due to what was described as an ‘overwhelming need for development’ and ‘political motivations’ (personal communication Assistant Director NCC Forward Planning 1, Nairobi, April 2015). Planners often enter into ad hoc commitments with developers, requiring them to provide additional infrastructure (such as a school or community hall) if they want their application to be approved.

Despite the high likelihood that plans will be accepted, this process is cumbersome and often circumvented by developers. Developers generally do not apply for development permission at all or submit an application only very loosely resembling the development eventually built (notable examples include important donor headquarters and a number of prominent hotels). Within the local planning department in the City County, a special division has been created to address the plethora of unapproved and ‘deviant properties’ developed across the city. The focus of this team is on informally developed high rises (tenements) and property developed on the urban fringe by land buying companies (LBCs) (Huchzermeyer, 2011; Charles, 2013). Tenements are often constructed on road reserves, public spaces, or within the set back of another property, with scant regard for applicable land use or building regulations. Officials in this department retroactively approve or reject tenement development which has been constructed (personal communication, NCC Forward Planning official 2, Nairobi, April 2015). LBCs, another focus of the special division, are groups of households which have pooled resources to buy unserviced peri-urban land with the hope of eventual title (Huchzermeyer, 2011; Yahya, 2002; personal communication, Stanley Ndungu, Nairobi NACHU Head Office, April 2015).1 Officials note that these areas are often allowed to subdivide, despite not meeting the basic criteria. Retroactive approval, despite the failures of tenements and LBCs to provide infrastructure and services for their development, demonstrate the power of even small scale developers within the regulatory system.

In Addis Ababa, the citywide plan is prepared by a special project office set up for this purpose. Within the City Government, there are two sub-tiers kebeles (lower level administration) and woredas (an administrative jurisdiction consisting of a group of kebeles). Kebeles are empowered to administer local matters, 1 The state was originally reluctant to allow subdivisions before the LBC provided infrastructure to their members. However, the LBCs rarely provide this infrastructure (often becoming defunct rapidly after land acquisition) and the state has conceded to provide it through local government budgets or to allow subdividing without infrastructure in place.
including neighbourhood maintenance and building code enforcement. Similar to Nairobi, in Addis Ababa, Local Development Plans (LDP) include explanatory details on the strategies, implementing agencies, concrete standards, development controls, budgets, and timeframes for implementing plans. Unlike Nairobi, however, the majority of new development is undertaken by the local state. Because housing delivery is dominated by the state, new developments tend to conform to the master plan and LDPs. The Building Permit and Control Authority is responsible for assuring that all public and private development conforms to the plans and regulations. The authority approves designs and monitors implementation.

Importantly, no land is formally released to the state or private developers without being serviced. This had led to a very slow release of land and a huge gap between the supply and demand. Almost a million households are outside of the formal system, building informally in and around the city. Understanding the constraint, the state has been lax on enforcing building controls within informal and extra-legal areas. However, when areas fall within critical parts of the master plan, the city takes swift action to evict households which do not conform. In these cases households are sometimes compensated for the cost of their top structure, a question of particular concern for human rights and planning activists.

In Harare, unlike Nairobi and Addis Ababa, stringent regulations are applied to urban space and property development within the city. The property boom (against the anomalous backdrop of a failing economy) of the early 1990s gave impetus to the state's desire to build Harare into a modern and ordered city, imposing restrictive policies including the repression of informal trade, informal settlements, and the minibus industry (for example Operation Murambatsvina in 2005) (Kamete & Lindell, 2010; Watson, 2009b). The local government plays a role in regulation; however they are often undermined by higher levels of government (personal communication, Harare City Council urban planning official, Harare, March 2015). According to a local developer, the building and planning standards applied by all spheres of government to new developments are onerous, imposing high costs. The high standards imposed in the city core exhibit stark contrast to that on the periphery. On the periphery beyond the formal city boundary, building regulations are not enforced and development takes place in an ad hoc manner. In the case of housing cooperatives, building regulations simply do not apply. Plots are allocated without services and often with little regard for the long term spatial implications.

The three cases reflect three very different regulation practices. In Nairobi, the planners 'strike back', negotiating to regain lost control and respond retroactively to the many forms of informal building. In Addis, state-led construction, in a sea of urban informality, forms the basis of their regulatory approach, creating a situation where (new and conforming) high quality construction is side by side irregular slums. Control is selectively negotiated, focussing enforcement on new building and ignoring that which already exists. Harare, a combination of the former two, focusses development regulation both on existing building and new building, however this regulation is spatially selective, focussed on the core and turning a blind eye to the periphery. All three cases represent a state which can only partially regulate building through ongoing negotiation and compromise.

