



Responsible Land Governance: Towards an Evidence Based Approach

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DISPLACEMENT POLITICS AND POST-AID URBAN DEVELOPMENT: RESETTLEMENTS, DONORS AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN BEIRA CITY MOZAMBIQUE

MURTAH READ, ANNELIES ZOOMERS, KEI OTSUKI & MAYKE KAAG

Department of Human Geography & Planning, Utrecht University, Netherlands
African Studies Center, Leiden University, Netherlands
LANDac Netherlands

M.L.Read@uu.nl

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Abstract

The New Urban Agenda (NUA) and SDGs have served to formalize the ‘urban turn’ in international development. More than simply an overdue recognition of urbanization challenges, these agendas signify a mainstream consensus on the holistic nature of development, which is based on the ideals of inclusion, resilience and sustainability. Balancing the ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ targets of urban development will pose significant challenges to struggling municipalities marred by infrastructure deficits, as land based investments have regularly lead to displacement and loss of livelihoods. For municipalities such as Beira in Mozambique however, which have succeeded in attracting substantial investments from abroad, it is a balancing act which is closely related to the priorities of the various supporting donors and IFI’s. It is against this background that this paper will discuss three recent cases of development induced resettlement in Beira, each associated with a different donor, resettlement strategy and development outcome. In doing so the paper will put forth the argument that resettlements are highly contingent upon the interests associated with them. Furthermore it will argue that such a contingency, occurring within the shared administrative framework and close proximity of the same city, serves to perpetuate the arbitrariness of municipal-resident relations, thus ultimately undermining inclusive urbanization. As an increasing amount of resources and interests are mobilized around urban land throughout the world, these findings point to the need for greater understanding of displacement politics if the ambitions of the NUA and SDGs are to be realized.

Key Words: displacement politics, inclusive urbanization, infrastructure, international development organizations, municipalities, post aid, resettlement, urban development



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Introduction

Recent years have witnessed the emergence of an unprecedented momentum around the issue of urban development. The so called ‘urban turn’ in development has resulted in global policy agenda’s targeting cities in the global South, such as the New Urban Agenda and SDG goal 11. These agenda’s has been associated with a drastic recasting of urbanization as a developmental force in its own right, representing a breach with decades of urban pessimism. This urban-optimism has similarly been associated with high hopes in regards to municipal leadership as implementers of the urban future (Parnell, 2016). Within this context cities such as Beira in Mozambique have emerged as contemporary development successes, with strategically minded leaders realizing substantial development successes.

In order to realize the potential of urban development an increasing amount of resources are been mobilized around the urban cause. For however ‘local’ city development is envisaged, many municipalities will remain dependent on external expertise and investments in order to offset their current capacity deficits and realize their development ambitions. As an increasing array of resources and interests are amassing around the cause of urban development, concerns have been emerging as to their potentially disruptive impacts (Shi et al, 2016; Zoomers et al, 2017; Grant, 2014). This is related in particular to the increasing emphasis on land based investments in the form of infrastructure development, land value capture and industrialization (among others).

In many cities of Sub Saharan Africa urban land is characterized by overlapping claims, diffuse governance practices and extreme social stratification. Land based interventions thus inevitably result in various forms of displacement, which can potentially contradict the SDG and NUA agenda’s by contributing to further marginalization of the urban poor. Recent research on developmental-state approaches to urban development have underscored these concerns, with interventions often resulting in involuntary resettlement to the detriment of affected populations (Patel et al, 2015; Abebe & Hesselberg, 2015). Authoritarian states are however hardly the champions of the urban era. What we don’t know yet is how involuntary displacement is dealt with by municipalities which enjoy significant support from the international development community. How do they balance land based investments and displacement? Which development priorities guide their urban development programmes towards the target of ‘inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities’?



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It is these questions which the following paper will seek to shed light on based on the experiences of Beira, widely hailed as Mozambique's urban development success story. By analysing the resettlements dynamics associated with several high profile infrastructure projects in Beira, we will seek to understand how 'soft' and 'hard' development priorities are addressed by the municipality. As a city heavily reliant on external support, we will start the paper with a discussion of contemporary urban development and recent trends in the global political economy of development. This will be followed by a discussion of the potential implications of land based investments within the context of urban development. These discussion will be followed by an extensive introduction into Beira's social and political context of urban development. This will lead into an analysis of three cases of involuntary resettlement, each supported by an different donor.

Methodology

This paper is based on findings from an ongoing phd research into urban development interventions and land governance dynamics in Beira Mozambique. The research is funded by LANDac and Utrecht University, in cooperation with the Catholic University of Mozambique. Data collection was conducted during two field work periods from July-December in 2015 and 2016. The primary means of data collection were qualitative, encompassing 170 in-depth interviews with stakeholders (government, donors etc.) and household representatives of resettled populations. More than half of the households of each resettlement participated in the research. The data collection also included extensive field visits, observations and attendance of various stakeholder meetings.

Urban Development and the Post-Aid Era

Cities are bigger than ever, both literally and figuratively. With the dawning of the urban era an unprecedented wave of interest has amassed around urban development, resulting in academic innovations and policy agenda setting (Parnell, 2016). The 'urban turn' in development studies has been hailed by some as a paradigm shift in development studies. The SDG's and New Urban Agenda (NUA) constitute the policy counterparts of the urban era. Perhaps most defining of these agenda's is the manner in which urbanization has been recast as development force in its own right, constituting a break with decades of urban-pessimism in development policy (Parnell, 2016). Cities in the global south are thus no longer understood solely as a cluster of problems (slums, poverty etc.) to be solved, but as a sight of innovation and agency providing unique development opportunities. This has contributed to a reevaluation, on paper, of some of the most tenacious assumptions of urban development within mainstream policy circles. For instance, informality is no longer simply understood as an aberration, and the urban poor are no longer seen as hapless victims