3.2. Infrastructure investment

A core part of implementing urban plans is infrastructure investment. Plans often include future infrastructure investments (especially if plans include strategies for densification or expansion). The laying of public infrastructure (or not) forms a critical part of the realisation of plans.

The local government in Nairobi has had little ability to invest in infrastructure due to the anti-urban bias in Kenya’s revenue sharing formula (Cira, Kamunyori, & Babjies, 2016). This impedes the possibility of surplus funding for capital expenditure (personal communication Kathy Whimp, Nairobi, April 2015). Investment in infrastructure and the associated development outcomes in the city are instead shaped by national line-function parastatals, private developers, and international development partners, each of which are discussed below.

Many international donors and development agencies have their regional headquarters in Nairobi and play an active role in setting and funding the agenda. This is particularly evident in roads and transport. For example, the major highway infrastructure such as the Eastern, Northern, and Southern bypass roads were funded by the Chinese government together with the national government of Kenya. The World Bank, European Union, and the African Development Bank are pushing for (and partially funding) a new bus-rapid-transit (BRT) system (personal communication, Anne Chauassavone, European Union, Nairobi, April 2015). In contrast and despite having the mandate to plan and implement, the County roads department addresses residential roads (often retroactively), focusing on drainage, junctions, traffic signals, non-motorised transport (NMT). While many donors support the devolution process, all of the long-term donor loans are granted to the national government of Kenya and their respective parastatal institutions, and are thus negotiated at the national level. Notably, parastatals play a huge role in infrastructure development in the city. Most parastatals operating in the city are offshoots of the national government, such as Kenya Power, Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA), and Athi Water Board. Each parastatal has its own sector plans and infrastructure investment programmes. In the NUIPLAN, the infrastructure plans of these parastatals have largely been incorporated into future planning processes, creating an ‘infrastructure leads planning’ approach to development.

Parastatals and donors tend to provide the high level infrastructure which creates the shape of the city; however, patches within this structure are left un-serviced. As a response, private developers play a substantial role in the provision of infrastructure, albeit largely for their own developments. Along the major road network, developers provide their own infrastructure such as boreholes, septic tanks, and solar panels, unlocking land otherwise undevelopable. ‘Lifestyle estates’ and ‘new suburbs’ funded by global and local investors, are common drivers of this development. Examples include Thika Greens Golf City, Garden Cities, Four Ways Junction, and Tatu City (personal communication, Julius Orowe, Tatu City, April 2015). In this way, developers reinforce high level urban plans, filling the spaces ignored by major funders and parastatals.

In contrast to Nairobi, infrastructure investment in Addis Ababa follows the forward planning agenda set forth in the master plan for the city (thus planning leads investment). Extremely advantageous revenue sharing privileges with the central government, the conferring of Charter City status (No. 87/97), and the ability for the city to raise revenue through taxes and other instruments have enabled Addis Ababa to have the financial capacity to invest in their

2 The construction sector is booming in Addis Ababa. There are very few private real estate developers; however, the majority of development is being undertaken by the state, by construction companies willing to build on the basis of upfront payments from the lessors of the land, or by international investors (although this constitutes a much smaller percentage) (personal communication Yohannes Sisay, Sunshine Construction, Harare, March 2015).
plans (Goodfellow, 2015). In addition to the funding from the state, international donors are also increasingly investing in the high level infrastructure of the city in line with the urban regeneration project. The most important cases are the Chinese-funded Light Rail Transit system (LRT) which is under the ownership of the newly established Ethiopian Railways Corporation (ERC). By controlling the finance, individual sectors’ infrastructure investments are compelled to align with these plans. It is possible to compel this alignment because, aside from electricity, the well-funded City Government owns and operates the majority of the infrastructure assets (for example, roads and water assets).

As noted in the above sections, the City Government embarked on a scaled urban regeneration project, including the re-development and infrastructure investment on fourteen inner city sites (personal communication Ato Hassen, Addis Ababa City Administration, Addis Ababa, April 2015). Most of the sites house informal or unplanned settlements. Most of these programmes involve the relocation of residents who currently reside on the redevelopment land. This redevelopment process has been coupled with a huge expansion of the road infrastructure and a planned decentralisation of economic activity (achieved through the direct allocation of land for commercial and industrial uses within assigned hubs, as discussed in the following section).