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blighted by poverty (United Nations General Assembly, 2016). In some instances this has even resulted in a dismissal of the most tenacious tendency of all; that of using categories derived from the ‘Western experience’ for understand urbanization in the global South. As argued in a recent UNHABITAT report ‘Africa and the world community need to rethink what constitutes a “city” since the Western concept is no longer the sole legitimate template for its application in Africa. There is need to “re-imagine the African city” by creating new paradigms for modern African urbanism.’ (UNHABITAT, 2014, p.37)

Within the context of contemporary urban optimism cities are not only envisaged as the *site* of development, but also as its political unit. Within this context high expectation have emerged around the potential of municipalities in taking the lead in urban development. As a number of commentators have noted however, the reality of urban governance for many cities in the global south is one of underfunded mandates and low strategic capacity (Parnell, 2016; Cohen, 2016)). This is particularly true in Sub Saharan Africa. How exactly municipalities are to develop, finance and implement the ‘re-imagined African city’ is thus entirely unclear. Municipal capacity has thus emerged as one of the primary preconditions for successful urban development. However, the emphasis on the municipal level risks overlooking the broader structures which coproduce the parameters of urban development. The reality of urban development for many struggling municipalities is in fact one which will be closely related to external development initiatives. Indeed the SDG’s and NUA are themselves an expression of this broader development context. In keeping with the depolitical traditions of international development policy however, these interests are generally understood in neutral terms of ‘support’ and ‘assistance’ of collectively agreed upon goals (United National General Assembly, 2016). The urban turn in development policy thus appears as a tired repetition of established development discourse, whereby broader political-economic relations are deemed unproblematic and political accountability is seen as resting solely with ‘local’ institutions (Copestake & Williams, 2014; Grindle, 2014; Arsel & Dasgupta, 2015). In order to understand urban development in a city like Beira, it is necessary to politicize international development and elucidate the various interests which shape it and ultimately the city itself.

Development in Sub Saharan Africa has always been largely contingent on externally imposed development agenda’s. Indeed it is impossible to understand the political-economic and social-political context of a country like Mozambique with taking into account cold-war rivalries, state-roll back, and decentralization reforms (among others) (Igreja, 2013; Vines, 2013; Fairbairn, 2013; Buur et al, 2011; Hanlon & Mosse, 2010; Sumich & Honwana, 2007). As has been the subject of numerous critiques however, the ‘international donor community’ has, exhibited a particular adeptness at depolitizing its own role within international



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development while continuously reinventing its relevance, despite questionable outcomes (Grindle, 2014; Riddell, 2007). As understood here the international donor community refers to a diverse range of actors and agenda's representing a broad coalition that shared an implicit interest in Western hegemony. It wasn't until the ratification of the Paris Aid Effectiveness Agreement in 2004 that the policy spotlight shifted to include donors as co-accountable for development outcomes. In the years that followed the Paris Agreement it became apparent however that donors, exceptions aside, were only marginally committed to its implementation. A body of research soon emerged demonstrating how the political interests of donors and aid-agencies shaped aid allocation and decision-making, leading to fragmentation, inter-organizational competition and poor effectiveness (Vollmer, 2013; Knack & Rahman, 2007; Djankov et al, 2009; Yanguas, 2014; Gulrajani, 2014; Easterly & Williamson, 2011). Roughly ten years later the Paris Agreement was essentially deemed a failure (Mawdsley et al, 2014; Leiderer, 2015)

While the failure of the Paris Agreement confirmed many suspicions as to the contradictory politics of development, it would perhaps have been of little consequence had it not been for the rise of China. China's development success, which was initially used to inflate the MDG outcomes and the development community's legitimacy, would go on to decentre Western hegemony in an unprecedented manner

(Kilama, 2016; Arsel & Dasgupta, 2015; Rampa & Bilal, 2011; Ghosh, 2015). Its strategy of mutual-benefit and non-interference, provided many developing nations with an attractive alternative to the perceived paternalism and sanctimony of Western donors. Moreover, China's focus on rapid infrastructure development proved to be a strong comparative advantage, filling a massive supply-gap left by the 'soft' agendas of the MDG era. Sub-Sahara emerged as a region particularly receptive to the Chinese development model. China's presence alone provided countries in SSA with a newfound bargaining power in negotiations with Western donors. Countries such a Mozambique, to which China is currently the largest lender (Jones 2015), have proved to be particularly adept at capitalizing on this new strategic potential (Rampa & Bilal, 2011), gradually drifting out of Western spheres of influence.

The rise of China and the global financial crisis would ultimately contribute to a thorough reorientation of traditional donors ultimately giving rise to the notions of 'post-aid' and 'beyond aid' (Mawdsley et al, 2014; Janus et al, 2015; Brooks, 2016). Despite still very much in their conceptual infancy, these concepts denote the following four interrelated trends within the political economy of development:

Development effectiveness: Represents a broad agenda that has been hailed as an alternative to the aid-effectiveness agenda, which has increasingly been deemed unsuited to the contemporary global reality. The



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notion of development effectiveness denotes a broader and integrated perspective of development cooperation, particularly finance. It comes as a critique of narrow conceptions of development commitment as solely measurable in quantities of ODA, arguing for a need to coordinate and harmonize the development impact of non-ODA flows such as remittances and FDI. It has similarly been argued that ODA falls short of global issues, despite being closely related to development, as in the case of international public goods (Alonso, 2012; Mawdsley et al, 2014; Rampa & Bilal, 2011).

Donor self-interest: The financial crisis led to a strong domestic orientation of many donors, illustrated by notions of donor ‘value for money’ (Jakupec & Max, 2015; Mawdsley et al, 2014). While self-interest is nothing new, some donors appear to have taken a leaf out of the Chinese development book in terms of the overt manner in which they being pursued under the banner of global development. The Netherlands for instance, once a poster child for selfless aid, is now actively pursuing domestic private sector interest through an agenda of ‘Aid, Trade and Investment’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2013).