Much like Nairobi, the local government in Harare holds little power over infrastructure provision, being reliant on national government and parastatals to provide funding and services. On the back of economic collapse in the 1990s (and the subsequent string of unsuccessful economic reforms) Harare, as well as the national infrastructure parastatals from which the city relies, have had little capital to distribute and invest (personal communication, Regis Makwembere Revenue Collection City of Harare, Harare, March 2015). Given the dire lack of funds for infrastructure and the lack of interest of international investors, developers are often required by local planning authorities to build both on-site and off-site infrastructure. However, developers, relying on commercial finance, face the high risk brought about by rapid inflation and interest rate fluctuation, therefore preferring short term borrowing to longer term exposure (personal communication, Darlington Chirima, ZB Bank, March 2015). It is therefore also not possible for the private developers to provide scaled infrastructure to support large projects or the larger network of the city. They contribute bits and pieces to the infrastructure network, most of which directly serves very small scale development projects.

While Harare’s master plan purports to develop a World Class City, the Government of Zimbabwe has commissioned plans for a new capital city in the Greater Harare City region approximately 25 km away from the Harare central business area (personal communication Percy Toriro, independent town planner Harare, March 2015). The new capital is intended to replace Harare as the centre for political activity, housing a new parliament and various social and economic nodes. While this plan will likely be nothing more than one of Watson’s (2013) ‘fantasy cities’, it represents a clear effort on the part of the national government to divert what little funds are available from Harare to other areas. In practical terms however the Government of Harare is struggling to assemble the capital to finance the access road to the site of the proposed new capital, not with standing the commitment of the Chinese government to provide USD 200 million for the construction of a new parliament building (www.newsday.co.zw, 31 August 2016).

These cases show that the capacity and interest of the state to invest in urban infrastructure is a fundamental (though often ignored) part of the implementation of urban plans. Furthermore, these cases show that infrastructure investment is not driven by the state alone, but reflects negotiations between the government, parastatals, financiers, and developers. In the case of Nairobi, major loans are granted by foreign governments and donors to the national government to invest in high level urban infrastructure. This process (perhaps intentionally) undermines the local government’s role in infrastructure investment and entrusts in developers the role of ‘filling in’ the city’s structure. In Addis Ababa, the desire to showcase a national and regional success story forms a central plank in the infrastructure strategy of the city and its supporting funders. Addis Ababa leads the servicing of all formally released land and provides high quality public infrastructure at scale. In Harare, in contrast, the desire of the national government to undermine the development of the city (traditionally an opposition strong hold) is also unlikely to be coincidental. However, in reality the acute shortage of finance continues to undercut the national government’s capacity to exert its urban planning ambitions. These cases show that infrastructure investment reflects not only the technical context of the state (the varied extent to which there is or is not money available for infrastructure), but also forms the basis of an expression of control and power, the outcome of which is a negotiation between donors, investors, the state and even communities.

3.3. Land management

It is not possible to discuss all aspects of land governance or management for each case. We focus instead on land allocation. How land is allocated (directly by the state, through the market, or in some combination) has direct implications on the outcomes of urban planning processes.

Competition over urban land in Nairobi is fierce and determined by and large by the open market. Land for development is bought on the open market, often through partially informal processes. The long history of land grabbing in Nairobi – where public land was irregularly sold to private individuals – is testament to the pervasiveness of market forces (Klopp, 2000). Over the past few years, the value of strategically located urban land in and around Nairobi has skyrocketed. In the past five years plots along major infrastructure corridors have more than doubled and across the city property prices have increased by an average 25 percent per year. While some research agencies suggest that this process could be driven by real demand (such as a growing African middle class within Nairobi) (Centre for Affordable Housing Finance in Africa, 2014), a number of interviewees argue that increases are the result of market speculation, fuelled by overseas investors. Efforts to curb land speculation have been minimal, with many officials and politicians taking part in the scramble (personal communication NCC Forward Planning official 2, Nairobi, April 2015). Efforts by the National Land Commission to curb irregular land sales and rectify ‘grabbed land’ have proved complex and costly.