New Modalities: Refers to a variety of novel ways in which private finance is being leveraged to advance development goals (Jakupec & Max, 2015; Brooks, 2016, Green, 2015). These modalities take on a wide array of forms from PPP’s to international funds, and as with the case of the Dutch development policy, often involve providing subsidy to private investments made in priority sectors. Within this context the state has been reimagined as a facilitator of private sector-led development, with the latter ‘outstripping the influence of scholars, civil society pressure groups and the old-style development industry’ (Parnell & Pieterse, 2014, p.15). Consequentially an expanding array of interests are now being endorsed as agents of development. This has similarly been associated with a decidedly entrepreneurial conception of development in which efficiency and profit generation have become leading principles.

Hard development: Denotes a gradual orientation away from ‘softer’ development concerns towards land-based investments in infrastructure, agricultural and natural resource management etc. This has similarly been associated with understandings of development as urgent and technical, a logic tailored to the supply end of private sector-led development (Tanner, T., & J. Allouche, 2011; Green, 2015; Shi et al, 2016; Brooks, 2016)

The concept of post-aid has ridden heavily on the wave of ‘failed-aid’ sentiment, and has been embraced as a paradigm change within international policy circles. Despite the mass of research suggesting otherwise however, ‘aid-failure’ appears to be understood mainly in efficiency terms, not structural. Far from a



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critique of development relations and ideology therefore, post-aid appears as a normative agenda for (re) asserting the political-economic interests of traditional donors (Brooks, 2016; Green, 2015). Contradictory political agendas will thus continue shape resource allocations and development outcomes. In fact the contemporary political economy of development, characterized by its multi-polarity and ever expanding range of development actors is perhaps more fragmented and competitive than ever. For the sake of clarity therefore we will make a distinction between the post-aid as an agenda and post-aid as era. The former will be used to denote a normative development agenda, while the latter will be used to reference the current period in the global political economy of development. It is ultimately this political economy which will provide the 'support' and 'assistance' in 're-defining the African city' for municipalities in need. So what does this mean on the ground?

Land Governance and Displacement.

As an increasing array of interests are mobilized around the cause of urban development, commentators have become increasingly concerned as to their potentially negative impacts. This due in particular to the land based nature of many investments proposed by the SDG and NUA, which are addressed alongside social equity targets. As has been demonstrated repeatedly however, such a happy marriage between soft and hard targets rarely exists outside of the unbound optimism of development policy. As argued by Barnett & Parnell (2016), the tensions between the various urban epistemologies upon which these agendas are based are likely to become more pronounced as priorities are negotiated over. With investments in urban land increasing, commentators have pointed to similarities with recent trends in rural development whereby land based investment was hailed as a prerogative for development (Zoomers et al, 2017). Far from a unified force for rural prosperity, the global land rush which ensued would be marked by volatility and contradiction.

The subsequent 'land grab debate' which emerged in the wake of the investment surge into rural land gave way to a wide range of insights and opinions, ranging from the polemic to the descriptive. As the debate matured a range of nuanced analyses emerged demonstrating the highly differentiated manner in which global political economic processes had shaped land governance contexts in negotiation with local power structures (Borras et al, 2011; Borras & Franco 2012; McCarthy et al, 2012; Peluso & Lund, 2011; Kaag & Zoomers, 2014;). The picture that was painted was not one of rural salvation nor catastrophe, but one of fragmentation and temporality. These findings reinvigorated the relevance of empirical actor-oriented research for understanding the spatial and distributional implications of global processes. Perhaps most importantly, the land grab debate demonstrated the manner in which international development policy had



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meticulously paved the road for the ‘global land rush’ to occur in the first place, while recipient governments had similarly been engaged in a race to the bottom in an attempt to attract investments into ‘empty lands’. The legality of these ‘grabs’ thus pointed to deeper issues than mere proceduralism, questioning the legitimacy of development ideology and its associated governance arrangements.

As argued by Zoomers et al (2017) current trends point to an urgent need for greater interaction between urbanization and land rush debates, for very little is currently known about the implications for the urban poor of contemporary urban investment surges. There is however an eerie familiarity in the manner in which development ideology is being used to mobilize (private) investments into occupied land. The focus of investments differ considerably however, as does the socio-political context. Infrastructure development for instance, serves to produce ongoing connections and disconnections which have not been captured by land rush debates as argued by Kei et al (2016). Such connections are as political as they are spatial with engineers, investors, development agencies, local officials and land users finding their interests intertwined with a specific locality. These dynamics further add to the complexity of (conflicting) claims, governance structures and social stratification that characterize the urban realm. What is particularly clear at least that the ‘empty-land’ discourse will have no purchase within the urban context and that land based investments will thus occur on occupied land. Displacement will thus likely become a defining feature of urban development.

Development induced displacement has continued to be one of the most controversial issues in development studies, particularly in relation to resettlements (Cernea, 2003). The forced residential relocation of communities has repeatedly been shown to be detrimental to livelihoods and overall wellbeing. Mozambique stands as a testimony to this general conclusion, be it in the context of dam construction (Isaacman, 2005), conservation (Otsuki et al, 2016), mining (Joshua & Power, 2015), natural disasters (Artur & Hillhorst, 2014) or land acquisitions (Borras et al, 2011). The case of Mozambique is similarly illustrative of the fact that displacement research has traditionally focused on rural mega projects and their impacts for affected populations. In recent years however a body of literature has emerged around development induced displacement in the urban context. These analyses have demonstrated how state-led urban regeneration initiatives have displaced urban residents through eviction, resettlement and gentrification (Patel et al, 2015; Abebe & Hesselberg, 2015; Porter & Shaw, 2009, Wang & Lo, 2015). By analyzing the spatial implications of displacement these studies have contributed greatly to deeper understating of spatial justice concerns within the context of non-Western urban regions. So far however,



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the majority of these studies have focused on countries with a relative degree of consolidated state power, which far removed from the fragmented and informal reality of many cities in Sub Saharan Africa.

Beira

Beira is a coastal port city in the Sofala province of central Mozambique. Similarly to the capital Maputo, Beira consists of several colonial era neighborhoods near the seaside, and a vast expanse of informal neighborhoods land inwards, punctuated by occasional clusters of upmarket developments. With a population of around 700,000 it is the country's second largest city. The city's port is as major node in the connections to and from Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and the Mozambican hinterland. The port has played a key strategic role in facilitating Mozambique's recent coal boom in the central Tete province, as well as the (illegal) timber trade to China. In addition, the port is anticipated to play a crucial role in the development of the currently floundering Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC), a donor-driven PPP initiative intended to modernize agriculture. The port is currently managed by Cornelder de Mocambique, a joint venture between The Dutch Cornelder company, the Mozambican state and several anonymous shareholders reportedly linked to the former Guebuza regime.

In addition to being Mozambique's second largest city, it is also recognized for being the county's most climate vulnerable municipality. Located in the flat swampland of the Pungwe river estuary at only a few feet above sea level, it is subject to various water related threats. Seasonal downpours and extreme weather events induce a reoccurring 'bathtub' effect as the result of soil conditions and a deficient drainage system, leading to the inundation of whole neighbourhoods for prolonged periods of time. Coastal erosion is also a major threat at around one meter per year, though based on 30 year old data and presently expected to be significantly higher. Beira's water challenges are related to a range of anthropogenic causes such as urbanization, dredging and environmental degradation, whose effects are increasingly exacerbated by climate change. Development in Beira has been predominantly informal, occurring in relative autonomy of the numerous urban plans and land regulations. As a municipality in one of the poorest countries in the world, Beira's development challenges far outstrip the municipality's strategic and financial capacity.

Beira's strategic location, its development challenges and political orientation have served to attract a substantial amount of donors to the city. The Netherlands, World Bank, China, KfW development Bank and GIZ are just some of the development actors, which have recently been engaged in variety initiatives targeting the city specifically. These initiatives can be general characterized as 'hard' interventions, such as infrastructure development and urban planning. Such interventions inevitably result in various forms of



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development-induced displacement, intervening in highly contentious land governance practices. With the recent development of the Dutch-backed 'Beira Masterplan' it has become clear that development induced displacement will be an intrinsic feature of the cities urban development. The masterplan outlines a far-reaching vision and numerous PPP projects intended to fundamentally restructure the city's infrastructure and land management towards a 'safe, prosperous and beautiful Beira'.

The city of Beira has occupied a somewhat unique position vis a vis the central state due to its long history as an opposition stronghold, resulting in an alternative experience of Mozambique's post-conflict 'success'. (Igreja, 2013) After the cessation of a 15 year civil war in 1993 the FRELIMO and RENAMO groups laid down their arms in favour of a multiparty democracy. A centralized 'winner takes all' state model was agreed upon by both sides. After winning the first multi-party elections FRELIMO abandoned its socialist ideology in favour of neo-liberal restructuring. The privatization agenda that followed gave party members unfettered access to state assets, entrenching the party's reach in the private sector to the exclusion of RENAMO members. FRELIMO would go on to win the following elections, entrenching its patronage in the state and private sector further while being hailed a poster-child for post-conflict development by the international development community. RENAMO was excluded from the spoils of state restructuring and Beira was subjected to neglect and underinvestment (Sumich & Honwana, 2007; Whitfield & Buur, 2014; Hanlon & Mosse, 2010; Vines, 2013)

FRELIMO's grip on state power was compromised somewhat by decentralization reforms in 1998, again adopted under pressure of the international development community. These reforms provided for partial autonomy of municipality's through local elections, of which Beira was one. In 2003 this allowed the then-RENAMO candidate Davis Simango to become mayor. After an internal power struggle in RENAMO he went on to establish the MDM party and was re-elected as mayor in 2008 and 2013. The rise of MDM served to disrupt the political status quo in Mozambique, introducing a new contender to national politics. Its rise coincided with a gradual fall from grace of FRELIMO among many Western donors due to continuous blatant self-enrichment and corruption of party affiliates under second term of president Guebuza from 2009-2015. FRELIMO on the other hand had grown increasingly frustrated by donor meddling in domestic politics, particular Western support of MDM on the grounds of the fledgling party's contribution to democratic politics and its modernization agenda (Nuvunga, A., & J. Adalima, 2011, Vines 2013, Shankland, & Chambote, 2011). It was during this period that FRELIMO became increasingly oriented towards China, which would become Mozambique's biggest lender in 2015 while 'traditional'



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donors saw their influence waning. All these developments were closely related to the discovery of massive natural gas reserves in 2012 in the country's North.

Beira's MDM party under the leadership of mayor Davis Simango has embarked on a far reaching modernization agenda based on industrialization, infrastructure expansion and land value capture through formalized urban expansion. The party has proven particularly adept at attracting donors despite frequent accusations of political partisanship from the central FRELIMO government. MDM's success in Beira is anchored on the charismatic leadership of the mayor who was born and bred in Beira. He is known for his hands on approach, often mediating personally upon request in minor conflicts and negotiations throughout the city. His leadership has similarly been credited with rejuvenating the city's service provision and infrastructure after years of deterioration and underinvestment. The accessibility and can-do approach of mayor Simango have awarded him three terms as mayor and a broad support base among all walks of life in Beira. As a relatively new party MDM's success appears to be dependent more on its results than an established patronage structure, as is the case with FRELIMO and RENAMO. MDM's electoral success 2013 municipal election was however also been attributed to RENAMO's boycott of the elections. Since then RENAMO's, long been assumed to be of fading relevance, has seen its popularity surge due to its renewed insurgence against the FRELIMO government. As a traditional RENAMO stronghold, there is a significant chance of it winning Beira's 2018 municipal elections. Consequentially MDM's political future will be closely related to what it has to show in terms of development successes.

Despite the high standing of the mayor among the population of Beira however, the municipality is still very much a top down and authoritarian institution. This is generally in keeping with Mozambican governance culture, but also a result of the volatile political context of the region. The ever present specter of political factionism has been credited with inhibiting the establishment of a strong civil society advocacy. Illustratively, a 2012 baseline report on the state of municipal-civil society relationships found there to be no formal mechanisms for such engagement. In recent years a DfiD funded initiative has made careful progress in this field. In 2015 however a local implementing partner was accused of attempting to sabotage an urban development initiative for political purposes by instigating a neighborhood land conflict. The organization in question was ultimately removed from the DfiD programme, illustrating the precarious nature of the municipality's-civil society relationship, and the fact that the roots of factionism (are suspected to) reach down into the grass-roots level. The citizens of Beira, known in Mozambique for their propensity for conflict in the face of injustice, frequently express grievances through disorganized protest and



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confrontation. Seen from this perspective the mayor's accessibility can similarly be understood as an expression of unstructured and personalized engagement in the absence of formalized mechanisms.