Of the three cases, Addis Ababa has the most complex and comprehensive land allocation system, based entirely on a lease-hold system. In Addis Ababa, land leasing has allowed the city near total control of spatial development (Goodfellow, 2015). The City leases land in two ways. First there is direct allocation wherein a ‘base price’ for the land servicing is paid. Second there is land auction, where land is sold to bidders (Yntiso, 2008). In Addis Ababa, 94% of land is allocated directly for activities and development seen to be of strategic importance (Kaganova & Zenebe, 2014). Housing is one strategic area; the state allocates its own land for condominium style development or to housing cooperatives for private construction (Yntiso, 2008). Since there is little land released to open market, this has constrained supply dramatically. Due in part to the slow release of land (brought about by the requirement to first service land before auction or allocation), farmers on the edges of the city have taken to illegally subdividing their plots and selling off the parcels directly to buyers. The
arrested formal land allocation system is thus supplemented by an informal alternative.

Harare, as an urban council, is given little control over land allocation (save the basic ability to sell land to developers) (Marongwe et al., 2011). Urban expansion of Harare’s functional areas is driven by the national government which has the power to expropriate commercial farmland and allocate it for urban development purposes (see the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Marongwe et al., 2011; Tibaijuka, 2005). The majority of land allocation is given to housing cooperatives in peri-urban areas, such as Caledonia, Whitecliffe and Southlea Park (Chirisa, Gaza Bandauko, 2014). However, the state is not the only actor extending the city into the peri urban surroundings, private developers bypass the delimitation laws (i.e. the urban edge) by building developments in peri-urban areas surrounding the city which are formally designated as ‘rural’ but, for all intents and purposes, are urban. These developers are colloquially called ‘land barons’ (personal communication Precious Shumba, Harare Resident's Trust, Harare, March 2015). Rural district councils wherein these developments take place benefit; they are often able to charge property tax for these developments, without having to provide the infrastructure in return (such as in areas such as Greensyke).

This is not an option open to the state. The state has remained unable to implement the new master plan for the city. This story sits in contrast to narratives of ‘failed states’ and crumbling local governments which characterise popular thinking on African cities. However, the power of the state is not uncontested. Tensions between the city and the resident communities in the surrounding area, resulting in scaled protest and violence, represent a challenge to state power. For two years the state has remained unable to implement the new master plan due to community backlash. In addition, the prevalence of informality demonstrates the limits of the state’s control over the regulation of existing development and the negotiated nature of urban outcomes in Addis Ababa.

In contrast to both of the above cases, Harare experiences very little investment in infrastructure given the lack of budget, weak interest of international funders, and low capacity of the private sector. While state led land allocation forms an important part of urban expansion, it is difficult to assess if this land allocation aligns with the plans for the city or instead reflects patronage efforts. Harare’s local government, unable to participate in infrastructure investment or land allocation, fixes on planning and building regulations, working to control both new and existing development in the core urban area. This control is juxtaposed with the peri-urban areas where no regulation is enforced. These efforts are a negotiation wherein the local government exercises selective spatial control.

It is not useful to categorise the planning in each city — in fact they do not represent discrete categories which can be given simple slogans. Differences in the cases exist not as cases of ‘all or nothing’ outcomes, but along spectra, creating what might be better considered as assemblage or configuration of planning implementation (à la Jaglin, 2014).

By beginning with the actual practices and contexts in each city, a number of important issues are brought to the fore. First, the negotiated nature of planning implementation has a clearly spatial logic. The negotiation which takes place in the core of urban areas is markedly different from what takes place in the suburbs, or peri-urban fringe. Different actors and power dynamics are clearly involved. Second, negotiation is not simple between the planning departments and developers (as is commonly understood). While this relationship is important, there are also important and power-laden negotiations which take place with donors, funders, various spheres of government, and mobilized citizens. Finally, each context has a particular logic. While the logics do not align with the ‘virtuous cycle’ of planning, infrastructure, and land which underpins much of western planning discourses, they are not impossible to understand or track.

Undoubtedly, the ability and will of the state to control urban space has not resulted in the order envisaged by the early architects of the planning discipline or by planners themselves. The planning outcomes in African cities do not reflect clear patterns of data driven decision making or stakeholder consensus. As these cases show, it is precisely the recognition that the state exercises limited, constrained, and contested control that we seek to call planning in African cities ‘negotiated’. Undeniably, efforts to improve the planning of African cities must begin by understanding this negotiated-ness as it is key to understanding the possibilities and
limitations of change.

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**Further readings**
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