The above land conflict was similarly a testimony of the extremely contentious nature of land governance in Beira. Conflicts around land, whether it be between land users, investors and land users or the municipality and other actors (among others) are a routine source of protest and resistance. As Beira continues to urbanize rapidly new forms of displacement emerge, whether voluntary or involuntary, particularly with respect to urban agriculture upon which many urban poor depend. The governance behind this rapid urbanization is by and large an informal affair in Beira, i.e. a set of practices and norms which are far removed from formal laws and procedures. The sale of land for instance, formally illegal according to the Mozambican land law, is in fact one of the primary forms of land acquisition. It is important to note that the existence of an informal realm is not an allusion to the existence of a separate 'formal' realm, for formally mandated institutions are similarly implicated in this informal governance process. In line with research in Maputo therefore, it is perhaps more fitting to understand land governance as occurring in its entirety in a 'twilight' realm (Earle, 2014). Urban agriculture occupies a particularly contentious form of land use in Beira. The majority of plots are concentrated in several flood plains within the municipality border and for a large segment of the urban poor, they major source of livelihood security providing staples of rice and sweet potato. It is not uncommon for families to own multiple plots which are handed down from generation to generation for cultivation, rental or sale. The governance of urban agriculture is inherently an informal affair and is not eligible for formal tenure security. Urbanization in Beira has resulted in a gradual displacement of urban agriculture whereby plots are either bought up or expropriated without compensation.

Urban Development in Beira

The municipality of Beira has been particularly successful at attracting various urban development initiatives to its city. In recent years three high profile project have been developed in Beira which will provide the empirical basis of this paper; the development of a Special Economic Zone by the Chinese Sergicoa company, rehabilitation of the Chuveve river with support by the German KFW bank, and implementation of the first phase of an World Bank funded urban drainage programme. These projects illustrate the strong emphasis on infrastructure development in Beira, fitting with the modernization agenda adopted by the current municipal administration. This agenda has been laid out in the Beira masterplan developed with support of a Dutch consortium of urban planners and hydraulic engineers. Within the context of the masterplan several Dutch backed projects are to be realized in the short term, encompassing



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road expansion, real estate development and land value capture, housing for the ‘working poor’ and water supply extension. In addition to these projects Beira’s N6 highway is set for expansion with support from China, and the second and third phase of the World Bank drainage programme are awaiting funding. The majority of donor initiatives in Beira have been formulated at the national level and implemented through central government bodies. This approach has been noted to be associated with considerable political manoeuvring due to a reluctance within the central government to put Beira in the spotlight. The Netherlands partnership differs in this respect however due to the fact that the masterplan projects have been negotiated directly with the municipality leadership, with cooperation from central government bodies generally being sought afterwards.

A particularly salient characteristic of the various internationally supported initiative in Beira is their generally uncoordinated nature. Project formulation and implementation occurs predominantly without engagement with other projects. Consequentially urban development in Beira is associated with several clusters of consultants, technical experts and administrators with little to no inter-project knowledge sharing, let alone coordination or coproduction. During interviews project staff of the various clusters often lamented the secrecy and unwillingness to cooperate of other project clusters. It was not uncommon for respondents to be dismissive of the expertise and priorities associated with other projects. This has resulted in several notable cases of duplication whereby a significant amount of resources and expertise have been invested in urban plans that are essentially incompatible and contradictory. As a result some of these plans never seen the light of day. A regularly heard complaint among project staff was the perceived passiveness of the municipality, arguing that project coordination was ultimately the responsibility of the municipality. This was often stated as a symptom of donor-pleasing. Other donor respondents argued simply ‘we have become each others competition’ suggesting that the current political-economic context provided no incentives for cooperation with other project clusters. While many respondents mentioned the need for a municipal level coordination platform, they similarly recognized the potential political sensitivities and a reluctance to attract any unnecessary attention from ‘Maputo’.

So what does Beira’s heavy reliance on a fragmented political economy of external expertise mean for local land users? In order to shed light on this question we will address the three previously mentioned cases of urban infrastructure development. Each of these cases was associated with instances of involuntary displacement, which we will take as the focus of our comparison.



Three Cases of Involuntary Resettlement

Case 1: The Manga Mungass Special Economic Zone

In 2013 the Chinese Sergicoa company commenced development of the Manga-Mungassa Special Economic Zone encompassing an area of 217 hectares in an area identified as an industrial expansion zone on Beira's masterplan. The area which had been allocated to Sergicoa encompassed residential and agricultural land and would ultimately lead to the resettlement of around 100 households. The project was associated with a significant degree of conflict which resulted in three distinct categories of resettlement and compensation. The majority of residents in the Mungassa community consisted of lower income groups. Small scale agriculture, informal employment and entrepreneurship provided the primary livelihood means for these residents. The houses were of various sizes and construction materials ranging from one bedroom 'pau-pique' constructions made of wooden frames and stones to multi-bedroom brick buildings. Reflective of Beira's urbanization the neighbourhood consisted of long term residents and new comers. The community was located next to the N6, a major highway connecting Beira to other regions and providing easy access to affordable transport throughout the city.

The land acquisition and resettlement process was on the whole without structured engagement or negotiation with the community. The respondent stated that Seegicoa had initially pitched camp behind the Mungassa community and their houses were registered soon after by municipal staff. While suspicions arose as to pending evictions within the community, it was only until a community meeting was organized with the mayor that residents were informed they would be relocated. The community was told they would receive new houses in the vicinity of the Special Economic Zone, easing fears of being relocated far from basic infrastructure services. A distinction was however made between long term residents (group 1) and those in the process of constructing their homes (group 2), with the latter category being labelled as 'opportunists' who were told they would receive no compensation at all.

Despite the initial agreement however the community was eventually relocated a different location in an urban expansion area called Ndunda 2. The resettlement location consisted of several rows of houses in an undeveloped area, connected by roughly 6 km of dirt road to the N6, with no healthcare, education, market or transport facilities in the area. The resettlement neighbourhood consisted of 2 bedroom houses of around 35m² and 75m², as well as several larger 3 bedroom houses. The respondents reported a highly untransparent process of house allocation, whereby some households received up to three new houses. The



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vast majority of respondents reported a significant reduction in income generation and overall welfare as a result of the resettlement. Similarly all but one respondent stated having received formal land titles. In relation to this matter a municipal spokesperson states titles were being processed and would soon be distributed. According to the community however, this is was the story they had been told for the entire duration of their 3 year stay in the new area.

Group 2, expecting to receive no compensation for their displacement stayed in Mungassa after group 1 was relocated. A committee was organized by the members of the group which lobbied the municipality and coordinate protests. One such protest, in which the road to the Economic Zone was barricaded, was televised nationally. This ultimately led the municipality to concede to compensating group 2 for fear of deterring future investors. The group, consisting of around 50 households would ultimately receive building materials and titled plots to build new homes, allocated in the area of Mangelene considerably closer to the N6 than Ndunda 2. It became apparent during the research that the second group did not only consist of people who had recently moved to Mungassa before the resettlement, but also consisted of some long term residents who had refused the conditions in Ndunda2 due to the location. Similar to group 1, the respondents of group 2 reported an overall decrease in income generating ability as well as a reduction in overall welfare. In contrast to group1 however, their assets were considerably more liquid due to their formal titles. While untitled plots are generally sold for around 5000-10000 meticals (around 70-140 USD at the time of research), titled plots can fetch a factor of 25 of this amount

During the research an additional third group emerged consisting of two households. This group had refused the resettlement and circumvented the municipality entirely by lodging a complaint with the provincial authorities. While Mozambican law stipulates resettlements to be planned and coordinated by central government institutions, it was only in relation to the complaints of group 3 that these procedures were followed. This resulted in considerably better terms of compensation consisting of bigger houses of considerably higher quality.

Across all three groups there was a general sense of dismay and resentment towards the municipality who they viewed as the party responsible for the resettlement outcomes. There was a widely held conviction that the resettlement had been associated with considerable corruption and that the Chinese had made funds available for the resettlement which had subsequently been embezzled by municipal staff. The respondents of group 1 felt particularly cheated by the fact that the resettlement location had changed without any



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negotiation, reportedly only being informed several days before being resettled. There was a widely shared sense among the respondents that the resettlement would have been better organized and more just had it been implemented by non-governmental partners. Various respondents stated recent examples of exorbitant amounts being paid by companies acquiring land from home owners, stating such a procedure as being more reliable than municipal interference. Other respondents referred to a recent resettlement associated with a World Bank project, lamenting the better terms received by the population in question. Across the board the experience appeared to have resulted in a deep distrust towards the municipality as well as a sense of tenure insecurity. The resettlement was not associated with any form of livelihood rehabilitation or social support.

Case 2: The Chuveve River Rehabilitation

The Chuveve river project consisted of two phases of river rehabilitation and green space development, the first being funded by the German KFW and the second by the World Bank and KFW. The Chuveve river runs through downtown Beira and had been closed off in the 1980's. By rehabilitating the river the project aimed to significantly increase the urban drainage capacity. With phase two Beira is to host one of Africa's largest urban green spaces. In 2015 33 households were removed from precarious living conditions in the mouth of the Chuveve river known as Mangal or 'Casas das Frutas' to make way for construction work.

The resettlement consisted of a temporary transition period in rental houses followed by a relocation to existing houses throughout the city. The resettlement was formally not included within the scope of the rehabilitation project, with a KFW representative mentioning recipient ownership as a guiding principle behind this choice. As a consequence the resettlement was funded by the municipality and coordinated by an independent consultant. The resettlement would ultimately be reported as costing 10,000 USD per house. The community of Mangal was known being among the poorest and precarious in terms of living conditions. Many households stated earning an average of around 2000-3000 (around 30-45 USD at the time of research) metical's per month. Similarly to the Mungassa the community of Mangal consisted of long and short term residents. The majority of houses were constructed of 'pau-pique' (wood and stones) and the area's vicinity to the ocean made many houses susceptible to flooding indoors during high swells. Despite the precarious living conditions the community's down town location offered easy access to basic infrastructure services and commerce.

The respondents stated that before their resettlement in 2014, they had been visited throughout the preceding years by various officials and unknown individuals that had warned them of a pending relocation.



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The first formal notice of the resettlement was provided by a meeting with the mayor, which notified the community they would need to move. At this stage the terms of resettlement were not clear, and various respondents stated being asked if they would prefer new houses or land titles and building materials. The respondents differed in their accounts as to the terms that were initially agreed upon. It became apparent however that the eventual resettlement strategy differed from the choices they were presented with. This discrepancy reach as far as formal documentation, with a World Bank project description stating that the community would be relocated to a block of serviced plots.

The news of the pending resettlement was received with some reluctant to move and others happy to, although many respondents reported questioning the commitment of municipality staff to following through on the promises. The coordination of the resettlement was eventually overseen by an independent consultant which had been hired by the municipality. In turn the consultant recruited a member of Mangal community as a project assistant. The consultant reported having explored a number of resettlement options with the municipality. Due to limited financial means it was eventually decided that the community would be relocated to existing houses, which would be acquired by the municipality. Thus resulting in a different terms than was negotiated with community.

Due to the fact that the municipality had yet to acquire the houses, a process which threatened to delay construction work on the Chuveve project, it was decided that the community would first relocate to rental houses throughout the city, which would eventually be followed by a relocation to the final houses. Similar to the Mungassa case the respondents reported being briefed of the final decision only shortly before being required to move, with estimates being around 2 weeks prior to resettlement. During the same meeting the community was informed by the resettlement coordinator that they were required to search for their rental houses themselves. For this they were granted a budget of 3000 meticals a month (around 45 USD) which would be paid by municipality to the landlords. While some respondents reported having considerable difficulty finding a rental home, others found it less challenging. Eventually all community members found a rental hoouse and were relocated throughout the city.

The respondents would eventually stay in the rental houses for periods ranging from 6-18 months before they moved to their final houses. During this period the majority reported a decrease in income generating ability and a general increase in living expenses. The acquisition of the final house was overseen by the resettlement coordinator and the project assistant. Some respondents stated being given the opportunity to



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look for a house themselves for a budget of 300,000 meticals (around 4200 USD at the time of research). Others stated that the houses were selected for them by the coordinator and assistant which they were then given the opportunity to decline if they wanted. Others however stated being given no choice but to accept the houses that had been selected for them by the project staff. These stories were similarly associated with suspicions of embezzlement on the part of project staff regarding the acquisition process.

The final houses were spread out throughout the city and therefore differed substantially in terms of their vicinity to basic infrastructure. The houses differed similarly in terms of their construction quality and facilities. Not surprisingly the satisfaction with these houses differed greatly among the respondents. While all the house were constructed with bricks, some did not have proper sanitation facilities and could therefore be categorized as slums. This category could similarly be applied to the questionable tenure arrangements of the new houses. For while the majority of the respondents stated being promised formal titles, only a minority had received them at the time of the research. Even for those which had received titles however, the security provided by them was not clear. This was due to the fact that the houses had come out of Beira's existing informal housing stock. Consequentially all the houses were located in unplanned neighbourhoods. In one instance a title had been provided for a house in close vicinity to a railways in clear violation of planning laws. The actual legality and tenure security of these titles was thus far from clear. Similar to the Mungassa case the majority of the respondents reported a reduction in income generation abilities as a result of the resettlement. Several respondents complained about structural issues such as leaking rooves or unfinished construction. None of the respondent stated having received any form of livelihood rehabilitation or social support, although several mentioned having heard of others receiving temporary employment on the Chuveve construction.

The resettled community of Mangal proved particularly difficult to access. The municipality appeared to have no clear documentation of their new locations, which were known only to the resettlement coordinator and assistant. The consultant refused to provide the addresses, demanding the project assistant be present during the interviews with resettled household members. Out of concerns for neutrality the research team therefore engaged in a laborious process of snowballing to locate the resettlement community throughout the city. The story which emerged from interviews with the former Mangal community was one which contradicted the accounts of project staff. The various project affiliates spoke of a successful resettlement, a community eager to move, their free choice of resettlement location and provision of employment construction sites. It became apparent that this narrative was based on a particularly selective account of



events. This mismatch in formal narrative and community experience was illustrative of an overall lack of community agency during and after the project.

The project similarly demonstrated questionable the manner in which the notion of ownership had been invoked by project financiers to separate the resettlement from the project which necessitated it in the first place. This resulted in a similar mismatch between formal narrative and reality, as illustrated by World Bank documentation of the project which stated that ‘the works financed by the KfW project do not require resettlement of the families at Mangal.’ (World Bank, 2014, p.13). A statement which was in clear contradiction to activities on the ground.

Case 3: Urban Drainage Rehabilitation

Beira’s deteriorated urban drainage system has been targeted for a thorough 3 phased rehabilitation. The first phase funded by the World Bank resulted in the resettlement of about 25 households whose homes were located alongside the drainage system. The houses were located throughout several relatively dense sub-neighbourhoods and were inhabited primarily by long term residents. The majority of houses were made of bricks and various households had additional buildings on their property which they rented out. The households were resettled in October of 2016 to a newly built housing block located on the edge of a floodplain, in an area known as Motond earmarked for future residential development. The block consisted of several rows of plotted houses, paved roads, a playground and an area earmarked for a sports field. The new houses were located in the vicinity of public transport and other basic infrastructure and social services. Due to construction challenges associated with Beira’s notoriously swampy soil conditions the houses were estimated to have cost 60,000 USD each. The resettlement had been planned in reference to the Mozambican resettlement law and World Bank operational policy 4.12 and was coordinated by the same external consultant as the Chuveve resettlement project.

The respondent had received formal notice of the pending resettlement in 2014 by project staff which had visited the households. The visited were followed by several community meetings in the municipality where the details of the resettlement were discussed. In stark contrast to the Mungassa and Mangal cases the respondents were nearly unanimous in their positive evaluation of the organization and engagement prior to the resettlement. The majority of respondents recalled how the initial resettlement was to be located near Ndunda 2 and that they had voiced complaints regarding this location. Whether it was due to their complaints or policy guidelines was unclear, but the location was eventually changed to Motondo. The respondents were unanimous in their preference of Motondo over Ndunda 2 due to its vicinity to



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infrastructure services. Before being resettled the household members were taken to visit the new location and recalled being happy with the quality of the houses.

The households, which ranged from 4 – 10 family members were eventually resettled into two and three bedroom houses in Motondo. At the time of research, roughly six weeks after the resettlement, the fledgling community was clearly still adapting to their new living circumstances. The vast majority of the resident stated being happy with the new houses, preferring them to their former properties. Similar to the Mungassa and Mangal communities however, a clear majority reported a reduction in income generating abilities and an increase in living expenses. The majority of households had depended on selling goods in their former neighbourhoods which had been bustling with clientele. Motondo was however markedly tranquil and without a market. Other respondents described how they had relied heavily on rental income and that the new houses provided no such means. They stated having plans for building additional rental accommodation on their plots, but that they had been told to wait until after the project inauguration by the project staff. The respondents spoke of the inauguration being a publicized event which would be attended by the Mozambican president. They had also been told that they were to keep the exterior of the houses clean until the inauguration, and that the ceremony would include the handing over of land titles. When asked when the inauguration was expected to occur accounts ranged from several weeks to a year later.

The pending inauguration embodied a striking difference with the Mungassa and Mangal resettlements. For while the latter two cases had been surrounded with substantial secrecy, the Motondo resettlement constituted a flagship project, which the central government and World Bank eagerly associated itself with. The neighbourhood had a distinctly showcase feel, with immaculately painted houses and a signposted entrance noting the various project partners. It was apparent by the instructions given to the residents that this image was not to be tarnished before the project's media coverage, regardless of how long they were to wait. During the research notice of the new project had reached various respondents of the other resettlements, who compared the apparently higher standards of the World Bank to that of their own. Indeed from the outside this appeared to be self-evident. The reduction in income generating ability revealed a clearly more nuanced picture however, as one respondent argued 'we are starving in our beautiful homes'. Outside of the houses the matter of livelihood rehabilitation and social support appeared to be patchy at best. Project staff stated plans to enrol elderly woman in a social support programme for widows. Although several respondents reiterated these plans, the support had yet to materialize, leading to complaints about unmet promises. Outside of plans to support widows, there appeared to be no other form of social support or livelihood rehabilitation.



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. The project was associated with a particularly contentious issue of which many respondents appeared to be unaware. For while the households were to receive formal land titles, they were forbidden from selling the houses for three years. Although it was not clear where the initiative for this regulation lay, it did not appear to be part of World Bank procedure or the Mozambican resettlement law. Project staff stated the regulation constituted a safeguard against sudden sale which may potentially harm the households in question. The issue of gender was invoked to further substantiate the regulation by safeguarding families against male heads of household which could seek to sell the houses without consent of family members. While such allusion to gender stereotypes may be warranted in cases headed by males, they are clearly of no relevance to the many households headed by widows. In fact by prohibiting the sale of family assets households are essentially formally frozen in their mobility, and thus restricted in their agency over their own lives. This is a particularly harsh measure considering the state many had been frozen in suggested a state of greater livelihood insecurity than in their former homes. The fact that many respondents did not appear to be aware of this regulation was particularly concerning. On the other hand however, formal regulation are of little influence over land governance practices in Beira. Those seeking to sell can therefore easily turn to the informal market where the majority of land transactions occur. The 3 year sale prohibition may thus have as an unintended side-effect that formal property is incorporated into the informal housing sector.

Conclusion: Displacement Politics and Post-Aid Urbanization

The three cases stand as a testimony of the municipality's success in attracting urban development investments to the city of Beira. In the span of three years this has resulted several high profile projects in the field of industrialization, urban drainage and (one of Africa's largest) urban green space. The municipal leadership's demonstrated ability to bring about drastic and visible change to the city has resulted in considerable political momentum, both from the (local) electorate and donors. With several commitments by the Netherlands and China soon to be implemented, Beira is emerging as a posterchild of successful urban development in the face of extreme adversity. Moreover, the land based nature of these investments foretell a development trajectory which will continue to reshape the city's urban form.

Beneath the surface of these high profile cases however we see that each investment has been associated with processes of involuntary resettlement. Displacement thus emerges as an intrinsic component of Beira's development success. What is particularly unsettling in its familiarity is the fact that each resettlement was



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associated with an increase in vulnerability for affected populations, albeit in varying degrees. These findings fit within an established body of resettlement research. If these cases are anything to go by therefore, a growing amount of land users will find their livelihoods sacrificed for a ‘safe, prosperous and beautiful Beira’ as more projects unfold. This is obviously contradictory to the social equity targets of the SDG’s and NUA. Despite being of pressing relevance to local leaders however, resettlement-as-vulnerability-enhancing is hardly ground-breaking conceptually. We wish therefore to shift the focus to the role of donors, an issue which so far has received little attention within the context of displacement and urban development.

The fact that each case was associated with a different resettlement strategy, despite sharing the same administrative and legal framework, demonstrates that ‘municipal capacity’ cannot be understood as the sole variable mediating resettlement outcomes. It is only when taking into account the fact that each project was associated with different donors that these divergent outcomes begin to make sense. The commitment and vested interests varied greatly among each donor, ranging from disinterest (Sergicoa), to disassociation (KfW) to proliferation (World Bank). It is here where our main argument lies; resettlement outcomes are highly contingent upon the interests associated with them. This is not to suggest that each donor represents a coherent set of interests, or that donor interests are themselves the sole determinant of project outcomes, far from it. Each intervention is in reality a micro-political economy of tenders, consultancy firms and organizational incentive structures (among others) which interact with ‘local’ interests, such as the municipality and land users. It is in the interaction of these various interests that priorities are set and outcomes are shaped. What it does demonstrate however is that these divergent interests are not necessarily vested in the development outcomes of resettled populations, despite projects being legitimized on the basis of their development contribution.

The developments in Beira appear bare a clear resemblance to the dynamics observed within the context of the post-aid era. Whether it be China’s presence, inter-donor competition or the emphasis on ‘hard’ interventions, Beira is in many ways a microcosm of global political economic trends, mirroring it’s fragmentation. We argue that this has political implications that are greater than the sum of individual projects. This is due to the simple fact that resettlements in a city like Beira do not occur within a vacuum, and word of mouth travels fast. Stories of new resettlements are used for the previously-resettled to evaluate their own experience, while their stories similarly shape the expectations of the soon-to-be-resettled. It is not only affected population that engage in such comparison, but donors as well. Illustratively during the research, several project staff of future infrastructure projects lamented the high expectations raised by the



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World Bank project. The collective result of differential resettlements is therefore that they reinforce the highly arbitrary relationship between residents and the municipality.

The findings underscore the need to put displacement at the forefront of urban development agenda's, by recognizing it as a process that goes hand in hand with the many targets laid out in the SDG's and NUA. The fact that resettlements are contingent upon the interests associated with them, illustrates the need to include these interests as a unit of study. As the post aid era sees an increasing array of actors and resources mobilizing around urban land, these interests will likely become increasing diverse and contradictory. More than simply a question of proceduralism or livelihoods therefore, we argue for an orientation towards the politics of displacement if a future of 'inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities' is to be realized.

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